

TESTIMONY

Of

MICHAEL DOYLE

On


ELECTRONIC ACCESS TO COURT RECORDS

As one of the largest users of FOAA in the State of Maine it has been my experience that the more damning the facts the greater the resistance is to provide the data.

The Maine taxpayers signed on to this scheme and voted a 15 million dollar outlay to gain access to court records. Not to computerize a system to make it easier for lawyers to access the data and for the people paying for it to drive to the courthouse, such as Bridgeton to Portland or Fort Kent to wherever. If the Lawyers want exclusive use of the 15 million dollar system their Bar Association should pay the bonds and the interest on them and assess the members enough fees to cover the costs.

Otherwise the current recommendations should be discarded for cause and the public should be given the opportunity to register as a user and buy pages at will. If any misuse takes place identify the user and assess whatever penalty is needed.

You have to wonder what the reason is that supports less access to public records instead of more access.



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