



Maryland | Delaware | DC Press Association

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To: Judiciary Committee

From: Rebecca Snyder, Executive Director, MDDC Press Association

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Re: HB 1376 - 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 Maryland Gazette 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 HB 1376, which would allow news media to video criminal sentencing hearings under specific circumstances by filing a written request with the clerk of the court.

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).

This is important to our members because 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 ability to video and broadcast news-worthy criminal sentencing will aid in the public's knowledge and understanding of important cases and issues.

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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