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SCOTX to Hold Hearing on Uniform E-Filing System

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This afternoon at 2:00, the Texas Supreme Court will hold a public hearing to explore the feasibility of a statewide uniform system for electronic court filings. The hearing will take place in the Supreme Court Courtroom and will be [webcast live here](#).

The Court is considering whether Texas ought to implement a system modeled to some degree after Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER), the federal courts' electronic document portal. In conjunction with the Case Management-Electronic Case Filing (CM-ECF) feature, PACER allows litigants to file documents electronically at no charge, 24 hours a day. Parties and the public may access the docket online and may view and download listed documents for a fee.

Followers of this blog know that [I have advocated e-filing for years](#) and have [watched closely](#) as our state e-filing processes have developed. Texas has made great strides in this area, but the current system is far from perfect. PACER/CM-ECF has its flaws too, but it has been implemented successfully in federal trial and appellate courts and provides a reference point to something other than the state courts' filing-fee driven model.

A system that is not fee-based at the filing stage would level the playing field for everyone with access to a computer and an internet connection, and a uniform approach to e-filing and online document access would be inherently valuable. We should applaud the Supreme Court for considering the need for and benefits of a uniform system and for taking the initiative to gather more information about the options going forward.