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Sen. Stephanie Chang
Chair, Civil Rights, Judiciary, and Public Safety Committee
Room 1200, Binsfeld Office Building
201 Townsend Street, Lansing, MI 48933

October 30, 2024

Dear Sen. Chang:

I am writing to you on behalf of the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA), representing dedicated stenographic court reporters across Michigan, to express our strong support for the passage of HB 5046. This bill, which seeks to adjust the compensation for court reporters, represents not just a long-overdue recognition of their invaluable service but also a critical step towards enhancing the efficiency and fairness of our judicial process.

Since the last increase in compensation in 1986, the roles and responsibilities of court reporters have only expanded and intensified. Over these decades, these professionals have continued to serve with unwavering dedication, ensuring accurate communication, understanding, and legal fairness for all in our courts. Their work is foundational to the principles of justice, access, and equity that our country — and Michigan — hold dear.

HB 5046 addresses the significant lag in compensation that has not kept pace with inflation or the increasing demands on these court reporters. This bill aims to rectify this by recognizing the specialized skills, training, and education required to perform effectively in court settings.

Ensuring that court reporters can focus on their duties without the added burden of financial strain will maintain the high standards of service reflected in their NCRA credentials. Attracting and retaining talented individuals in this profession is crucial for the long-term integrity of our judicial system at every level.

The passage of HB 5046 would be a testament to Michigan's commitment to justice for all its citizens. It acknowledges the essential role these reporters play in our judicial process, where accuracy and clarity are paramount. By supporting this bill, Michigan would provide fair compensation after more than three decades and reinforce the state's dedication to upholding the integrity of its judicial proceedings.

We urge you, in your influential position as Chair of the Senate's Civil Rights, Judiciary, and Public Safety Committee, to advocate for the swift passage of HB 5046. Your support can pave the way for a legislative acknowledgment that reflects the value and necessity of these professionals in our society. This bill is not merely about compensation; it is about ensuring that every individual in Michigan has fair and equal access to justice.

Thank you for considering this critical issue. We hope for your favorable response and action, and we stand ready to assist in any way that might further this important legislative effort.

Sincerely,

Keith Lemons

Keith R. Lemons, FAPR, RPR, CRR (Ret.)
President, NCRA