



National Court Reporters Association
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Members of the Tennessee House Subcommittee on Departments and Agencies
Tennessee House of Representatives
425 Rep. John Lewis Way N.
Nashville, TN 37243

March 4, 2025

Dear Representative:

Court reporters are officers of the court, much like lawyers, judges, and bailiffs, because they hold a sworn duty to uphold the judicial process by producing accurate, impartial records of all legal proceedings. Their role is integral to the justice system: without verbatim transcripts, the integrity of trials, appeals, and legal accountability falters. Just as lawyers argue cases, judges adjudicate, and bailiffs maintain order, court reporters ensure every word spoken is preserved for the rule of law to function.

Each of these professions is regulated by a state board of peers — lawyers by bar associations, judges by judicial conduct boards, bailiffs often under a sheriff or court oversight — because peer regulation ensures specialized expertise and accountability tailored to their unique responsibilities. Court reporters, through boards like Tennessee’s Board of Court Reporting, are held to similar standards by professionals who understand the trade’s demands.

Unlike a peer board, a non-specialized entity lacks the nuanced understanding needed to maintain court reporting’s high standards, threatening judicial integrity. If lawyers, judges, and bailiffs benefit from profession-specific regulation, court reporters deserve the same to safeguard their critical role in our judiciary. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Keith Lemons

Keith R. Lemons, FAPR, RPR, CRR (Ret.)
Spring Hill, TN
President, National Court Reporters Association

