

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 8, 2021

Ted Cominos
Circuit Executive
Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals
John Minor Wisdom United States Court of Appeals Building
600 Camp Street
New Orleans, LA 70130

Dear Mr. Cominos,

We write to request information regarding the Circuit's ongoing and continued live streaming of proceedings. As you know the livestreaming of court proceedings has broad bipartisan support in Congress. There is a strong support to ensure this level of transparency continues.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic all 13 federal Circuit Courts have allowed the livestreaming of oral arguments, ensuring the public has real-time access to courtrooms in spite of social distancing protocols. The U.S. Supreme Court has also allowed for live audio streaming of oral arguments since May, 2020.

Even before the accommodations adopted for the pandemic, several Circuit Courts allowed live access to oral arguments: the D.C. Circuit (audio access) and Ninth Circuit (video) for all arguments, the second and fourth Circuits (both audio) on various occasions.

Live audio and or video streaming has allowed for a greater level of transparency within our Judicial branch and livestreaming during the pandemic has been a demonstration of the courts' ability to give greater access to the public.

In order to better understand your livestreaming operations, please respond to these questions:

1. Has your court established live audio streaming of arguments during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. And what issues if any have you faced in implementing this policy?
3. Would your court consider allowing live audio streaming of arguments post-pandemic?
4. Would your court consider allowing the live video streaming of arguments post-pandemic?
5. What help would your court require to enable live audio and or video streaming of arguments post-pandemic?

Thank you for your urgent consideration of this request and your commitment to provide public access and transparency of court proceedings.

Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress
11th District, Virginia



Mike Quigley
Member of Congress
5th District, Illinois