



President's Message

Kristin Burke, LCR
TCRA President 2021-2022

As we come to the end of another year, I think we all hope we are better for the experiences it's brought us and the lessons we've learned along the way. Court reporting is definitely a career that can teach us something new with any given job/case. And as with all things, evolution is constantly occurring in the world of court reporting. If you keep up with current events in our profession, you know that there are some very concerned colleagues across the nation that are feeling the change in the air in regard to one of our most trusted companies, Stenograph, and other large court reporting firms who seem to be focusing in on electronic reporting formats instead of maintaining razor-sharp focus on stenographers. While I try to read and ingest as much information as I can on a subject before I speak on it or form a definite opinion, there always comes a point in time where it becomes clear what my position is or where my "line in the sand" gets drawn. I will always consider stenography the highest standard of capturing the record. Whatever software enhancements come along to help us stenographers do what we do best, I appreciate and applaud those developments when new technologies can be utilized to aid us.

As I stated in my last President's Message, I am not diminishing the job that qualified electronic reporters do here in Tennessee. What is concerning to me are the number of out-of-state ERs I see obtaining licensure here and the way in which large court reporting companies and product suppliers are advertising and promoting electronic reporting instead of stenographers or voice writers. If you are concerned about this issue, as well as other issues facing our profession, and you would like more information or first-time information, look into the [Protect Your Record Project](#), Inc.

Another area of great concern are the instances of contracting in our state. We are a no contracting state, but it seems to be happening more and more and the frustration grows when long-time clients tell you they cannot use your services because they are directed by their client to call an out-of-state or national firm. Almost all of these national CR firms are not located in Tennessee which means they send out e-mails asking for coverage from the local area of the job. This is another "line in the sand" area to consider. To coin a phrase from a trusted friend and colleague: Do you want to build someone else's business in your own backyard? Better yet, do you want to perpetuate the instances of contracting in our state whether stipulations are made by the attorneys or not? It takes each of us to combat this problem and it takes a monetary sacrifice on our part to do so sometimes.

No one can predict the future or know exactly where the evolution of our profession is going to take us, but while we have a voice, an opinion, and a say-so, please do not be shy about where your "line in the sand" is. Being a part of this association and NCRA is incredibly important now more than ever. The greater our number, the louder voice we have against those that threaten our profession. I am not sure what the solutions are to the issues our profession is facing, but the ethical questions of the issues have the easiest answers for me.