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Date 2-9-05
SB 355

SENATE BILL 355

An Act Revising the Payment of Transcript Fees to Court Reporters in Criminal Cases

Thank you, Chairman. Good morning, Senators.

My name is Stephanie Ahrens. I am the President of the Montana Court Reporters Association and an Official Court Reporter with the Fourth Judicial District Court.

I am here today in support of SB 355.

Stenographic court reporters across the state of Montana provide the State and Court with technologically-advanced equipment. This equipment allows judges to view realtime, the instantaneous translation of speech to text. Realtime helps maintain efficiency in the courtroom by allowing judges to review testimony quickly. It further allows a hard-of-hearing judge access to testimony in a text format.

This technology has been brought to Montana by court reporters using transcript fees to acquire that technology. Without transcript fees, court reporters cannot afford to supply this valuable equipment.

Therefore, I urge you to pass SB 355.

Thank you.