

## S 410

### Sunshine in the Courtroom Act of 2011

**Congress:** 112 (2011–2013, Ended)

**Chamber:** Senate

**Policy Area:** Law

**Introduced:** Feb 17, 2011

**Current Status:** Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Administrative Oversight and the Courts. Hearings held.

**Latest Action:** Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Administrative Oversight and the Courts. Hearings held. (Dec 6, 2011)

**Official Text:** <https://www.congress.gov/bill/112th-congress/senate-bill/410>

### Sponsor

**Name:** Sen. Grassley, Chuck [R-IA]

**Party:** Republican • **State:** IA • **Chamber:** Senate

### Cosponsors (7 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Cornyn, John [R-TX]	R · TX		Feb 17, 2011
Sen. Durbin, Richard J. [D-IL]	D · IL		Feb 17, 2011
Sen. Graham, Lindsey [R-SC]	R · SC		Feb 17, 2011
Sen. Klobuchar, Amy [D-MN]	D · MN		Feb 17, 2011
Sen. Leahy, Patrick J. [D-VT]	D · VT		Feb 17, 2011
Sen. Schumer, Charles E. [D-NY]	D · NY		Feb 17, 2011
Sen. Blumenthal, Richard [D-CT]	D · CT		Mar 31, 2011

### Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Judiciary Committee	Senate	Hearings By (subcommittee)	Dec 6, 2011

### Subjects & Policy Tags

#### Policy Area:

Law

### Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
112 HR 5163	Related bill	May 18, 2012: Referred to the Subcommittee on Courts, Commercial and Administrative Law.
112 HR 2802	Related bill	Aug 25, 2011: Referred to the Subcommittee on Courts, Commercial and Administrative Law.

**(This measure has not been amended since it was introduced. The summary has been expanded because action occurred on the measure.)**

Sunshine in the Courtroom Act of 2011 - Authorizes the presiding judge of a U.S. appellate court or U.S. district court to permit the photographing, electronic recording, broadcasting, or televising to the public of court proceedings over which that judge presides, except when such action would constitute a violation of the due process rights of any party.

Directs: (1) a district court, upon the request of any witness in a trial proceeding other than a party, to order the face and voice of the witness to be disguised or otherwise obscured to render the witness unrecognizable to the broadcast audience of the trial proceeding; and (2) the presiding judge in a trial proceeding to inform each witness who is not a party of the right to make such request. Allows a presiding judge to obscure the face and voice of an individual if good cause is shown that photographing, electronic recording, broadcasting, or televising such features would threaten the individual's safety, the court's security, the integrity of future or ongoing law enforcement operations, or the interest of justice.

Prohibits a presiding judge from permitting the photographing, electronic recording, broadcasting, or televising of any juror in a trial proceeding, or of the jury selection process.

Terminates a district court's authority under this Act three years after enactment of this Act.

Authorizes the Judicial Conference of the United States to promulgate advisory guidelines to which a presiding judge may refer in making decisions regarding the management and administration of photographing, recording, broadcasting, or televising described in this Act.

Requires the Judicial Conference to promulgate mandatory guidelines which a presiding judge must follow for obscuring certain vulnerable witnesses.

Prohibits any audio pickup or broadcast of conferences which occur in a court proceeding between attorneys and their clients, co-counsel of a client, adverse counsel, or counsel and the presiding judge, if the conferences are not part of the official record of the proceedings.

## **Actions Timeline**

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- **Dec 6, 2011:** Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Administrative Oversight and the Courts. Hearings held.
- **Apr 7, 2011:** Committee on the Judiciary. Ordered to be reported without amendment favorably.
- **Apr 7, 2011:** Committee on the Judiciary. Reported by Senator Leahy without amendment. Without written report.
- **Apr 7, 2011:** Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 27.
- **Feb 17, 2011:** Introduced in Senate
- **Feb 17, 2011:** Sponsor introductory remarks on measure. (CR S908)
- **Feb 17, 2011:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. (text of measure as introduced: CR S908-909)