



## **Sacramento Superior Court Issues Statement on Assembly Bill 882**

**July 1, 2025**

**Sacramento, CA** – The Sacramento Superior Court is voicing concerns about Assembly Bill 882, citing its potential to further restrict access to justice for thousands of Sacramentans.

Due to California's ongoing court reporter shortage, more than 1.7 million family, probate, and unlimited civil hearings took place between April 2023 and March 2025 without a verbatim record—many in courtrooms fully equipped with state-approved electronic recording (ER) systems that are prohibited by law from being used.

"The California Supreme Court has made clear that the absence of a record can be devastating for litigants who seek to appeal," said Presiding Judge Bunmi O. Awoniyi. "We must be able to use available tools, like electronic recording, to ensure fair access to justice—especially for those who cannot afford a private court reporter."

While the court strongly supports efforts to recruit and retain certified shorthand reporters, AB 882 contains harmful provisions that would:

- Forbid courts from using ER in most civil proceedings unless litigants provide advance written notice—an unrealistic requirement for many, especially self-represented parties.
- Impose hiring rules that override courts' discretion and invite costly litigation.
- Prohibit reassignment of court reporters even when urgent coverage is needed in criminal cases.
- Ban the use of ER in criminal proceedings altogether, despite existing court orders that allow its limited use when no reporter is available.

"Electronic recording doesn't replace court reporters—it's a safety net when none are available," said Judge Awoniyi. "Our priority is to ensure that all parties—especially those without resources—have a meaningful opportunity to appeal. AB 882, as written, works against that goal."

The Sacramento Superior Court urges lawmakers to amend AB 882 to remove unnecessary restrictions, preserve judicial discretion, and allow for the responsible use of ER technology. The court remains committed to partnering with the Legislature and other stakeholders to expand the court reporter workforce and uphold Californians' right to a complete and accessible record of their day in court.

###