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February 4, 2019

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building

Dear Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Feinstein,

We write to you today in support of the *Electronic Court Records Reform Act*, a bill sponsored by the ranking member of this committee, and the legacy of H.R. 6714 in the 115th Congress. The scholars of the R Street Institute's Program on Judicial Governance emphasize the need for our judicial system's institutional stability, transparency, accessibility and efficiency. These are the standards by which we both vet and endorse policy. When measured by these standards, the *Electronic Court Records Reform Act* has earned our endorsement.

As you may know, the *Electronic Court Records Reform Act* modernizes our nation's approach to court accessibility by guaranteeing free public access to federal court records through the Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER) system. In addition to fulfilling PACER's promise to offer its resources for true 'public access', this legislation would significantly improve the research efficiency of legal professionals and the general public by consolidating the Case Management/Electronic Case Files (CM/ECF) system. The efficiency of such legal professionals and other users would be further improved by modernizing the database to be easily and uniformly searchable across the entire court system—a change that would also greatly increase transparency and accountability.

This *Electronic Court Records Reform Act* promotes public access to the law—a vital, fundamental aspect of our democracy. We encourage your support and co-sponsorship of this bill, which promises to bring greater transparency and efficiency to American democracy.

Sincerely,

The R Street Institute, Program on Judicial Governance