

UNITE HERE! LOCAL 26

33 Harrison Ave, 4th Floor • Boston, MA 02111 • Tel (617) 832-6699 • Fax (617) 426-7684

June 15, 2015

Joseph Stanton, Clerk
Massachusetts Appeals Court, Room 1200
One Pemberton Square
Boston, MA 02108-1705

RECEIVED
JUN 15 2015
APPEALS COURT

Re: Criminal Cases and Internet Access to Docket Entries and Court Files

To the Trial Court Public Access to Court Records Committee:

I am the President of UNITE HERE Local 26. We are the 7,000 member union that represents hotel workers and food service workers in the Boston area.

I oppose online access to criminal records from the trial court website because:

- Internet access to records will hurt countless people in communities of color and deepen poverty due to the racial disparities that exist in the criminal justice system.
- Internet release of criminal record information on the trial court website will make it harder for many unemployed people to get jobs because once information is released online, it has a life of its own and lives on forever;
- Internet release of information conflicts with our sealing laws that intend that sealing be available after 5 and 10 years, and permit sealing of non-convictions without waiting.
- Access to docket sheets online is contrary to our CORI laws which limit access to data based on the requestor's level of access, the type of disposition nature, and whether the charge was felony or misdemeanor;
- Launching of court records online is a mistake because court records often have errors;
- Provision of online data will fuel the large industry of criminal background checking companies that already produce reports that are out of date, contain errors and/or fail to comply with consumer protection laws;
- Cyberbullying is not uncommon and open access would give abusive people the ability to send links to the court website to an employer to harass former defendants, including but not limited to individuals, who were misidentified or falsely accused, or later have their criminal records expunged.

I can be reached at 617-832-6620.

Sincerely,


Brian Lang

Henry C. Green
Financial Secretary-Treasurer

Brian Lang
President

Carlos Aramayo
Director of Organizing

