



IL

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ASSOCIATION

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ad infinitum

SUMMER

2018

## President's Message



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### Don't forget to Renew Your Membership!

Now is the time to renew your membership and you can do so online by simply clicking on this link:

**Renew Now!**

*Don't let your membership expire at the end of June!*

It's an understatement to say that a lot has been going on in your ILCRA organization since the last issue!

- The board has met and is in the process of formulating a strategic plan to bring ILCRA to more activity, vibrancy, and influence.

- Vice President Deborah Cohen-Rojas represented Illinois at NCRA's Legislative Boot Camp, as well as in a meeting with NCRA's executive director Marcia Ferranto and other state leaders.

- ILCRA board members represented in STAR.

- Legislation was introduced proposing that continuing education requirements be reduced, and that the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation be allowed to use electronic recording, rather than stenographers, to be the official record of their hearings.

- We are appointing a new Treasurer due to Deborah Cohen-Rojas's advancement to Vice President.

And of course ...

- SB2965, the bill to include voice writing as a means of taking the record in Illinois. I've written an in-depth article on this, and it is in this newsletter.

First, save the date of September

20-22 in Oak Brook at the DoubleTree Hotel for our annual convention, themed this year as we "Boldly Go" into Infinity and Beyond! Alan Peacock, RMR, CRC is on deck to be our main presenter. Plus we have Tori Pittman, RDR, FAPR, who will give a demonstration of voice writing and be available for questions. Our Friday night party will be science-fiction themed, so bring your costume!

Next, we thank Andrea James for her service on the ILCRA board. She entered a new phase of life and decided to step down from board service. We wish her well. She's been a wonderful asset to ILCRA during her time on the board, and we are thankful for her service.

Since the vacancy of Vice President happened between conventions, the board has appointed Deborah Cohen-Rojas to finish the term as your new Vice President, and she's done a stellar job so far! She's related her experiences at this year's NCRA Legislative Boot Camp in this issue.

So now this leaves a vacancy for the office of Treasurer, and we're in

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For a listing of all **committees and current committee members**

[CLICK HERE](#)

## What ILCRA Does for Illinois Reporters

- **Works** to maintain your right to be certified.
- **Monitors, promotes, and lobbies** to pass legislation favorable to the interest of court reporters, captioners and CART providers.
- **Monitors** legislation affecting our professions on a statewide and national basis through both our Legislative Committee and our lobbyist.
- **Sponsors** an annual conference and one-day seminars including continuing education and the latest in reporting technology.
- **Publishes** *Ad Infinitum*, a quarterly online newsletter containing the newest up-to-the-minute reporting developments throughout the state, highlights of board meetings, advertisements of vendors and agency owners, and names and telephone numbers of ILCRA officers.
- **Serves** as an affiliated state unit of the [National Court Reporters Association](#).
- **Offers** members significantly reduced rates for the conventions and seminars.
- **Awards** Student Scholarships, a Distinguished Service Award, an Award of Excellence for an Outstanding Educator, and conducts [speed contests](#) each year.
- **Provides** resources on the ILCRA website, including the CSR Act, Court Reporters' Act, Rules and Regulations of the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation, Transcript Act, and ILCRA Bylaws. It also includes officers' names and contact information as well as Committees and Committee Members. ILCRA Member Information is included on the website under "Find a Reporter."
- **Offers** an Online Student Mentor Program.
- **Promotes** student recruitment.
- **Organizes** letter-writing campaigns on issues affecting our professions.
- **Sends** representative members to legislative boot camps, leadership conferences, and the national convention for training and education.
- **Provides** reporters for demonstrations on request and attends career days throughout the state.
- **Provides** free CART brochures to its members.
- **Provides** a court reporters network through Constant Contact which allows ILCRA to immediately be in touch with members via email.
- **Serves** the membership with the phone number 703-729-4861 and a [website](#).
- **Provides** an association management company to assist members.

## ILCRA MISSION STATEMENT

***To maintain standards of excellence in verbatim shorthand reporting, to provide continuing educational opportunities and advocate technological advancements, and to promote a spirit of mutual assistance between the profession of verbatim shorthand reporting and its consumers.***

## President's Message

Continued from front page

the process of confirming the next candidate. Thankfully the lion's share of the bookwork is handled by our Executive Director and his firm, so the new Treasurer will get up to speed quickly.

STAR, the Society for the Technological Advancement of Reporting, met in Chicago, and several of your board members represented ILCRA in the Exhibit Hall at this event. This was a wonderful opportunity to network with other tech-minded reporters from across the country.

Your board met on April 7 in Peoria and had a full plate. In the morning we began to work on our strategic plan. We identified specific areas that could use improvement and activity, and we'll be finalizing our plans during the next few months. ILCRA is a strong state association, and we will make it stronger. Expect exciting things to happen!

At noon we observed a voice writing demonstration hosted by

Maranda Murphy, president of the National Verbatim Reporters Association, and including Elizabeth Kavelman, president of the Illinois Verbatim Reporters Association. We were able to see real-time voice writing firsthand, and we had several questions about the bill as well as voice writing skills and technology. After much discussion, we still have questions and concerns, and thus decided that we cannot support the bill itself at this time, but that does not mean we oppose it either. That's why we've sent a survey to all of you, so we can better represent you in this matter.

Finally, one piece of current legislation that we oppose is SB 3396. This bill would allow the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation not only the option to record their hearings electronically rather than stenographically (they cite the reporter shortage as a reason why they seek this option), but also reduce continuing education requirements for certain professions covered under the IDFPR, including court reporting. (HB 5207, its House counterpart, was entered, but the

bill failed.)

I don't know about you, but I don't like the idea of any of us, or my cosmetologist, or my funeral director, or environmental health practitioners being able to say "I've learned all I need to know now, thanks." Be sure your state senators know of your opposition to SB 3396. Find more information at <http://www.ilga.gov>. Use the search box on the left to find the bill.

So this quarter we're looking forward to finalizing our strategic plan to turbocharge your ILCRA organization, representing Illinois at the National Committee of State Associations at the NCRA convention, preparing for our own 2018 convention, and of course working through the pending legislation in Springfield.

We can do this because of our membership. All of Illinois will benefit when YOU are a member of ILCRA. Encourage your colleagues to join ILCRA and be a part of helping the court reporting and captioning professions to thrive in Illinois!

~ Kathryn Thomas, RDR, CRC, CSR

## Teacher Appreciation Week – May 7-11, 2018

By Bernie Radavich CPE

ILCRA would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for all that our court reporting instructors do to teach, train, support, and mentor the students who are the future of the profession. Thank you for your continued dedication and commitment to increasing our ranks!



# 2018 ILCRA ANNUAL CONVENTION

September 20-22

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ILCRA Board Meeting

Friday Evening Party

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- Harnessing the Warp Power of the Web – Kwhamec Rojas
- Let's Talk Steno: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly – Donna Urlaub
- Out of This World Macros! – Alan Peacock
- Mirror, Mirror – We Are More Alike than Different – Tori Pittman
- Interstellar Captioning as a Career – Alan Peacock
- State of the Court Reporting Empire – Jessica Nardulli

*Register now for the Early Bird pricing!*

[www.ilcra.org](http://www.ilcra.org)



# To Infinity and Beyond! 2018 ILCRA Convention Registration Now Open!

Register [HERE](#)

The ILCRA Board of Directors has once again come up with a stellar lineup for the 2018 ILCRA convention which will be held on September 20-22, 2018 at the DoubleTree hotel in Oak Brook, IL.

The theme for this year's conference will be "To Infinity and Beyond: Taking your skills to the next level." This best in value CEU opportunity will focus on some of the nation's best speakers who help court reporters, captioners and CART providers hone their skills and help with productivity. In addition, we will be having some demonstrations of other technologies, CAT training and even a seminar on being a remote official.

The ILCRA Board has also revived the Friday night party and we will be rolling out the red carpet just for you! Bring your dancing shoes, themed costumes, or glitzy outfit with your smile for what is sure to be an out of world experience!

Here are a few of the highlights of the high-quality seminars you can look forward to.

- **CAT User Training**
- **In a Galaxy Far, Far Away...You Too Can Write Remotely – Judy Lehman**
- **Harnessing the Warp Power of the Web – Kwhamec Rojas**
- **Let's Talk Steno: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly - Donna Urlaub (Bring your writer to get the most out of this fun and informative session.)**
- **Out of This World Macros! – Alan Peacock**
- **Mirror, Mirror – We Are More Alike than Different - Tori Pittman**
- **Interstellar Captioning as a Career - Alan Peacock**
- **State of the Court Reporting Empire – Jessica Nardulli (Brown Hay and Stephens, LLP)**

Please also consider registering for the Speed and Realtime Contests. The more the merrier!

## Register now for Early Bird pricing!

We have a very limited supply of rooms since we got such a great rate so get yours before they are gone! You can find that information on the ILCRA website as well.

## Nominate deserving members and students for ILCRA's highest awards

Each year, ILCRA asks you to nominate some of your fellow colleagues and students to receive ILCRA's awards given out at the annual convention. Specifically, there are three awards that are given out to worthy candidates: the ILCRA student scholarship, the Distinguished Service Award, and the Award of Excellence that is given to an outstanding educator. Please nominate a worthy person for these great awards.

You can go to [www.ilcra.org](http://www.ilcra.org) to find the forms or simply click on the links here.

[Student Scholarship](#)

[Distinguished Service Award](#)

[Award of Excellence](#)

## 2018-2019 ILCRA Board Nominations

Nominations are also open for two seats on the Board. Please consider nominating someone to help lead the ILCRA Board. The current open seats are for a Region Two Freelance and Official Director positions. For more information, please click [here](#).

Giving back to your profession is one of the best things you can do to further the association. Thank you for your consideration.

## Notification of the next ILCRA Board meeting

The ILCRA Board will be having their annual meeting on September 20 from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the DoubleTree hotel in Oak Brook, IL. Members are welcome to attend.

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OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS

# Attendance at “The New” NCRA Legislative Boot Camp

By Deborah Cohen-Rojas, RPR, CRR

Late last year I was asked by the ILCRA Board to attend NCRA’s Boot Camp in Washington, D.C. from March 11th to March 13th, 2018. Being relatively new to Board service (I had served one term as Secretary and was only made Treasurer last September), I viewed it as a great opportunity to gain more knowledge about how to be a more effective leader.

When I arrived for an informal dinner the night before Boot Camp to prepare for an early meeting the next morning with Marcia Ferranto, NCRA’s new Executive Director and CEO, I will have to admit to feeling a little intimidated by the caliber of people I was sharing the room with. Some of the attendees at the meeting included current state association Presidents and Vice Presidents, along with a few past NCRA Presidents, as well. We had gathered to discuss issues we wanted to address with Ms. Ferranto, which included NCRA’s policy on contracting, NCRA’s stance on assistance with and response to outstanding matters that are facing state associations, improving communication between NCRA and its headquarters with states and membership, and a lack of clarity about NCRA’s new vision.

Some of the members that attended the meeting on Sunday morning with Ms. Ferranto and Matt Barusch included, among others, Sarah Nageotte, Doug Bettis, Kelly Linkowski, Bruce Matthews, and Carol Naughton. Even before the official Boot Camp had begun, the members of this meeting shed a lot of light on the issues facing our profession.

The issues discussed were of a sensitive and sometimes controversial nature, and attending this meeting helped me to achieve an equally important, if inadvertent, education. One of the most difficult skills to learn is grace under pressure, as well as the ability to effectively communicate when tensions are high. I would like to thank and congratulate the attendees of this meeting for maintaining a professional demeanor while

refusing to sacrifice the integrity of their message. Some of the most important lessons come from example, and the influence of these leaders was inspiring.

The first day of Boot Camp provided the backdrop and outlines of what we hoped to take away from our time in D.C. Matt Barusch, NCRA’s State Government Relations Manager, presented Politics 101, a baseline understanding of American politics and how legislation is made. NCRA President Chris Willette gave a rundown on the state of court reporting and how to stay informed about the most recent developments in the profession.

Next we met Cynthia Bruce Andrews, NCRA’s Senior Director of Certification and Education, who spoke with Matt Barusch about the importance of certification and how leaders at the state-level can advocate for certification in their individual areas. This seminar provided a perfect segue into a presentation from John Brandon, the Interim President of the Connecticut Court Reporters Association, who talked about his state’s recent loss of certification through the institution of unfortunate legislation. This was a grim but informative demonstration of just how valuable grassroots efforts can be, and attendees walked away with a new appreciation for the support of Political Action Committees.

The opening day of Boot Camp was concluded with a presentation by Jacqueline Sly, former State Representative for South Dakota, who talked in-depth about how to incorporate grassroots efforts into your overall leadership strategy. Ms. Sly relayed, through sharing personal experiences as well as professional knowledge, invaluable tips about the best way to communicate with legislators and members alike.

On Monday, March 12, the second day of Boot Camp, our first presenter was Shelley Row, a consultant, author, and professional speaker, who addressed the group on “Effective Decision Making in an Overthinking World.” Being an over-thinker/compulsive worrier myself since...well, birth, I found this seminar very helpful on a deep personal level. Ms. Row addressed how internal



conversations and becoming mired in over-analysis can sometimes paralyze us in a world that increasingly demands hard-line reactions and quick thinking. A description of the biological and neuroscientific reactions to such situations was given so that attendees can more readily recognize the actual, physical responses to such situations and more effectively navigate difficult decisions. Attendees learned techniques to address overthinking by resolving the forces that freeze decision-making.

On a personal note, this seminar couldn't have been better-timed, as I received an email from ILCRA's President, Kathryn Thomas, just that morning about filling a sudden vacancy in the Vice-President's position. The entire time I was sitting in a seminar about overthinking, this decision was in the back of my mind. Hearing Ms. Row address the perils of becoming frozen by self-doubt couldn't have been more appreciated than at that moment. Combined with the feedback I received from colleagues I met at Boot Camp, most of whom are

in president and vice-president positions in their own states, I was very grateful for the opportunity to meet Ms. Row, and I discovered the value of networking on a level I had never realized before.

Our final seminar that day was given by James Cool (yes, that IS his real name), Attorney at Law. You can't really help hating Mr. Cool just a little bit for having a way more fantastic name than pretty much anybody else on the planet, but you start forgiving him a little when you realize how steadfastly he supports court reporting. Mr. Cool discussed implementing effective programs in your state, which all comes down to how you communicate with people of influence. As the last topic presented before attendees began prepping for our day on the Hill, Mr. Cool had a lot of information to impart about how to appeal to individuals with varying political and moral philosophies. A breakdown was given about the differences between Republicans and Democrats and which way they lean on the moral/political/philosophical spectrums. Some very interesting books

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were recommended for further reading, and some very interesting conversations were had about Mr. Cool's ideas later while I had dinner with my new friends. Whether you agreed or not with Jimmy Cool, you certainly weren't going to forget what he had to say!

The entire afternoon of the second day of Boot Camp was given to prepare for and present mock hearings. We were broken into teams and given time to confer about how to convince a panel of "senators" – portrayed by presenters at Boot Camp who went out of their way to simulate actual conditions on the Senate floor by such measures as passing notes, taking phone calls during presentations, and arguing amongst themselves – to support realtime training funding that was up for renewal and had received bipartisan support in the past.

My group took a less-than-conventional approach by role playing. One member pretended to be an educator, another a student, another a captioner, and yet another a freelancer. My role on the team was to be a consumer of realtime. I pretended to be a woman I had provided realtime for in my courthouse after she had lost her hearing late in life and couldn't easily participate in her own divorce proceedings. It was a truly empowering experience, as my team managed to convince "Senator" Barusch to support our bill, a prize that was not lightly earned or readily given out. Even knowing that this was a mock hearing, I faced the following day on Capitol Hill with a confidence I could not have claimed when I first arrived in D.C.

The entire following day was spent on Capitol Hill talking to a variety of people about all matters court reporting. While we were given the central topic of funding for realtime training to address in our meetings, we were informed while traveling to the Hill that we could basically speak about any aspect of our professions we wanted to raise. The important thing was to improve awareness of court reporting and captioning and why a human presence in these professions is critical.

My partner for this day was the extraordinary Amanda Lundberg, a captioner based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I had a lot of fun picking Amanda's brain about captioning on the hour-long ride into D.C. from our hotel in Reston, Virginia, and I couldn't have asked for a better partner that day. We spent the day meeting with Congressional Fellows, Senior Policy Advisors, Education

Policy Advisors, Legislative Aides, and Legislative Correspondents from the offices of senators and representatives from our home states of Pennsylvania and Illinois. I felt very fortunate to get a meeting with Brad Schneider, the Representative from my very own district in Illinois. Mr. Schneider was duly impressed with all the information we gave him about what we do, and we were very pleased that he made the time to meet with us.

Amanda and I wrapped up a very long but rewarding day by rejoining the group at a wine and cheese reception that was hosted in the Madison Building of the Library of Congress for the Boot Camp participants. This reception was also given to honor the Veterans History Project, and a tour of the VHP facilities in the Jefferson Building was made available to those able to attend.

This brought to a close the NCRA 2018 Boot Camp. A lot of questions were asked of me by prior attendees to the Boot Camp about the changes in format that took place for the first time this year. Having never attended before, I can say that, while it certainly sounds like a very different experience to what went before, I did find it to be a positive experience. I was able to interact with people very high up in our national organization, to ask them questions and gain confidence in my new knowledge and ability to communicate. I spent time in the seat of our nation's government advocating for my profession – and feeling surprisingly relaxed and self-assured while doing it! I met amazing people that imparted their knowledge and helped me make a more informed decision about moving forward in my own state organization. I participated in discussions that will affect the future outcome of our profession's state and national associations.

Could communication have been improved among the organizers and attendees? Indeed. The format did seem a bit looser and less grounded than what was described to me in the past. There was some confusion about gathering times and places here and there. It was definitely apparent that this Boot Camp was a departure from a well-established norm. But on the whole, I'd say, after a logistical face-lift here and there, this Boot Camp has a lot of potential, and I certainly feel richer in experience, knowledge, and friendships for having attended.

# YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

## *Spread the word!*

Encourage someone you know to explore court reporting, captioning, and CART as a career. Ensuring that qualified reporters are in the field is the only way to protect the profession and to fight digital technologies from taking over our industry.

### Local Court Reporter Training Programs

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# Voice Writing

By Kathryn A. Thomas, RDR, CRC, CSR

Are you nervous? I am. Since my career began, I've not seen any issue so polarizing in the reporting community than the question of: Do we encourage/allow voice writers to be certified reporters or not? At this time there is NO plan to add certification in voice writing as criteria for inclusion in ILCRA professional membership. That's up to you, the members, because that would require a bylaw change.

The question of voice writing in Illinois re-emerged at the end of February, when a proposed bill was entered to add it as a shorthand method, licensable as an Illinois CSR. Many states already certify voice writers as well as stenographic writers. In fact, voice writers may legally provide court reporting services in 38 states as of this writing, and they may legally provide captioning services nationwide. The US military uses voice writing. Voice writing is used in Congress and at the United Nations.

The National Verbatim Reporters Association certifies voice writers, and their criteria is exactly that of NCRA's RPR: five minutes each of 225 wpm testimony, 200 jury charge, and 180 literary. Their CM test has the same requirements as the NCRA RMR. They also certify voice writers in realtime, at 180 words a minute at not only literary but also a leg each of jury charge and testimony, no editing allowed.

How serendipitous that I should caption a seminar about the concept of disruptive innovation immediately -- within an hour -- after I found out about the proposed bill. While voice writing is not a new innovation, it is a technology that has improved significantly within the last few years. Voice writers, using voice recognition software to take down every word said in a proceeding, can indeed provide real-time translation as well as live captioning. They can read back. They use briefs. It is no more simply "re-speaking" than we simply "type."

It is a technology that allows many with mobility

issues access to computer work. If someone were to suffer injury or disease that subsequently limits their dexterity, they could still capture every word spoken.

Voice writing and stenography have a common adversary -- using audio recording as the sole record. Voice writers don't want to see Illinois's 14 vacant official reporter positions (some of which have been unfilled for a long time) filled by electronic recording -- and those positions WILL be filled by electronic recording if they aren't staffed by a human being making note of every word. Some courts already use electronic recording in lieu of a live reporter. Many Illinois agency owners are having trouble covering their books, and that overflow WILL be covered by audio recording. Some of these overflow jobs already are. If there's not enough people to cover the jobs, then attorneys and judges must make do or suffer delays, and this is already the case.

Perhaps, some will say, the solution is towards getting more students into court reporting schools. Why not both? The Steno A to Z program is open for ANY ILCRA member to host and it is online now, so please check it out at [discoversteno.org](http://discoversteno.org) and start the process for introducing your friends, family, spouse's coworkers, anyone to the profession of court reporting. Volunteer for a career fair. Volunteer for an ILCRA committee. These are all things that can be done in addition to, not instead of, exploring the incorporation of voice writers into the CSR. Performing one strategy does not exclude other strategies.

Daniel Hamilton, our lobbyist, met with the bill's author Senator William Sam McCann less than two business days after ILCRA found out about its existence. As of this writing the Senator is submitting a shell bill to maintain compliance with deadlines, but he assures us it is only a placeholder until the bill is finalized.

The Illinois Verbatim Reporters Association, or ILVRA, an association of Illinois voice writers, has reached out to ILCRA to discuss the bill. Yes, voice writers are here, although they cannot be certified in





Illinois. They can provide captioning, they can work in federal court, and some writers work across the border in other states where they can legally practice as court reporters, such as Missouri and Wisconsin. There's not a lot of them, but they are here, and they want to be certified as court reporters.

ILVRA has criticisms of the bill as it stands, and they're working to clarify some of the language. The Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation is hesitant to amend the CSR Act before its sunset in 2025. ILCRA is keeping an eye on this bill and is in close communication with our lobbyists to ensure this bill doesn't endanger the CSR Act.

The American Association of Electronic Reporters and Transcribers has also learned about this bill, and they've been lobbying to have their members included. ILVRA insists that they will pull their support of this bill should AAERT succeed in including electronic reporting. They don't like electronic reporting any more than we do.

This bill may or may not pass; but if it doesn't pass, the question still stands. Voice writers aren't going away. They will try again.

ILVRA's request is to be included as a legitimate method of taking the record. The ILCRA board witnessed a voice writing demonstration at our strategic planning meeting this April, and we saw the realtime feed with our own eyes.

Tori Pittman, RDR and NCRA Fellow, uses both steno and voice methods. She learned voice writing so she could work during her intermittent disability. She will present a seminar at our annual convention this year about voice writing, so you will be able to see this for yourself and ask questions.

This isn't something the board takes lightly, pro or con. This is a big step for Illinois.

So the overarching question is: Is it time to acknowledge voice writers as guardians of the record?

Is voice writing an asset? Is this a way to start to help fill positions as we keep up our efforts to recruit

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more steno students? Has voice writing finally come of age, where it's as reliable and accurate as stenography?

Or are they a threat, endangering steno jobs? Except we're now into the gap predicted by NCRA's Ducker report, which forecasted 5,500 NEW reporting jobs by 2018. That is THIS YEAR. We're feeling the gap now. We've got unfilled jobs that NEED someone at the post, or the gap WILL be filled by electronic recording, and in some areas it already IS.

Missouri certifies both steno and voice, and it's working out very well for everyone. The inclusion of voice writing does NOT lead to subsequent extinction of steno. There's not even that many voice writers in Illinois -- ILVRA estimates there are only 17-18 voice writers in Illinois.

Is discriminating against voice writers ableist, should the writer be unable to write steno due to disability? If a member of our military transitions

to civilian life and wishes to continue practicing court reporting in Illinois, should we discriminate against them?

If I were to suffer injury, I'd pick up a copy of Dragon immediately. However, I'm a captioner, and neither my CRC certification nor my Illinois CSR is required to practice my profession.

I personally have a shelf life. Arthritis runs in my family, and my younger sister is already suffering from the symptoms. Like many other members of Generation X, as well as Millennials and Generation Y, retirement will be a rare luxury for us. The financial and economic world has changed in the last few decades. Pensions, except in some government jobs, are a thing of the past. Social security is due to run out the year I turn 67. I will need to work until I die, and my hands will not be able to use a steno machine soon, much less in 20 years. Should I forgo voice writing because it's not machine stenography? Do I go back to college and start from scratch in a completely different career?

If YOU were to suffer an arm or hand injury due to

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accident or disease, would you appreciate having a second method in which to work, and continue in the profession you love? Or would you leave behind the career you've built to start back at square one with no experience?

Many of us saw the movie Doctor Strange and sympathized with the titular protagonist, an expert surgeon who lost the precise use of his hands due to an accident, and thus the loss of his profession and livelihood. We are all in the same boat; we are ALL one accident or injury away from being unable to write steno.

However, is it worth all this legislation to add only 17 to 20 new reporters to Illinois? There's not a lot of voice writers out there. Is it worth the risk of opening up the Illinois CSR Act to add only a few more reporters?

There's also quality concerns. The representatives of NVRA who gave the demonstration assured us that voice writer training includes all the academics that steno training does, and their certifications are comparable; on the other hand, the promotional brochure they gave us for review had many typos, as well as language promoting voice writing as SUPERIOR to steno. That makes your ILCRA board very uncomfortable with supporting this endeavor, so we're withholding our endorsement at this time, unless you, the members, feel otherwise.

This issue is not simple. There are pros and cons both ways, but your ILCRA board needs to represent the members. Since this has popped up, I've heard from people passionately for inclusion and against inclusion. A survey has been sent out to all members through email. Please let us know what you think.

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## ad infinitum

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