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June 18, 2015

Joseph Stanton, Clerk
Massachusetts Appeals Court
One Pemberton Square – Room 200
Boston, MA 02108-1705.

Re: Trial Court Public Access to Court Records Committee

Dear Mr. Stanton:

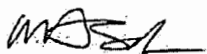
I'm writing in response to the Trial Court Public Access to Court Records Committee's interest in public comments regarding online access to Massachusetts court records. Many of the comments you receive may come from people in the legal community. I'm writing as someone from the business community who supports the same view.

My employer for 23 years, Fuld+Company (www.fuld.com) is a leading consulting firm in the field of competitive intelligence. Competitive intelligence is information about competitor's capabilities and intentions. It is a key element in developing both corporate strategy and tactics, and it is analogous to properly obtained scouting reports in the sports world.

In the course of our work, it has been very helpful to have access online to court records of lawsuits and judgements involving corporations. We have good access to federal filings (including online access to bankruptcy filings), but states and other countries vary in how much information they make available. As a state with an admirably strong open meeting law, one would expect that Massachusetts would have strong regulations or legislation in place making court records readily available both online on paper, but as you know, this is not yet the case.

Some corporations may prefer to limit access because they prefer not to have the public know that they have been involved in legal proceedings. That information has long been available in the form of paper records, and it should be available on line as well. Protecting corporations that have been involved in lawsuits and judgments in Massachusetts from public scrutiny puts other corporations with legitimate economic interests and the public at a disadvantage. I hope the Committee will consider the importance of access to court records related to businesses.

Sincerely yours,



Michael A. Sandman, Principal (Retired)
Fuld+Company Inc.