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Sunshine in the Courtroom Act of 2013

Congress: 113 (2013–2015, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Law

Introduced: Feb 28, 2013

Current Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. (text of measure as introduced: CR S1014-

Latest Action: Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. (text of measure as introduced: CR S1014-1015) (Feb 28, 2013)

Official Text: https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/senate-bill/405

Sponsor

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

Party: Republican • State: IA • Chamber: Senate

Cosponsors (7 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Blumenthal, Richard [D-CT]	D · CT		Feb 28, 2013
Sen. Cornyn, John [R-TX]	R · TX		Feb 28, 2013
Sen. Durbin, Richard J. [D-IL]	D · IL		Feb 28, 2013
Sen. Klobuchar, Amy [D-MN]	D · MN		Feb 28, 2013
Sen. Leahy, Patrick J. [D-VT]	D · VT		Feb 28, 2013
Sen. Schumer, Charles E. [D-NY]	D · NY		Feb 28, 2013
Sen. Markey, Edward J. [D-MA]	D · MA		Nov 19, 2013

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Judiciary Committee	Senate	Referred To	Feb 28, 2013

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Law

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
113 HR 917	Related bill	Dec 3, 2014: Subcommittee Hearings Held.

Sunshine in the Courtroom Act of 2013 - 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.

Requires the Judicial Conference of the United States 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

- **Feb 28, 2013:** Introduced in Senate
- **Feb 28, 2013:** Sponsor introductory remarks on measure. (CR S1014)
- **Feb 28, 2013:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. (text of measure as introduced: CR S1014-1015)