

I want to thank my colleagues for their dedication and effort toward improving the federal court records system and improving access and transparency for the public. The Open Courts Act of 2020 is the result of years of bipartisan effort to make our government function better for the American people.

This legislation will guarantee free public access to federal court records through the Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER) system, which currently charges the public a fee to access documents.

The bill would further support legal professionals and the general public by consolidating the Case Management/Electronic Case Files (CM/ECF) system. The CM/ECF system was designed to increase efficiency for all stakeholders within the judicial system, but it is compartmentalized among different courts. This makes locating records and filing documents difficult and inefficient.

This Legislation would unify these disconnected systems under the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts in order to ensure uniform access to all federal litigants.

I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues to take in feedback and improve this bill as it hopefully works its way to the President's desk.