

To: Our colleagues

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Date: June 22, 2017 (this letter is updated from the April 2017 version)

Re: Project Steno

Dear Colleague:

Our shared profession is in a death spiral: court reporters are retiring at five times the rate that new reporters enter the field. If we don't figure out how to get students into school and graduate them in a timely manner, our beloved profession will fade into history.

We have a plan to turn the tide – and we need your support!

The NCRA-commissioned Ducker Report of 2013 projected a nationwide shortage of 5,500 court reporters within five years, and it's happening now. The average age of an NCRA member is 54; for every 1,000 reporters who retire, only 200 new reporters enter the field.

We need to try something new. Right now. The plan we have formulated addresses the three barriers to achieving a sustainable rate of graduates into the field.

- First, the opportunity a career in court reporting (and captioning) affords a potential student is largely unknown to young people choosing a career path. Word-of-mouth recommendations and local advertising done by individual schools has proved inadequate.
- Second, many states are without bricks-and-mortar schools; no one is there to advertise for students. There are 243 million adults in the United States; 90 million of them are unemployed. If we can reach only a fraction of that talent pool, we can replenish our ranks.
- Third, cost. It's too expensive for many people who want to attend school, in large part because government funding of student loans for court reporting no longer exists.

Despite the best efforts of NCRA and schools, these barriers continue to exist. We are writing to you as a leader in our profession. We need your help to put our program into place.

Here's the plan.

- Create a national public awareness program to educate the public about the rewarding, well-paid career that court reporting represents. We must tell our story – and then make it possible for interested men and women to attend school.
- We will survey existing court reporter training programs and identify ones we consider to be successful. Candidates who pass our screening exam will be offered tuition assistance to any

one of those programs (in an amount not to exceed the *averaged cost* of the least expensive programs on our list).

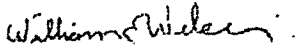
- To deliver this innovative program, we will create a nonprofit entity.
- Importantly, we will ask for your support and the support of all stakeholders in the preservation of this time-honored profession.

Now is the time for action. It's too late for half measures. We ask that you add your signature to ours as a proclamation of your commitment to save our profession. Thank you.



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Nancy Varallo, RDR, CRR, FAPR  
Past President, NCRA



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William E. Weber, RDR, CRR, FAPR  
Past President, NCRA



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James DeCrescenzo, RDR, CRR, FAPR, CLVS



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Glyn Poage, RDR, CRR, FAPR

**Yes, I understand the need and the urgency. You can count on my support.**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed name:** \_\_\_\_\_