

**COURTHOUSE NEWS SERVICE**

30 N. Raymond, Third Floor, Pasadena CA 91103, (626) 577-6700, [home@courthousenews.com](mailto:home@courthousenews.com)

October 1, 2021

Pamela Q. Harris  
State Court Administrator  
Maryland Judicial Center  
187 Harry S. Truman Parkway  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Ms. Harris,

I am the editor of Courthouse News Service, a national news service that publishes a daily news page at [courthousenews.com](http://courthousenews.com) as well as daily reports on new litigation and new appellate rulings which are subscribed to by law firms and the media.

I know that the Maryland courts are in the process of completing a statewide move to electronic filing. In light of that move, I am writing to respectfully ask for a press queue in those e-filing courts, so the Maryland press corps can timely review and report on newly filed civil complaints, a traditional source of news.

News has a short shelf life, and late stories either get less coverage or no coverage. Like bread, news quickly turns stale. With electronic filing, it's highly practicable to provide the press with access to new public civil complaints when they are received, when they are fresh.

Tyler Technologies installs a Press Review Queue for those court clients that request it. The press queue is an application that the company has already developed and is installed without any extra charge. It requires little more than filling out a form that designates public case types. Based on presentations made by Tyler, the Press Review Queue can be installed in two to four weeks.

The press queue allows members of the media to report on new filings when they have just been filed, when they are still fresh. Over the years, a number of states have set up such press queues, some voluntarily as part of electronic rollout, some when asked by us or other members of the press corps, and some when prompted by or the result of litigation.

The basic operation of an e-filing system is common to all courts. A lawyer sends a new civil complaint across the court's virtual counter to be received by an "e-file manager," software that vets the filing automatically and sends it on to a clerk review queue. The press queue is a practical way to allow journalists to see new public filings after they are received, while they sit in the clerk's queue waiting to be processed into the court's docket.

Tyler courts in Georgia, Nevada and California have installed press review queues and provide excellent access that remains consistent despite budget problems, staff shortages, and courthouse closures due to bad weather.

On-receipt access to new civil complaints in courts across the country is not limited to Tyler courts. State courts in Connecticut, New York and Hawaii provide the same on-receipt access through in-house systems, without leasing software.

Among state courts that are leasing software, Utah uses Tybera to provide on-receipt access to new civil actions. Alabama does the same, through OLIS. The biggest court in the nation, Los Angeles Superior, gives on-receipt access through yet another software company, Journal Technologies. Orange County Superior next door has recently agreed to set up an on-receipt press queue through a state-owned software called CCMS. And Arizona officials have just last week also agreed to install a press queue providing on-receipt access through Granicus.

Federal courts, including the District of Maryland, provide on-receipt access to efiled complaints through the PACER system.

It should be noted that almost all these courts provide on-receipt access while keeping controls in place. They require a press queue username and password and in many cases a modest subscription fee, in order to gain access to the press review queue. We support those control measures.

While there are variations in how all these courts go about providing the press queue access, the timing does not vary: it is on receipt, when the news in the new filings is fresh.

I would be happy to answer any questions you might have on the press queues and meet with you via teleconference. In conclusion I would respectfully ask that you provide the Maryland media with a Press Review Queue that will allow journalists to see the new filings when they are received, which I believe is when the right of access attaches under the First Amendment.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Girdner', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Bill Girdner  
Courthouse News Service  
[bgirdner@courthousenews.com](mailto:bgirdner@courthousenews.com)  
626 577 6700

cc Heather Goldman, Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP

**COURTHOUSE NEWS SERVICE**

30 N. Raymond, Third Floor, Pasadena CA 91103, (626) 577-6700, [home@courthousenews.com](mailto:home@courthousenews.com)

October 1, 2021

Scott Poyer  
Clerk of Court  
Anne Arundel County  
8 Church Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Mr. Poyer,

I am the editor of Courthouse News Service, a national news service that publishes a daily news page at [courthousenews.com](http://courthousenews.com) as well as daily reports on new litigation and new appellate rulings, which are subscribed to by law firms and the media.

I am writing to respectfully ask that your office provide a press queue so the Maryland press corps can timely review and report on newly filed civil complaints, a traditional source of news.

News has a short shelf life, and late stories either get less coverage or no coverage. Like bread, news quickly turns stale. With electronic filing, it's highly practicable to provide the press with access to new public civil complaints when they are received, when they are fresh.

Tyler Technologies installs a Press Review Queue for those court clients that request it. The press queue is an application that the company has already developed and is installed without any extra charge. It requires little more than filling out a form that designates public case types. Based on presentations made by Tyler, the Press Review Queue can be installed in two to four weeks.

The press queue allows members of the media to report on new filings when they have just been filed, when they are still fresh. Over the years, a number of states have set up such press queues, some voluntarily as part of electronic rollout, some when asked by us or other members of the press corps, and some when prompted by or the result of litigation.

The basic operation of an e-filing system is common to all courts. A lawyer sends a new civil complaint across the court's virtual counter to be received by an "efile manager," software that vets the filing automatically and sends it on to a clerk review queue. The press queue is a practical way to allow journalists to see new public filings after they are received, while they sit in the clerk's queue waiting to be processed into the court's docket.

Tyler courts in Georgia, Nevada and California have installed press review queues and provide excellent access that remains consistent despite budget problems, staff shortages, and courthouse closures due to bad weather.

On-receipt access to new civil complaints in courts across the country is not limited to Tyler courts. State courts in Connecticut, New York and Hawaii provide the same on-receipt access through in-house systems, without leasing software.

Among state courts that are leasing software, Utah uses Tybera to provide on-receipt access to new civil actions. Alabama does the same, through OLIS. The biggest court in the nation, Los Angeles Superior, gives on-receipt access through yet another software company, Journal Technologies. Orange County Superior next door has recently agreed to set up an on-receipt press queue through a state-owned software called CCMS. And Arizona officials have just last week also agreed to install a press queue providing on-receipt access through Granicus.

Federal courts, including the District of Maryland, provide on-receipt access to efiled complaints through the PACER system.

It should be noted that almost all these courts provide on-receipt access while keeping controls in place. They require a press queue username and password and in many cases a modest subscription fee, in order to gain access to the press review queue. We support those control measures.

While there are variations in how all these courts go about providing the press queue access, the timing does not vary: it is on receipt, when the news in the new filings is fresh.

I would be happy to answer any questions you might have on the press queues and meet with you at your convenience via teleconference. In conclusion, I would respectfully ask that you provide the Maryland media with a Press Review Queue that will allow journalists to see the new filings when they are received, which I believe is when the right of access attaches under the First Amendment.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Girdner", with a long, sweeping horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bill Girdner  
Editor  
Courthouse News Service  
[bgirdner@courthousenews.com](mailto:bgirdner@courthousenews.com)  
626 577 6700

cc Heather Goldman, Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP