

**HOW MUCH IS YOUR INCOME
WORTH TO YOU?**

**WE NEED TO BE AT THE
TABLE, NOT ON THE MENU**

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CCRA Online Copy Deadlines

The deadline for ad and article copy for CCRA Online is the first of the month prior to the scheduled publication date. Articles, ad copy, changes of address, complaints of nondelivery and subscription requests should be directed to CCRA, 65 Enterprise, Aliso Viejo, CA 95656 or call (949) 715-4682. Advertising inquiries also should be directed to the Association office. Photographs accompanying articles should be RGB color JPEG files with a resolution no less than 120 ppi.

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The Electronic Magazine of
the California Court Reporters Association

CCRA Online Committee

Lesia J. Mervin
Debby Steinman
Connie Parchman, Editor
3275 Royalton Court
Pleasanton, CA 94588
Tel: (510) 853-5260
parchman1@aol.com

Main Office

CCRA
65 Enterprise
Aliso Viejo, CA 92656
Tel: (949) 715-4682
Fax: (949) 715-6931
Email: staff@cal-ccra.org

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CCRA OFFICERS

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Early Langley
early.langley@cal-ccra.org

President-Elect/ Vice President Official

Kristi Garcia
kegarcy@comcast.net

Vice President Freelance

Kim Thayer
kim.thayer@cal-ccra.org

Secretary-Treasurer

Therese Claussen
TKClau@aol.com

Past President

Debby Steinman
debby.steinman@cal-ccra.org

CCRA MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the California Court Reporters Association is to advance the profession of verbatim shorthand reporting by promoting professional reporting excellence through education, research, and the use of state-of-the-art technology; establishing and maintaining professional standards of practice; and advocating before legislative and regulatory bodies on issues which impact the judicial system and others served by the court reporting profession of California.

President's Message — CCRA Teamwork: Depo Firms and Laid-Off Officials

By Early Langley, CSR, RMR
CCRA President



When unexpected career avenues turn and my options change, I want to know that my interests are represented by an association that represents teamwork between freelancers and officials. Who is that? CCRA.

Why? Because if I face being laid off, if I face taking deposition work until my job returns or if I face working in a courtroom as a freelancer, I know that CCRA will be there because CCRA's mission is to support both freelancers and officials.

Perhaps we'll all look back five years from now and go, Wow, I succeeded because my association had the foresight to put teamwork ahead of individual group interests.

What precipitates this are the actions of the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO). They have again submitted the same misguided digital recording proposal as in years past to eliminate court reporters in superior courts across the state. In addition, the LAO has suggested implementing mandatory court closing/court furloughs for all employees in addition to any furloughs already in place.

Laid-off officials and court reporting firms have an unprecedented chance to work together. Cooperation between court reporting firms and officials may be one key to offering the most benefit to both. When laid-off officials need work, they can reach out to firms. When firms need experienced officials, they can reach out to officials. Without cooperation, tension arises and what could be a solution becomes unworkable.

What is CCRA Doing?

Right now, CCRA is working to support our affiliate associations, one of which is the Los Angeles County Court Reporters Association (LACCRA). The LACCRA Board has organized an "Employment Resources" committee. The purpose of the committee is to form a repository of court reporting firms that contact LACCRA looking for reporters to cover work in the captioning or deposition fields. This information is provided as a resource for LACCRA reporters seeking employment. CCRA is actively working with freelance firms to coordinate work opportunities for officials. Please contact Rose Nava at rosalinanava@yahoo.com or Sandy MacNeil at macneilsandy@gmail.com. Or contact info@cal-ccra.org.

Right now, we are providing advice and direction to our affiliate, Sacramento DIR Hearing Reporters, as they battle a budget bill eliminating court reporters and implementing digital recording in those courts.

Right now, CCRA has set up the nation's best experts on technology updates and questions on everything from hookups to backups on our brand new TechImpact Video series. These videos feature such experts as our own Sandy Bunch VanderPol and Lesia Mervin. Visit <http://www.youtube.com/user/CaCourtReporters>.

Right now, CCRA continues to support the Court Reporters Board in its efforts to fight unethical gift giving.

Right now, CCRA has been victorious in aiding a court reporting firm to fight a deadbeat lawyer by writing an amicus curiae letter. His appeal is now dead!

Let us know at info@cal-ccra.org if your association would like advice on setting up a repository. Teamwork between freelance firms and laid-off officials helps us all.

**CCRA needs your help.
United we remain strong.
Contribute, renew and join CCRA!**



CR Board and President Early Langley



Front Row: Reagan Evans, Greg Finch, Toni O'Neill, Elizabeth Lasensky
Back Row: Early Langley, Yvonne Fenner, Angelique Scott

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pam.katros@cal-ccra.org

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terryjrj@aol.com

District D

Christine Taylor

christine.taylor@cal-ccra.org

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Brooke Ryan

brooke.ryan@cal-ccra.org

District F – (At Large)

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ljcsr@aol.com

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No, I Will Not Turn Over My CAT Dictionary To You!

In the late 1980's, CCRA past president, Gary Cramer, secured a copyright on his CAT dictionary. The following is an interview with Gary to find out what possessed him to seek a copyright and his thoughts about why he thought there was a need to do so.

CCRA: Gary, please tell us the background that caused you to seek a copyright on your CAT dictionary?

GARY: Looking back, it really started in the very early 70's when I worked at the Los Angeles Municipal Court. Xerox Corporation came to our local L.A. Municipal Court Reporters Association and asked us to help them develop CAT software. This was a time when CAT software was just being developed by various individuals and companies. It was my first exposure to computers and CAT software. As basic as it was and as slow as it was, I was convinced it was the future of shorthand reporting.

Unfortunately for all of us who participated in the project, none of us had what we now call a computer-compatible dictionary. Not only did we have to create a dictionary by hand — actually writing with a pen on paper every word and its corresponding steno strokes so Xerox could create a rudimentary dictionary — but the dictionaries were full of conflicts because the concept of learning a computer-compatible theory of stenotype had not yet been invented.

As you can imagine, relearning to write stenotype to accommodate the computer was a very large burden on all of us. I was convinced from those very early days that protecting my dictionary from loss, vandalism or accidental destruction was something to guard against.

CCRA: Was there a specific incident that caused you to want to try to copyright your CAT dictionary?

GARY: As time progressed through the 80's, our L.A. Municipal Court Reporters Association continued a long-held policy of cooperation with our court administration in finding reporters who would transcribe notes of reporters who had become unavailable to transcribe their notes. At this point, we had reporters using CAT software, reporters still using transcribers and notereaders, and we still had penwriters on staff. It was about that time that a

court manager mentioned that it would be advantageous to the court if the court could get access to the retired reporters' CAT dictionaries. I tucked that statement into my memory, and it became the seed that ultimately caused me to look into whether I could copyright my CAT dictionary.

As time progressed, the subject of CAT dictionaries being available to the court for preparing transcripts of unavailable court reporters came up at the bargaining table between the court reporters and management. Nothing serious ever developed. However, I decided it was time to look into actually trying to copyright my dictionary. It seemed only logical to me that if I could prove personal ownership of my CAT dictionary, I would be better protected against it being used by anybody else.

How did you do that?

Seeking a copyright turned out to be a lot easier than I thought. At that time there was no accessible Web site to get the information, either; that, or I didn't yet know how to use the Web well enough to find it. I called the Library of Congress who was very helpful, and at that time they referred me to the U.S. Copyright Office. The Copyright Office, at my request, sent me a brochure and an application. I filled out the application, included a printed copy of my CAT dictionary and a check for \$20.00, and sent it to the U.S. Copyright Office.

A number of weeks later, I received a letter from the Copyright Office indicating they had reviewed my request and determined that I could not copyright my dictionary because mathematically it was possible that another individual could have the exact same dictionary as mine. They obviously had never looked at my notes, thank goodness!! They also returned my \$20.00. However, they were kind enough to indicate in their letter to me that if I resubmitted my request for copyright and designated it as a compilation, they would reconsider my application. I did as they suggested, and, lo and behold, to my pleasant surprise, they sent me a copyright for my CAT dictionary.

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No, I Will Not Turn Over My CAT Dictionary To You!

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I worked way too hard and long to create that dictionary, all on my own time, to give it up to anybody, and felt more confident that if ever asked to give it up, I would be in a very strong position to refuse to do so.

CCRA: Are you aware if the process of copyright has changed since you got your copyright?

GARY: In looking at the Web site for the Copyright Office, it appears to me the process is basically the same. The least expensive way to do it now is to

submit the application and accompanying documents over the Internet. The charge has only increased to \$35.

To get all of the details for submitting a copyright, I suggest freelance, official, and state hearing reporters in California go to the following government Web site: copyright.gov. You can also contact the U.S. Copyright Office at U.S. Copyright Office, 101 Independence Ave. S.E. Washington, D.C. 20559-6000; (202) 707-3000 or 1-877-476-0778 (toll free).



From Our Transcripts

Q. Now, I noticed the slight but detectable accent. Where is that accent from?

A. From London, from England. Yes.

Q. And what brought you to America?

A. An airplane.



Argonaut Court Reporting Program Hosts CCRA Sacramento, CA

On March 22, 2012, Linda J. Hart, CSR, from CCRA's Speaker Roster, made a presentation to the whole student body about the benefits of membership in CCRA and the meaning of the different association acronyms: NCRA, NCCRA, and CCRA. Pam Katros, CSR, donated a student membership, and Allen Rose, senior court reporting student, was the proud recipient.

After the membership presentation, Ms. Hart, a deposition firm owner, presented a deposition procedures class to the senior students. All segments were videotaped by Dennis Ronk, owner of D.B. Ronk and Company in Sacramento, and the students were able to experience the use of video with the court reporter.

Many thanks to Lorri Doll and Bonnie Comstock for contacting CCRA and utilizing our Speaker Program.

Check out our CCRA Facebook page for photos of this great day.



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Beware of Email Trickery

Q. I received an email from my daughter that had no Subject line and the message only contained a link. I clicked the link which turned out to be a Canadian company selling Viagra. Is there anything I can do to make sure something like this doesn't happen again? Thanks, Mr. M.

A. You can always count on Mr. Modem to state the obvious, but the best way to make sure it never happens again is to not do it again. In short, links do not click themselves.

In today's eWorld, the From: address should not be the sole basis upon which a decision is made whether to view a message or not. For example, even though the message in question appeared to be from your daughter, if there was no Subject line, and she usually includes a Subject line, that's one red flag. The fact that the message was blank except for a link — no greeting, no explanation — that's red flag number two.

My standard practice is that unless a sender includes a personal greeting or explanation that lets me know the message is legitimate, I'm going to delete it. Is that too harsh? Perhaps, but I don't believe it is asking too much given the number of malicious messages in circulation today. All it takes is a simple, Hi, Mr. Modem. Here's a link to a video of a cat on a pogo stick I think you will enjoy. Tell me that and I'm there in a heartbeat.

Not all email received is worthy of your time or attention, so it's important not to feel compelled to open every message, either. Some people respond in knee-jerk fashion to any incoming email. The bad guys know this and a lot of computers wind up infected because of it. Get into the habit of not automatically opening every message received —

thinking before clicking and you will soon be able to spot problematic email and delete them upon receipt.

Q. I read several of your Top 50 Computing Tips eBooks, and they're great. I would like to give several of them to my friends who can definitely use them. I know I can purchase gift cards from amazon.com, so this is probably a dumb question, but if I do that, do I receive actual plastic cards from amazon that I then have to send out to my recipients, or how does that work? I'm so behind the curve on these things. Thanks for being there, Mr. M.

A. Amazon makes it very easy to give eBooks as gifts. Simply locate the book(s) you want to give on Amazon, then click the little Give as Gift button to the right of the book.

After providing the name and email address of your recipient, compose any personal message you would like to include and click the Submit button. Amazon will send an email to your recipient that includes your message and a link. A quick click on the provided link and the eBook will be transmitted to your recipient's Kindle, iPad or other device, and charged to your account. For direct links to all my eBooks on amazon, please visit the eBooks section of my Web site at www.MrModem.com.

Q. I have a two-monitor setup, but when I go to PrintScreen to try and print some selected text that appears on one of my monitors, it always prints what appears on both monitors. Is there a way to print from only one of the monitors?

A. If you hold down the ALT key and click PrintScr, the active screen (where your highlighted data and cursor are located) will be captured to the Windows Clipboard. Go to a destination location, such as a

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word processing document or email, right-click and select Paste. Your captured screen image will pop right into your document, which you can then print.

Mr. Modem's DME (Don't Miss 'Em) Sites of the Month

Batmobile History

If you were watching television in the 1960s, you probably watched the original Batman series. KAPOW! Sure, Batman was a hero, but the real star of the show was The Batmobile. THWACK! This site takes a look at the history of this famous vehicle. Each entry includes photos and a blurb about the car, including in which episode it appeared, in the unlikely event you do not have each episode committed to memory. SWOOSH!

www.batmobilehistory.com

Brainwaves Center

The Brainwaves Center provides practical applications of current research in the neurosciences designed to improve and maintain our mental skills. Test your memory and learning skills, executive planning, emotional response, social interaction, language/computation and spatial construction. I was enjoying the heck out of this site right up to the point that I forgot why I was there. But give it a try. I'm sure you'll do much better.

www.brainwaves.com

This Day

This site provides an interesting, high-tech twist on run-of-the-mill On This Day in History sites. Because it is hosted by Nikon, the photography is outstanding.

<http://bit.ly/bcfsDL>

Mr. Modem's technology-tips eBooks and award-winning weekly computer-help newsletter, now in its 12th year of continuous publication, are available on www.MrModem.com.



CCRA Legislation Update

For information concerning this report or the information contained herein, you may contact California Court Reporters Association, Attn. Sandy Bunch VanderPol, CSR #3032, at 65 Enterprise, Aliso Viejo, California 92656 (949) 715-4682 or by e-mail at RealtimeCSR@calweb.com.

- [AB 1208 \(Calderon, Charles D\)](#) Trial courts: administration.
- [AB 1582 \(Wagner R\)](#) Civil actions: telephone appearances.
- [AB 1630 \(Olsen R\)](#) Stanislaus County Superior Court: official court reporters.
- [AB 1875 \(Gatto D\)](#) Civil procedure: depositions.
- [AB 1918 \(Jones R\)](#) Civil procedure: depositions.
- [AB 2073 \(Silva R\)](#) Courts: electronic filing and service of documents.
- [AB 2076 \(Ma D\)](#) Official court reporter fee.
- [AB 2119 \(Nielsen R\)](#) Courts: information technology projects.
- [AB 2372 \(Hill D\)](#) Service of process: attorneys.
- [AB 2657 \(Calderon, Charles D\)](#) Electronic court reporting.
- [ACR 47 \(Davis D\)](#) Courts: 50th anniversary of service by African American justices.
- [SB 326 \(Yee D\)](#) Court records: public access.
- [SB 1428 \(Blakeslee R\)](#) Legislative meetings: recording and transcription.
- [SB 1489 \(Harman R\)](#) Courts: destruction of court records.
- [SB 1514 \(Anderson R\)](#) Death sentences: automatic appeal.
- [SB 1574](#) (Committee on Judiciary) Discovery: electronically stored information.
- [SCR 38 \(Price D\)](#) Courts: 50th anniversary of service by African American justices.



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Desmangles Letter — Payment of Transcripts Based on Word Count



Superior Court of California County of Sonoma

José Octavio Guillén
Court Executive Officer

ACCESS, SERVICE, JUSTICE

Cindia Martinez
Deputy Court Executive Officer

April 26, 2012

Ossee Desmangles
ossee.desmangles@seiu1021.org
VIA Email

Dear Mr. Desmangles,

Court leadership met with you and four of our court reporters to discuss the impacts on employment regarding the new administrative policy on payment of transcripts based on a word count, set to begin implementation on May 1, 2012. This meeting was held on April 23, 2012 and included reporters Mr. Martinez, Ms. Hart, Ms. Thompson, Ms. Berg and Court leadership Ms. Alston and myself.

We had a productive discussion with the reporters, and some valuable concerns were raised with respect to impacts on the reporters' independent contractor work. As mentioned in the meeting, we are still interested to receive in writing the specific impacts the proposed changes will have on court reporters' employment as contrasted with their independent contractor transcript work.

In light of the various comments raised in this meeting, including definition of a "word" and different software applications that can appropriately count it, our Court will be delaying implementation pending further research. Since we do not know how long it will take us to research some of the various software applications mentioned, at this time there is no set date for implementation. However, the Court will provide the reporters with advance notice of implementation of any administrative policy related to word count reimbursement of transcripts. In the meantime, the Court will also schedule another meeting with the reporters to further discuss implementation.

Once again thank you for your valuable and respectful input and concerns with respect to the court reporters' independent contractor transcript work.

Respectively,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cindia Martinez".

Cindia Martinez
Deputy CEO

cc: José Guillen, Court Executive Officer
Lesley Allen, Director of Operations,
Raul Riefkohl, Court Operations Manager
Valarie Alston, Director of Human Resources
Karen Thompson, Court Reporter
Carlos Martinez, Court Reporter
Barrie Hart, Court Reporter
Shelly Berg, Court Reporter

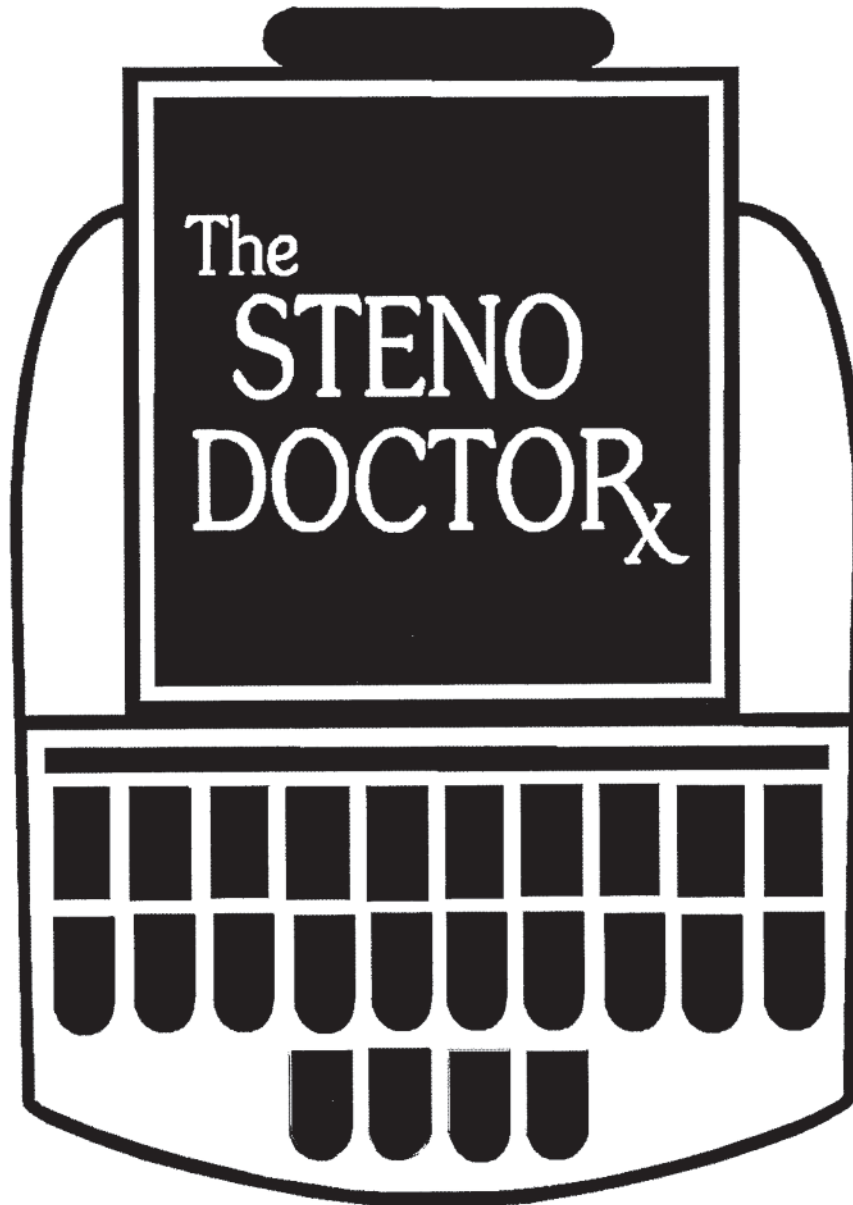
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How Much Is YOUR Income Worth To You? We Need To Be At The Table, Not On The Menu!

By Lesia Mervin, CSR, RMR, CRR, FAPR

Would you spend \$300 (\$25/month) to help ensure that your income is not cut by 30% or 50% next year? For less than the cost of a monthly pedicure, you may save thousands in income. How about \$600 (\$50/month), the cost of a dinner with a friend once a month? Would you spend that much to keep your income from dropping by thousands of dollars? Sounds like a no-brainer; right? What if you could save your income from being slashed, plus the incomes of court reporters statewide? Double, triple, quadruple no-brainer!

In these hard economic times, many people we know are unemployed. I would be willing to bet that those people would have gladly paid a few hundred dollars last year if it meant keeping their jobs this year. Well, as court reporters, we have a chance to do just that, and, yet, just a small percentage of reporters across the state respond to CCRA's plea. Since members of our profession are way above average in intelligence, not likely to pass up a no-brainer, I can only conclude that possibly, despite CCRA's best efforts, the message of the seriousness of our situation is not getting out there. So let me recap the assault that has happened on our profession this past year.

If you are an official reporter covering criminal and civil courts, you have already seen your income decline. Mandatory court furloughs have taken a bite out of salary income. Many courts have halted transcript preparation in felony sentencing and change of plea matters. The Legislative Analyst's office has once again recommended replacing all court reporters with digital recording and implementing additional furloughs on top of the furloughs officials already received. The latest assault on the official reporter is the transcript word count payment method, which is a substantial loss in income. The court's method of calculation inaccurately calculates the number of words in a transcript. At the same time courtrooms are closing and reporters are being laid off.

If you are a freelance reporter, many markets are experiencing a significant slowdown in the amount of work available. Laid-off official reporters are entering

the freelance market in large numbers in many areas, further diluting the work available to all reporters, creating more competition, and driving down rates for reporting services. At the same time, freelance reporters are battling gift-giving incentive programs and contracting that the national companies have implemented, making it even more difficult in the freelance market.

And now the Court Reporters Board has published an opinion regarding transcript fees for freelance reporters covering courts that has both officials and freelance reporters in a quandary as to what is the correct rate that can legally be charged for freelance reporter transcripts in the courts. CCRA has approached the CRB to seek a resolution in this matter.

As past president of CCRA and now acting in an advisory role to the board of directors, I can tell you that you have a very dedicated, passionate board serving your association. If there is one lesson that we have all learned over the years in preserving this great profession, it's that we need a lobbyist fighting for us in Sacramento, working the beat so to speak, so that we can be proactive instead of only reactive on court reporting issues. Unfortunately, it seems there's never a respite from the battles that court reporters face each year in the capitol.

Although having a lobbyist does not come cheap, it's clearly evident that we cannot afford not to. Thankfully, CCRA has made employing a lobbyist a top priority, but that does not come without a price tag. For many years now, we have been able to hire a highly respected and influential lobbying firm, Capitol Strategies, Jim Cassie and Meghan Loper. Those of you who have had a chance to hear them speak know what an impressive advocate we have fighting for us. Attendant to having a lobbyist is our Political Action Committee (PAC) fund. Each year this fund needs to be replenished. This year is no exception.

CCRA has a special fund that is utilized for those expenses over and above our normal operating

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How Much Is YOUR Income Worth To You? We Need To Be At The Table, Not On The Menu!

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expenses. Every year these funds are expended fighting these battles I've mentioned and many more. This fund also needs to be replenished each year.

This brings us to the reason for this call to action. We must raise money for our PAC fund and Special Fund in order to maintain the level of protection CCRA feels is necessary in fighting these issues.

Here's the solution: I'm asking you to personally commit to \$50 a month, \$25 a month, \$10 a month, or whatever you feel your income is worth, to help us in this fight. Consider how much you would spend to protect your profession and your income and then make an ongoing monthly pledge or one-time lump-sum pledge to one of these CCRA funds. If you have already given, please give more. If you can't, print this article and pass it out to every reporter you know.

Ladies, here's my personal challenge: Take a look at the purse you carry. How much did you pay for that purse? Would you be willing to commit to paying at least the price of your purse to one of these CCRA funds? Whether your purse is from Target or Louis Vuitton, we'll take it.

CCRA is working for you, but we desperately need your help. Please don't sit back and wait for someone else to save your job.

**How much is YOUR income worth to you?
We need to be at the table, not on the menu!**

MAKE YOUR PLEDGE TODAY.

PAC FUND SPECIAL FUND

Special thanks to Holly Kapacinskas in the writing of this article.



Did you know there was a rule change pertaining to identifying information in juvenile proceedings?

Pursuant to Rule of Court 8.401 – Confidentiality

(a) References to juveniles or relatives in documents

To protect the anonymity of juveniles involved in juvenile court proceedings:

- (1) In all documents filed by the parties in proceedings under this chapter, a juvenile must be referred to by first name and last initial; but if the first name is unusual or other circumstances would defeat the objective of anonymity, the initials of the juvenile may be used.
- (2) In opinions that are not certified for publication and in court orders, a juvenile may be referred to either by first name and last

initial or by his or her initials. In opinions that are certified for publication in proceedings under this chapter, a juvenile must be referred to by first name and last initial; but if the first name is unusual or other circumstances would defeat the objective of anonymity, the initials of the juvenile may be used.

- (3) In all documents filed by the parties and in all court orders and opinions in proceedings under this chapter, if use of the full name of a juvenile's relative would defeat the objective of anonymity for the juvenile, the relative must be referred to by first name and last initial; but if the first name is unusual or other circumstances would defeat the objective of anonymity for the juvenile, the initials of the relative may be used.



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Electronic Recording, More Furloughs, and more

On April 13, 2012, the Legislative Analyst's Office released its latest recommendations to the legislature. Here are a few of their recommendations:

- **IMPLEMENT ELECTRONIC COURT REPORTING.** Under current law, trial courts use certified shorthand reporters to create and transcribe the official record of many court proceedings. However, many other state and federal courts currently use electronic methods of recording proceedings. A multiyear pilot study carried out in California between 1991 and 1994 found that electronic court reporting could achieve substantial savings. Accordingly, we recommend the Legislature direct the trial courts to phase in electronic court reporting. We estimate that the state could save about \$13 million in 2012-13 and in excess of \$100 million on an annual basis upon full implementation.
- **ENSURE COURTS CHARGE FOR COURT REPORTING SERVICES IN CIVIL CASES.** The parties in a civil case are currently required to pay for reporting services only for proceedings lasting more than an hour. However, information provided by AOC indicates a roughly \$50 million difference between court reporting costs for civil cases and the amount of fee revenue collected to offset these costs. This shortfall likely includes costs related to proceedings of less than one hour, fee waivers courts are authorized to provide to indigent litigants, and some failure to collect these fees in certain courts. To generate revenue to help courts meet their ongoing reductions, we recommend the Legislature amend existing state law to require trial courts to charge court reporting fees to offset costs related to court reporting services, including proceedings lasting less than an hour (though still allowing fee waivers for indigent litigants). This new source of revenue along with more efficient collection of the fee by trial courts would generate ongoing savings of \$23 million in 2012-13.
- **IMPLEMENT A FURLOUGH FOR COURT EMPLOYEES FOR ONE YEAR.** The Legislature could mandate a statewide furlough for court employees for one year. This would be in addition to the furlough days already implemented in many courts. As discussed previously, 47 of the 58 trial courts have implemented furlough days at some point in the last few years, with the number of actual furlough days varying across courts. We note, however, that a mandatory furlough could significantly impact public access to court services. For example, a one-day-per-month furlough could generate roughly \$65 million in savings in the budget year.
- **TRANSFER REMAINING CALIFORNIA CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CCMS) FUNDS TO TRIAL COURTS.** The judicial branch has worked since 2002 to develop a statewide court case management technology project called CCMS. This system was designed to standardize court filings, increase electronic access to court records, reduce the amount of work associated with paper-driven filings, and allow electronic interaction with criminal justice entities. Product development concluded in November 2011. However, in March 2012, the Judicial Council voted to terminate the product before deploying it to individual courts, in part because of the high projected costs of full deployment statewide. Based on AOC estimated costs, the decision to terminate CCMS will reduce spending on this project by \$46 million in 2012-13. In addition, the Judicial Council will receive a one-time \$16 million cash payment from the CCMS product vendor as compensation for numerous product quality issues which resulted in a ten-month project delay. We recommend that the Legislature direct AOC to transfer all of these funds (totaling \$62 million in 2012-13) directly to trial court operations to offset the unallocated reduction.

continued on Page 17

Electronic Recording, More Furloughs, and more

(continued from Page 16)

- **DELAY OR CANCEL CERTAIN COURT CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS.** As discussed previously, two judicial branch special funds — SCFCF and ICNA — receive roughly \$450 million in criminal fine and civil filing fee revenues annually for court facility construction projects. A portion of these funds are also used for maintenance of court facilities. Most ICNA construction projects are currently in either the site acquisition or design phase, whereas most SCFCF projects are already under construction. The Legislature could delay all projects not currently under construction (mainly ICNA projects) for one year and transfer a couple hundred million dollars of the \$320 million in annual revenues received by ICNA to offset reductions to the trial courts. (At the time of this analysis, we had not received updated court construction figures from the branch to provide a precise estimate.) Alternatively, the Legislature could consider canceling certain courthouse construction projects and achieve significant savings on an ongoing basis. The AOC conducted an evaluation of court facility needs throughout the state in the early 2000s and used a methodology approved by the Judicial Council in 2006 to prioritize potential construction or facility modification projects. The ICNA currently funds 39 construction projects identified by this methodology as meeting either an immediate or critical (less immediate) facility need. The Legislature could direct the courts to continue the immediate need projects, but cancel the 12 critical need projects (whose budgets total roughly \$1.6 billion). This would allow roughly \$100 million to be transferred annually to trial court operations.
- **REQUIRE INDIVIDUAL COURTS TO MAKE ADDITIONAL REDUCTIONS.** As discussed earlier in the brief, \$214 million of the cumulative General Fund reduction to the judicial branch was passed on to the individual trial courts in the current year. In most cases, courts made various operational changes to accommodate the reductions (such as by implementing staff furlough days and reducing service hours). The Legislature could require that the individual trial courts be required to absorb additional reductions by expanding upon these actions. However, these actions taken in prior years have frequently resulted in a backlog of cases, delays in processing court paperwork, and longer wait times for those seeking court services. In addition, as discussed above, many trial courts also drew upon their local reserves to help offset recent budget cuts and avoid taking the operational actions described above. At the end of 2010-11, trial courts possessed combined reserves of \$562 million, but only around half was unrestricted and available for use by the trial courts to address their budget reductions. With additional budget reductions in the current year, we expect the final balance of these unrestricted reserves to be even lower, leaving less available for use in 2012-13. Furthermore, the actual level of reserve balances, particularly unrestricted funds, currently varies across trial courts. As shown in Figure 8, some courts possess enough funds in their reserves to cover a large share of their annual expenditures and would probably be able to draw on these reserves — rather than make additional operational changes — to absorb additional budget reductions. Other courts lack a significant amount of unrestricted funds and might have difficulty absorbing further budgetary reductions.



Sacramento DIR Hearing Reporters Thank You Letter

Sacramento DIR Hearing Reporters
160 Promenade Circle, Ste 300
Sacramento, CA 95834

April 18, 2012

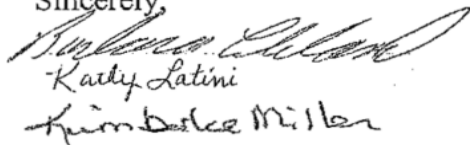
California Court Reporters Association,

We would like to thank CCRA for taking time out of the busy agenda on April 14, 2012, to listen and provide the State Hearing Reporters with advice and direction on our Budget Bill Item. CCRA's time and feedback were abundantly generous. We have implemented and are continuing to implement the advice CCRA provided.

We also thank you for providing us with names of individuals to contact who could be of assistance. We have been in contact with them, and their feedback has been beneficial.

Thank you again for your time, efforts, and willingness to lend assistance to fellow reporters.

Sincerely,



Barbara Cleland
Kathy Latini
Kimberlee Miller

cc: Early Langley, President
Kristi Garcia, Vice President, Officials/President Elect
Kim Thayer, Vice President, Freelance
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