



National Association of Judiciary Interpreters & Translators

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Lancaster Online

To the Editor:

Your article "Judge: Interpreter in church-line stabbing mistrial under investigation," contained several errors that we hope you will correct. Most importantly, it misstates the reasons that the mistrial was declared; the article also contained several misperceptions about the interpreting field and its role in judiciary.

The reporter used the words "translator" and "interpreter" interchangeably. This is not correct usage. A translator works exclusively with the written word. An interpreter works exclusively with the spoken word. We ask that you correct the online article so that the word "interpreter" and its different variations are used throughout.

It is also often recommended for a judge to instruct a jury to accept the official English rendition of the interpreter as the testimony, regardless of any interpretation a juror might make for him- or herself. Your article did not provide information on what instructions, if any, the jurors had been given with respect to discussing the interpretation outside of the court room. The fact that jurors were discussing the interpretation outside of the courtroom while the case was ongoing suggests that jury misconduct, and not the interpreter, is the cause of the mistrial.

Sincerely,

Esther H. Navarro-Hall

Esther Hall-Navarro
Chair
National Association of Judiciary Interpreters & Translators