



National Association of Judiciary Interpreters & Translators

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Letters to the Editor
The New York Times
620 Eighth Avenue
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Via USPS and email

Re: Lost in Translation, Editorial of May 24, 2012

To the Editor:

This case dealt with the definition of "interpreter" vs. "translator" under 28 USC section 1827. Although translation and interpreting are related disciplines, there are significant differences. Translators convert a text from one language to another, while interpreters do the same for speech, requiring different procedures, skills and training. Many people outside of the profession are unaware of the distinction, erroneously referring to interpreters as translators.

We agree wholeheartedly that limited-English litigants should be provided with translated documents in addition to having proceedings interpreted. However, Congress has not yet enacted such a provision. Hopefully, this recent decision will prompt them to do so.

In the mean time, as we indicated in our amicus brief to the Court, translation and interpretation are two distinct professions with separate qualifications and accreditations. That distinction should be maintained.

Very truly yours,

John M. Estill
Chair, NAJIT Advocacy Committee