

October 31, 2018

The Honorable Bob Goodlatte  
Chair  
U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler  
Ranking Member  
U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary

Dear Chairman Goodlatte and Ranking Member Nadler:

We, the following 11 organizations, write in support of H.R. 6714, the Electronic Court Records Reform Act of 2018. The legislation will improve the federal courts' electronic records system, enabling greater access to court records and bringing increased efficiency and transparency to the courts.

The bill consolidates the Case Management/Electronic Case Files (CM/ECF) system and requires that all documents in the system be searchable, machine-readable, and available to the public and to parties before the court free of charge. The bill includes protections for private information, requiring the courts to redact any information prohibited from public disclosure.

The bill introduction follows the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet February 2017 hearing, "Judicial Transparency and Ethics," during which Professor Thomas R. Bruce testified about the importance of improving the Public Access to Courts Electronic Records (PACER) system. Our organizations are pleased H.R. 6714 addresses several of the issues raised during the hearing, including PACER's fees for access to case materials and the federal courts' current compartmentalized electronic records system.

We are pleased to support H.R. 6714, and we respectfully request the Committee to consider the bill as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

American Association of Law Libraries  
American Civil Liberties Union  
American Library Association  
Association of Research Libraries  
Data Coalition  
Demand Progress  
Government Information Watch  
GovTrack.us  
National Security Archive  
Open the Government  
R Street Institute