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To: Comments Mailbox
Subject: [External]Virtual Civil Trials

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Dear Committee Members:

Given that several vaccines seem promising, I do not believe we should go to virtual civil trials, or at best they should be optional. While virtual meetings and oral argument are wonderful technological solutions, a virtual trial is no substitute for live, in person witnesses. There is no substitute for a judge and jury actually seeing the actual witness testify and being able to judge directly, without electronic or video filter, and base credibility determinations based on their in person observations. These same concerns apply to jury selection as well. Moreover, it is hard enough for jurors to pay attention in live trials when they don't have the distractions available off-screen in their home; it would be exponentially harder by video.

Should both parties decide it is in their interest to voluntarily waive these protections they should be able to do so, but there is no way that virtual trials should be mandatory.

However, this pandemic will end. There is no reason to rush and in the process diminish people's right to a jury where they can actually confront witnesses.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully yours,

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