



National Court Reporters Association
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Paul “Naganit” Wesselhöft
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Delivered Electronically

Re: *Hownikan* article “The shift from white collar to blue collar”

August 14, 2025

Dear Mr. Wesselhöft,

As a proud member of the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) and a certified court reporter in Oklahoma, I am writing in response to your recent article, "The shift from white collar to blue collar," published in the *Hownikan*, the Citizen Potawatomi Nation’s monthly tribal magazine. Your comment suggesting that AI-based recording systems can fully replace human court stenographers due to their ability to "instantly and accurately print out every word" prompted me to reach out. With the approval of the Oklahoma Court Reporters Association board, I wish to respectfully address this misconception and emphasize the indispensable role of NCRA-certified court reporters in ensuring judicial integrity for both state and tribal court systems, including those of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation.

As guardians of the official record, certified court reporters bring far more to the judicial process than mere transcription. Our rigorous training and certifications, such as the Registered Professional Reporter (RPR) or Certified Realtime Reporter (CRR), equip us to produce verbatim transcripts with unmatched accuracy, capturing nuances that automated systems often miss. Unlike AI or automatic speech recognition technology, which can struggle with accents, overlapping speech, or complex legal terminology, human court reporters adapt in real time, clarifying inaudible remarks and ensuring the record’s precision. This is especially critical in tribal courts, where cultural sensitivity and adherence to tribal laws demand meticulous attention to detail to uphold due process and public trust.

Beyond accuracy, NCRA-certified court reporters adhere to a strict Code of Professional Ethics, ensuring impartiality, confidentiality, and professionalism — qualities technology cannot replicate. We provide real-time transcription, allowing judges, attorneys, and parties immediate access to testimony, which is invaluable in fast-paced legal proceedings. In contrast, digital systems are prone to technical failures, cybersecurity risks, and errors, as highlighted in the NCRA’s white paper on the limitations of AI and digital recording in legal settings. For instance, [in high-profile cases like the Alex Murdaugh trial](#), courts have rejected digital transcripts for their unreliability, underscoring the need for human oversight.

The judicial systems of Oklahoma and Indian nations, including the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, rely on accurate and defensible records to administer justice fairly. Certified court reporters ensure compliance with federal, state, and tribal legal standards, safeguarding the integrity of proceedings that impact individual rights and tribal sovereignty. Replacing human reporters with AI risks undermining this foundation, as technology lacks the judgment and accountability required in



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complex legal environments. NCRA's advocacy resources further illustrate these concerns through studies and articles like "[Would You Let Siri Be Your Court Reporter?](#)"

As a former Oklahoma State Representative, you understand the importance of a reliable judicial system. I recall meeting you at a legislative meet-and-greet in the early 2000s, where we discussed the vital contributions of court reporters. I would be honored to continue that conversation and share how NCRA-certified professionals support justice in both state and tribal courts. NCRA offers resources, including presentations and videos, that I can provide to highlight our profession's value.

Thank you for your leadership within the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and for considering the critical role of certified court reporters in ensuring a fair and accurate judicial process. I look forward to your response and the opportunity to collaborate.

Sincerely,
Cassy Kerr, RPR, CRR, CRC,
Official federal court reporter, Oklahoma City, Okla.



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