

[3-19-2019]

Wisconsin Supreme Court  
P.O. Box 1688  
Madison, WI 53701-1688

RE: Rule Petition 19-01 relating to making the record

Dear Honorable Justices of the Supreme Court:

Thank you for your commitment to ensuring an accurate record in Wisconsin courtrooms. I have been a court reporter for six years and currently work in Milwaukee County as a full-time official reporter. I write to convey my personal experiences with digital audio recording (“DAR”) that I believe are relevant as you consider making DAR an official means of taking the verbatim record in Petition 19-01.

In Milwaukee County, our transcript load is very high here. There are commissioner courts where DAR systems are the only thing keeping the record. There are no live reporters because the proceedings are usually simple ones. Although, numerous transcript requests come in for those courts for the digital recordings to be prepared in to transcripts. The process we have then is to take the recording, put it in to our computer, sit down with our machine and play it back while typing it up. The process is extremely repetitive and would be extremely time consuming if this became a relied upon process for taking the record in all courtrooms. Why not just have us be there as the live reporter initially? That way it’s already completed when requested.

Also, I had an attorney come in to court the other day complaining about the DAR system. He had a transcript produced from a hearing that was conducted with the DAR system and the juvenile’s plea was inaudible. The reporter transcribing the audio could not hear the juvenile’s plea and had to put (inaudible response). The case is now on appeal because of this huge flaw in the DAR system. This has also happened to me, as I also type up digital recordings and I had to put in (inaudible response) because I could not hear the person speaking in the back row, nor did I know who was talking. I had to put “UNKNOWN GIRL” as her speaker identification.

I appreciate your consideration of my experiences regarding DAR when considering Petition 19-01. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Kendra Oechsner  
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