



June 3, 2013

Col. Denise Lind
Chief Judge, 1st Judicial Circuit
US Army Military District of Washington
Office of the Staff Judge Advocate
103 Third Avenue S.W., Suite 100
Ft. McNair, DC 20319

Maj. Gen. Michael S. Linnington
US Army Military District of Washington
Office of the Staff Judge Advocate
103 Third Ave. S.W., Suite 100
Ft. McNair, DC 20319

To the Honorable Colonel Denise Lind and Maj. Gen. Michael S. Linnington,

We, the undersigned news organizations, respectfully request the Military District of Washington (MDW) media desk issue two press passes to allow professional court stenographers access to the media room so they can transcribe the public portions of the court martial of Bradley Manning.

Over 350 news organizations requested credentials to cover the court martial. On Thursday, the MDW media desk issued credentials to just 70 news organizations, leaving more than 280 of our colleagues unable to cover the trial and serve the public interest.

Public and press access to court proceedings is a hallmark of democracy in the United States. In an unusual move, the government has not provided the press with copies of transcripts or court rulings of the pre-trial portions of the Manning case, and we are concerned that this lack of access to the court proceedings will continue during the upcoming trial.

In an attempt to serve the public's right to know, more than 1,000 citizens have donated more than \$58,000 to Freedom of the Press Foundation to fund stenographers to sit in the media room to transcribe the unclassified portions of the trial. These transcripts will be identified as "unofficial," and will be available to both the press and general public.

The stenographers would serve a similar function as a pool sketch artist, allowing the public a window into a trial of newsworthy significance.

Coalition letter regarding media access to the Bradley Manning trial

Three media organizations—Forbes, the Guardian, and the Verge—each applied for an extra slot for media credentials so that a court stenographer could attend along with their reporters. The applications for additional slots were denied.

Broadcasting the trial in an appropriately-sized overflow theater would allow every organization that applied for a press pass to cover the proceedings. At the minimum, we urge you to issue two additional press passes in order to allow the court stenographers to attend.

If they are denied, over 280 of our colleagues who applied for credentials will not be able to report on the trial, and the public, which is closely watching this case, will be less able to understand the process and decisions made by this court.

Sincerely,

Freedom of the Press Foundation
Atlantic Media, Inc.
Belo Corporation
Bloomberg News
Boing Boing
Courthouse News
Forbes Inc.
Fox News Network LLC
The Guardian
The Huffington Post
Los Angeles Times
The McClatchy Company
The New Yorker
NPR, Inc.
The Online News Association
POLITICO LLC
Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press
The Verge
Wired