



Maryland | Delaware | DC Press Association

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To: Judicial Proceedings Committee

From: Rebecca Snyder, Executive Director, MDDC Press Association

Date: February 15, 2022

Re: **SB469 - SUPPORT**

The Maryland-Delaware-District of Columbia Press Association represents a diverse membership of news media organizations, from large metro dailies like the Washington Post and the Baltimore Sun, to hometown newspapers such as The Annapolis Capital and the Frederick News Post to publications such as The Daily Record, the Baltimore Times, and online-only publications such as MarylandReporter.com and Baltimore Brew.

The Press Association is pleased to support SB469, which would allow the public remote access to court proceedings that are already publicly available. This bill would allow for any party, witness or counsel in the proceeding to ask the judge to prohibit the broadcast, as long as there is not an overriding public interest.

In a 2016 report by the Federal Judicial Center, "Video Recording Courtroom Proceedings in United States District Courts: Report on a Pilot Project", ([http://www.fjc.gov/public/pdf.nsf/lookup/Cameras-in-Courts-Project-Report-2016.pdf/\\$file/Cameras-in-Courts-Project-Report-2016.pdf](http://www.fjc.gov/public/pdf.nsf/lookup/Cameras-in-Courts-Project-Report-2016.pdf/$file/Cameras-in-Courts-Project-Report-2016.pdf)) researchers surveyed bench, bar and staff to understand the effects of a pilot program for video recording. News media were allowed to record and broadcast court proceedings in several of the pilot sites. Survey respondents said that news media did not pose disruptions to proceedings (p Appendix F-14, F-15).

Broadcasting court proceedings will provide more transparency and openness to the process and allow the public to better understand and access the court system. This legislation is important to our members, as they would be able to cover proceedings more easily and thoroughly without the burdens of proximity. Additionally, the ways our members share the news is changing. In addition to the anchor printed publications, our members have websites and tv stations that provide different opportunities to engage audiences and inform the public.

The Press Association urges a favorable report.



We believe a strong news media is central to a strong and open society.

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