



American Translators Association

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American Translators Association Referenced in Supreme Court Case

ALEXANDRIA, VA (January 17, 2012) — The American Translators Association is cited as a main source of authority in a pending U. S. Supreme Court case that directly addresses translation and interpreting. *Kouichi Taniguchi v. Kan Pacific Saipan, Ltd* is set to be heard February 21, 2012.

The American Translators Association is heavily referenced in the amicus briefs concerning the case. ATA sources referenced include:

- *Interpretation, Getting it Right: A Guide to Buying Interpreting Services*
- *Translation, Getting it Right: A Guide to Buying Translation*
- “A Day in the Life of a Translator/Interpreter” video
- The online directories at www.atanet.org/onlinedirectories/
- “Being Bilingual is Not Enough,” from the July 2008 *ATA Chronicle*
- Information about the ATA certification program on the ATA website

Section 1920 of 28 U.S. Code defines what costs can be compensated in lawsuits including “compensation of interpreters.” The question presented in this upcoming case is whether costs incurred in translating written documents are included in the category “compensation of interpreters.”

In November 2006, Kouichi Taniguchi fell though a wooden deck during a tour of the Marianas Resort and Spa in the Northern Mariana Islands. Two weeks after the accident, Taniguchi informed the resort owner, Kan Pacific Saipan, Ltd., that incident resulted in injuries leading to medical expenses and loss of income. Taniguchi sued Kan Pacific for negligence and for losses suffered because of the accident.

The district court awarded summary judgment to Kan Pacific and awarded Kan Pacific litigation costs including translation costs for documents translated from Japanese into English. The district court included these costs because it considered “compensation of interpreters” as including compensation for document translation. Taniguchi appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, citing the difference between interpretation and translation. The Court, however, affirmed the award for the document

translation and denied Taniguchi's petition for a rehearing. Taniguchi subsequently appealed, bringing the case to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Founded in 1959, the American Translators Association's primary goals include fostering and supporting the professional development of translators and interpreters and promoting the translation and interpreting professions. ATA, based in Alexandria, Virginia, currently has more than 11,000 members worldwide. For more information on ATA, please visit www.atanet.org.

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