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Via email: press_request@flsd.uscourts.gov

Angela E. Noble
Clerk of Court/Court Administrator
US District Court for the Southern District of Florida

Re: Removal of CNN Journalists from Courtroom

Dear Ms. Noble:

As you are certainly aware, this afternoon the US Marshals improperly removed two CNN reporters, Kara Scannell and Tierney Sneed, from Judge Cannon's courtroom, and eventually the courthouse, barring them from reporting on a proceeding of significant national importance.

Upon their removal, the US Marshals informed Ms. Scannell and Ms. Sneed that they had to leave due to their "transmitting from the courtroom." That conclusion was erroneous and deprived our journalists from reporting on the hearing in nearly its entirety.

The US Marshals' conclusion was based upon its faulty assumption that [a story published under the co-byline of Ms. Sneed](#), and not Ms. Scannell, was published by Ms. Sneed from inside the courtroom. That assumption was wrong.

I can confirm that the story was pre-written by Ms. Sneed and sent to an editor in Washington, DC, prior to her entering the courtroom. The editor in DC in turn edited the story, and held it for publication at 1 p.m., the anticipated time of the hearing, a process in which Ms. Sneed was not involved.

Notably, that story did not include any information from inside the courtroom, and instead, highlighted which attorneys "might" appear in court during the hearing.

But while Ms. Sneed may have been removed due to a misunderstanding by the US Marshals, Ms. Scannell was removed for seemingly no reason at all. Ms. Scannell made no communications during the proceeding, and unlike Ms. Sneed, no information was published under her byline at all while she was in the courtroom.

Finally, while both reporters were eventually readmitted, they were only able to observe the final moments of the hearing prior to it being adjourned, so they were effectively denied the opportunity to report on the proceeding.

At best, our journalists' First Amendment rights to attend an important judicial proceeding were impaired significantly based on a faulty assumption. This was made worse because, when an attorney on my team spoke directly to one of the Marshals and clarified this misunderstanding, the Marshal refused to tell his supervisor in the courtroom, and the reporters continued to be barred from the hearing.

As I am sure you agree, this was an easily rectifiable situation. I would like to speak with you so we can discuss how we can avoid this unfortunate situation from repeating itself. Please let me know a convenient time.

Sincerely,

/s/

David Vigilante
Executive Vice President & General Counsel, CNN