

Below is a link to an article that appeared on the front page of The Boston Globe this past Saturday.

http://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2016/01/01/courtrooms-digital-concern-that-court-reporters-may-phased-out/Z4LI3sawdbZiGhxwiwNqEO/story.html?s_campaign=8315

MCRA's response posted on-line:

Massachusetts Court Reporters Association is proud of the important role that official court reporters serve in preserving and producing the record in criminal and civil proceedings across our country every day. The presence of an official court reporter in the courtroom at the time of the judicial proceeding is the most accurate and reliable way to make an official record and the justice system is served, as it has been for generations, with a trained court reporter present to capture the proceedings.

The court reporter is in the courtroom for the sole purpose of recording the spoken word and would, thus, never "forget to flip the switch" resulting in important testimony or argument going unrecorded. Without the presence of a court reporter, there is no opportunity to interrupt the proceedings for an unheard word, nod or mumble.

Stenographic reporters have played an integral role in bringing state-of-the-art technology into the courtroom. In fact, this technology offers many advantages when compared to digital audio or video recording. For example, a realtime court reporter's stenographic notes are translated instantly, displayed on a computer screen and digitally archived to a computer. Realtime court reporters create a verbatim text record of the proceedings for instant review and use by attorneys and judges. In fact, realtime is the only "voice-to-text" technology that meets the rigorous demand for accuracy that exists in the legal environment.

Several courtrooms that replaced court reporters with alternative methodologies have now switched back to court reporters. States such as New Mexico, New Jersey and Texas have found that the recording systems left much to be desired. Problems with inaudibles, blank tapes and overall system failures caused courtrooms in these states to return to the use of court reporters for major cases.

*Kathleen Silva, President
Massachusetts Court Reporters Association*

MCRA has scheduled a board meeting for this Thursday, 5:30 p.m. at the offices of Farmer Arsenault Brock, 50 Congress Street, Suite 350, Boston, to discuss this matter. As with all board meetings, any member is welcome to attend. We only ask that you let us know you plan to attend so we can make sure there are enough seats available. If you plan to attend, please send an email to info@mcraonline.com.