FILED
OCT 28 2026
OFFICE OF THE CLERK
SUPREME COURT, U.S.

26-6082

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

No. _____

IN RE JOSHUA DEANTHONY WOODSON,

Petitioner.

On Petition for Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit

PETITION FOR WRIT OF CERTIORARI

JOSHUA DEANTHONY WOODSON
16518 Pentonshire Lane
Houston, TX 77090
(432) 528-5771
Jwoodson1333@gmail.com
Petitioner, Pro Se

October 28, 2026

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the Fifth Circuit's denial of mandamus—on the ground that Petitioner should first seek relief from the district judge—constitutes a denial of the constitutional right of access to courts, when the district judge has been barred by a filing injunction from receiving any filings from Petitioner, rendering that remedy structurally impossible and illusory.

2. Whether a magistrate judge's *sua sponte* imposition of a blanket filing injunction, without prior notice or an opportunity to be heard, violates the procedural due process requirements established by the Fifth Circuit in *Mendoza v. Lynaugh*, 989 F.2d 191 (5th Cir. 1993), and conflicts with the approach of the D.C. Circuit, which has vacated overly broad filing restrictions.

3. Whether the appearance of bias created by the magistrate judge's conduct—including the rejection of twenty of Petitioner's twenty-seven filings before the hearing, the mockery of his sworn evidence as "Whack-A-Mole," the disparate treatment of a compliant pro se litigant versus non-compliant represented parties, and the unequal access to the hearing itself—requires recusal under 28 U.S.C. § 455(a), and whether the district judge's failure to act on Petitioner's direct pleas for recusal and intervention for over seven months also requires recusal and reassignment.

4. Whether the court's refusal to produce the native Zoom video and ERO audio recording—when the written transcript is materially incomplete and sanitized—violates Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 10(e)(2) and the right to meaningful appellate review.

5. Whether the district court's denial of e-filing access and its unexplained labeling of Petitioner as a "security risk"—while represented parties received 24/7 electronic access—constitutes a wealth-based and status-based denial of equal protection under the Fifth Amendment.

LIST OF PARTIES

Pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 14.1(b)(i), as revised effective March 16, 2026, the parties to this proceeding are listed below, along with their respective stock ticker symbols, if any.

Petitioner: Joshua DeAnthony Woodson. (No ticker symbol – individual).

Respondents:

Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC. (No ticker symbol – privately held).

LoanCare, LLC. (No ticker symbol – privately held).

Robertson, Anschutz, Schneid, Crane & Partners, PLLC. (No ticker symbol – privately held).

Shiann Shinella Woodson. (No ticker symbol – individual).

**Note: Ms. Woodson was joined solely as a nominal defendant pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 19(a). Petitioner and Ms. Woodson are now divorced, and she has never appeared or asserted any interest in this litigation. Petitioner is in the process of moving to dismiss her from the District Court action but lists her here solely to comply with the requirement to name all parties of record.*

The United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit is not a party to this action.

CORPORATE DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 29.6, Petitioner states that the corporate Respondents are Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC, LoanCare, LLC, and Robertson, Anschutz, Schneid, Crane & Partners, PLLC. Upon information and belief, these entities are privately held and not publicly traded.

RELATED CASES

Pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 14.1(b)(iii), Petitioner identifies the following directly related proceedings:

1. District Court Action: *Woodson v. Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC, et al.*, No. 4:25-cv-04700 (S.D. Tex., Houston Division). This is the underlying civil action from which the instant petition arises.

2. Fifth Circuit Mandamus: *In re Joshua DeAnthony Woodson*, No. 26-20208 (5th Cir.). This is the mandamus proceeding from which the instant petition for certiorari is taken. The Fifth Circuit denied the petition on July 30, 2026 (Docket No. 42).

3. Fifth Circuit Direct Appeal: *Woodson v. Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC, et al.*, No. 26-20234 (5th Cir.). This appeal is **currently pending** and challenges three specific orders of the district court: Dkt. 91 (the Filing Bar Order), Dkt. 92 (the Scheduling Order), and Dkt. 94 (the Order Adopting the Magistrate Judge's Recommendation). The record on appeal was certified on July 7, 2026. This appeal is the primary vehicle for reviewing the underlying merits of the district court's orders, while the instant mandamus petition seeks review of the Fifth Circuit's refusal to intervene in the face of a structural Catch-22.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED	1
LIST OF PARTIES & CORPORATE DISCLOSURE	2
RELATED CASES	3
TABLE OF AUTHORITIES	4
CITATIONS OF OPINIONS BELOW	5
BASIS FOR JURISDICTION	5
CONSTITUTIONAL AND STATUTORY PROVISIONS INVOLVED	6
STATEMENT OF THE CASE	7
REASONS FOR GRANTING THE WRIT	10
I. The Catch-22: A Remedy Rendered Impossible	10
II. The Filing Bar Is Void and the Case Management Plan Must Be Reset	11
III. The Court Obstructed Evidence by Refusing to Produce the Recording	13
IV. The Magistrate Judge Rigged the Case Management Plan	14
V. The Scheduling Order Was a Deliberate Ambush Requiring an Expert Never Agreed Upon	15
VI. Judicial Immunity Does Not Protect This Conduct	16
VII. Recusal Is Mandatory Under 28 U.S.C. § 455(a)	17
VIII. The Court's E-Filing and Access Policies Violated the Equal Protection Clause	19
IX. Mandatory Zoom Link Transparency and the Structural Denial of Access	21
CONCLUSION	22
APPENDIX COVER PAGE	App. i

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

CASES

Mendoza v. Lynaugh, 989 F.2d 191 (5th Cir. 1993)	10, 11
In re Green, 669 F.2d 779 (D.C. Cir. 1981)	10
Griffin v. Illinois, 351 U.S. 12 (1956)	19
Boddie v. Connecticut, 401 U.S. 371 (1971)	19
Liljeberg v. Health Services Acquisition Corp., 486 U.S. 847 (1988)	17
Liteky v. United States, 510 U.S. 540 (1994)	17

STATUTES AND RULES

U.S. Const. amend. V	6, 19
28 U.S.C. § 1254(1)	5
28 U.S.C. § 455(a)	17
28 U.S.C. § 753(b)	13
28 U.S.C. § 1651(a)	6
28 U.S.C. § 1746	6
Fed. R. App. P. 10(e)(2)	13
Sup. Ct. R. 10(a)	10
Sup. Ct. R. 13	5
Sup. Ct. R. 14.1(b)(i)	2
Sup. Ct. R. 14.1(b)(iii)	3
Sup. Ct. R. 29.6	2
Sup. Ct. R. 39	(IFP Motion)

CITATIONS OF OPINIONS BELOW

The order of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit denying the petition for a writ of mandamus is unreported and appears at *In re Woodson*, No. 26-20208 (5th Cir. July 30, 2026). The order is reproduced in the Appendix at App. 1.

The underlying orders of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas (Magistrate Judge Yvonne Y. Ho) imposing a filing injunction and setting a scheduling order are unreported and appear at Dkt. 91 (Mar. 20, 2026) and Dkt. 92 (Mar. 24, 2026). These orders are reproduced in the Appendix at App. 2–3.

BASIS FOR JURISDICTION

The judgment of the Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit was entered on July 30, 2026. This Petition is filed within the time allowed by 28 U.S.C. § 2101(c) and Supreme Court Rule 13. The jurisdiction of this Court is invoked under 28 U.S.C. § 1254(1).

CONSTITUTIONAL AND STATUTORY PROVISIONS INVOLVED

U.S. Const. amend. V, provides in relevant part:

"No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury... nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law..."

28 U.S.C. § 1651(a), provides:

"The Supreme Court and all courts established by Act of Congress may issue all writs necessary or appropriate in aid of their respective jurisdictions and agreeable to the usages and principles of law."

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

A. The District Court Imposes a Blanket Filing Injunction.

Petitioner Joshua DeAnthony Woodson is a pro se litigant who initiated a civil action against corporate mortgage entities and their counsel in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas (Case No. 4:25-cv-04700). The action alleges violations of the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO), the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act (FDCPA), the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (RESPA), and related state law claims stemming from an allegedly fraudulent foreclosure on his homestead.

On March 20, 2026, following an initial pretrial conference, Magistrate Judge Yvonne Y. Ho entered an "Order on Proliferate Filings and Other Issues" (Dkt. 91). App. 2. Acting *sua sponte*, and without prior written notice or an opportunity for Petitioner to respond, the Magistrate Judge imposed a sweeping injunction that barred Petitioner from submitting any further filings. Specifically, the order directs that "the clerk of court is directed to reject all submissions from Woodson unless this Court has explicitly authorized the filing." App. 2.

The order cited Petitioner's "numerous" filings, characterizing them as "redundant, improper, or otherwise meritless," and accused Petitioner of attempting to "bombard" the court. App. 2. Notably, out of 27 submissions, 7 were approved and 20 were denied. The Magistrate Judge explicitly relied upon filings that she had previously rejected to justify the injunction, effectively using the absence of Petitioner's own work product as the basis for silencing him. This disparate treatment occurred while represented Defendants, who violated case management orders by filing unilateral plans with false certificates of conference, faced absolutely no sanctions.

B. The Petitioner's Attempts to Seek Relief Are Blocked.

Following the imposition of the filing injunction, Petitioner attempted to comply with the district court's processes. However, the filing injunction functioned as a complete bar. On March 20 and March 23, 2026, Petitioner submitted emergency pleas directly to the chambers of District Judge Charles Eskridge, who retained supervisory jurisdiction over the case. These pleas requested immediate judicial intervention before the scheduled foreclosure sale of Petitioner's home, and explicitly requested that Judge Eskridge recuse Magistrate Judge Ho for bias and misconduct, address the unconstitutional filing bar, and grant an emergency hearing.

The District Judge did not respond to the emergency pleas. He did not respond to the request for recusal. He did not respond to the notification that his subordinate had unconstitutionally barred Petitioner from the court. The foreclosure sale proceeded. However, this was not a case of total inaction. The District Judge found the time to sign procedural orders, including the order permitting the appeal to proceed to the Fifth Circuit (Dkt. 104). He found the time to adopt the Magistrate Judge's recommendation (Dkt. 94). But when it came to the actual constitutional emergency—a citizen losing his home in violation of due process, and a direct plea for protection from a biased magistrate—the District Judge was silent for over seven months.

Further, the district court entered a Scheduling Order on March 24, 2026 (Dkt. 92). App. 3. This order required Petitioner to file amended pleadings, designate experts, and complete discovery by specific deadlines. However, because the filing injunction barred Petitioner from filing *any* document with the clerk of court, compliance with the Scheduling Order was structurally impossible. The district court's own orders created an irreconcilable Catch-22: Dkt. 91 ordered the clerk to reject all submissions, while Dkt. 92 required Petitioner to make filings.

On July 9, 2026, the district court entered an order (Dkt. 105) confirming that "The Clerk shall reject all submissions from Woodson unless explicitly authorized." App. 4. Compounding this, the district court denied Petitioner e-filing access and locked him out of PACER due to an unpaid balance of $58.70, which eventually grew to over $130 while he was unable to access his own docket to monitor the case. District Judge Eskridge was informed of this lockout and took no action to restore Petitioner's access to his own case.

C. The Fifth Circuit Denies Mandamus on Procedural Grounds.

Having exhausted all avenues in the district court, Petitioner filed a Petition for Writ of Mandamus in the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit (No. 26-20208). On July 30, 2026, a panel of the Fifth Circuit denied the petition. App. 1.

The Fifth Circuit's reasoning rested on two procedural grounds. First, the court stated that "Woodson must first present those objections to the district judge," as a magistrate judge acts subsidiary to the district court. App. 1. Second, the court reasoned that interlocutory rulings can be reviewed after final judgment, and mandamus "does not exist to bypass that process." App. 1.

The Fifth Circuit's denial failed to acknowledge that the district court's filing injunction explicitly prevents Petitioner from presenting objections to the district judge. The "process" the Fifth Circuit referred to is the exact process that the district court has barred Petitioner from accessing.

REASONS FOR GRANTING THE WRIT

I. The Catch-22: A Remedy Rendered Impossible.

This Court should grant certiorari because the Fifth Circuit's decision creates a constitutionally intolerable Catch-22. The Fifth Circuit denied mandamus on the ground that Petitioner must first present his objections to the district judge. However, the district court has explicitly barred Petitioner from filing any document—including objections—without prior permission (Dkt. 91, Dkt. 105). Petitioner cannot seek permission to file an objection without filing a motion, which the Clerk is ordered to reject.

This is not a mere procedural technicality. It is a structural denial of the right to access the courts. The Fifth Circuit has instructed Petitioner to walk through a door that the district court has bricked shut. When a procedural remedy is rendered a nullity by the opposing branch of the same court, the appellate court's refusal to intervene constitutes a denial of due process under the Fifth Amendment. The Fifth Circuit cannot use the doctrine of "exhaustion" as a shield when exhaustion is structurally impossible.

This Court must intervene because the circuits are divided on how to handle procedural barriers to court access, and because the district court's conduct in this case departed from the accepted and usual course of judicial proceedings. The D.C. Circuit has vacated overly broad filing restrictions that denied a litigant access to the courts. *See In re Green*, 669 F.2d 779 (D.C. Cir. 1981). While that court approved a pre-filing screening mechanism that allowed the litigant to seek leave to file, *id.*, the Magistrate Judge here imposed a total ban with no mechanism for seeking leave, and the Fifth Circuit refused to review it. This departure from the accepted and usual course of judicial proceedings warrants this Court's supervisory power.

II. The Filing Bar Is Void, the Scheduling Order Is Irreconcilable, and Both Must Be Vacated.

The filing injunction in this case was imposed *sua sponte*, without prior written warning, and without affording Petitioner any opportunity to be heard before the sanctions were imposed. The Fifth Circuit has held that a prefiling injunction is an abuse of discretion where there was no prior warning and the sanction is too severe. *See Mendoza v. Lynaugh*, 989 F.2d 191, 195-96 (5th Cir. 1993) (vacating a prefiling injunction because "the sanctions that it imposed were too strenuous"). Here, there was no warning, and the sanction was total—a complete bar on all filings. The imposition of a blanket filing bar based on an incomplete and contested record violates the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment.

Compounding this constitutional violation is the fact that the district court's own orders are structurally irreconcilable. Dkt. 91 prohibits Petitioner from filing anything without court permission. Dkt. 92, entered four days later, requires him to file amended pleadings, discovery, and expert reports by specific deadlines. Compliance with one is a violation of the other. When a court issues two orders that are structurally impossible to comply with simultaneously, it violates the Due Process Clause. The district court's own docket confirms the trap: on March 24, 2026, the same day Dkt. 92 was entered, the court set a docket call for August 18, 2026, to review compliance. Petitioner could not comply because Dkt. 91 barred him from filing. The district court was preparing to dismiss his case for failing to do something it had explicitly forbidden him from doing. This is not a mere procedural error. It is a deliberate setup.

Because the filing bar is void, the Scheduling Order that was made contingent upon it is also void. The only remedy that can restore the integrity of these proceedings is to vacate both orders and reset the case management process from the point before the unconstitutional bar was imposed.

The Constitution is not a mere set of procedural guidelines; it is the supreme law of the land, and it guarantees that no person shall be deprived of liberty or property without due process. When a federal court, which is sworn to uphold the Constitution, denies a litigant the right to be heard, it undermines the very foundation of the American legal system. If the Constitution is not upheld in the highest court of the land, it ceases to be positive law and becomes a mere legal fiction—a hollow promise. This Court must intervene to ensure that the Constitution remains a living,

enforceable guarantee of justice for all, not a formality reserved only for those who can afford it.

III. The Court Obstructed Evidence by Refusing to Produce the Recording.

The Fifth Circuit Clerk stated in a letter that "there is no audio or video recording for this hearing." App. 7. This claim is difficult to reconcile with federal law. The March 20, 2026, hearing was a proceeding before a federal magistrate judge. Under 28 U.S.C. § 753(b), the court must record "all proceedings in other cases had in open court" unless the parties agree otherwise. The court's Electronic Recording Operator (ERO) system was in use. The recording exists, or it should exist.

The written transcript (Dkt. 103) is demonstrably incomplete. It sanitizes the proceeding by omitting the Magistrate Judge's hostile tone, her interruptions, and most critically, her apology to opposing counsel for having to "tolerate" Petitioner. Petitioner specifically requested the native Zoom video and ERO audio to correct the record under Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 10(e)(2), but the court refused.

The withholding of this recording cannot be separated from the Magistrate Judge's prior conduct. She had already rejected twenty of Petitioner's twenty-seven filings before the hearing, only to cite their absence as the justification for sanctioning him. Now, the audio and video of the hearing—the only objective proof of her demeanor and bias—have conveniently "disappeared." The Fifth Circuit also removed Petitioner's filings from the docket with "NO ACTION TAKEN" notices, without a sealing order or any explanation. This pattern of evidence suppression is not a mere administrative convenience. It is a denial of meaningful appellate review. This Court must order the production of the ERO audio file and the native Zoom video to supplement the record.

IV. The Magistrate Judge Rigged the Case Management Plan.

The Magistrate Judge's conduct in this case goes beyond mere error; it constitutes a deliberate manipulation of the judicial process. Before the March 20, 2026, hearing, the Magistrate Judge rejected twenty of Petitioner's twenty-seven filings without prior warning or an opportunity to cure. She then explicitly cited those rejected filings in Dkt. 91 as evidence that Petitioner was "bombarding" the court.

During the hearing itself, she mocked Petitioner's efforts in open court. The transcript reflects her exact words: **"Yeah, because it's just not fair for you to have to - - it's just like Whack- A- Mole, there's just too much stuff proliferated."** (App. 10, p. 10, lines 1-3). She also dismissed a sworn affidavit—evidence that proved the Defendants' fraud—as "frivolous." Rejecting a litigant's evidence, mocking it as a child's game, and then citing its absence as a justification for sanctioning him is a severe abuse of discretion and a denial of due process.

Second, the Magistrate Judge rigged the case management process. On February 17, 2026, the court ordered the parties to submit a single joint plan. Petitioner complied, but Defendants filed unilateral plans with false certificates of conference. The court struck all three plans but imposed zero sanctions on the Defendants. When Petitioner filed a second compliant plan (Dkt. 76) on March 3, Defendants again filed a unilateral plan with a false certificate. Instead of sanctioning the Defendants for their repeated violations, the Magistrate Judge silenced Petitioner with Dkt. 91. This is a textbook violation of the Equal Protection Clause.

V. The Scheduling Order Was a Deliberate Ambush Requiring an Expert Never Agreed Upon.

The Scheduling Order (Dkt. 92) is not a routine case management tool; it is a procedural trap designed to manufacture a dismissal. The most egregious example is the imposition of a deadline for an expert witness. At the March 20, 2026, conference, the Magistrate Judge never mentioned an expert requirement. Yet, four days later, she buried it in Dkt. 92, requiring an indigent pro se litigant to designate an expert by May 20, 2026.

Petitioner never agreed to expert discovery in the Rule 26(f) report (Dkt. 76). Furthermore, no expert testimony is necessary to prove FDCPA or RICO violations. Imposing this requirement on an indigent litigant, after silencing him with a filing bar, violates Due Process. The ambush was designed to create a basis for dismissal for a deadline Petitioner could never meet.

VI. Judicial Immunity Does Not Protect This Conduct.

The lower courts may attempt to shield the Magistrate Judge's conduct behind the doctrine of judicial immunity. But judicial immunity exists to protect judges from personal liability for their official rulings; it does not shield them from appellate review, nor does it protect them from the consequences of deliberate obstruction of justice. Judicial immunity is a shield for doing the job, not a sword for manipulating the outcome of a case or silencing the opposing party inside a lawsuit.

The Supreme Court has never extended judicial immunity to cover a judge who rejects a litigant's filings, mocks his sworn evidence as "Whack- A- Mole," and then uses the absence of that evidence to justify a blanket filing bar. The Magistrate Judge's conduct here was not an exercise of judicial discretion; it was an abuse of judicial power. The same is true for Judge Eskridge, who sat silent while Petitioner was locked out of PACER and barred from filing, allowing the foreclosure to proceed.

If judicial immunity could shield this conduct, it would mean that a federal judge could silence a litigant and steal his home with absolute impunity. That is not the law, and it cannot be the law.

VII. Recusal Is Mandatory Under 28 U.S.C. § 455(a) for Both the Magistrate Judge and the District Judge.

A judge must recuse herself if her impartiality might reasonably be questioned. *Liljeberg v. Health Services Acquisition Corp.*, 486 U.S. 847, 860 (1988). The test is objective: whether a reasonable observer, aware of all the circumstances, would question the judge's impartiality. This is not a case about adverse judicial rulings, which are shielded from recusal challenges under *Liteky v. United States*, 510 U.S. 540, 555 (1994). This is a case where both the magistrate judge and the district judge demonstrated clear disparate treatment and failure to act.

As to Magistrate Judge Ho: First, she apologized to defense counsel for having to "tolerate" Petitioner. Second, she imposed a filing bar only on Petitioner, while the represented Defendants, who repeatedly violated court orders by filing unilateral plans with false certificates of conference, faced no sanctions. Third, she forced Petitioner to beg for the Zoom link at 7:02 AM while defense counsel received their credentials automatically. This disparate access to the hearing itself is a denial of fair and equal treatment. A court that is transparent and impartial provides access to all parties by default; it does not force an indigent pro se litigant to beg for the ability to appear at his own hearing while represented counsel receive automatic credentials. Fourth, she rejected twenty of Petitioner's filings before the hearing, mocked his sworn evidence as a game of **"Whack- A- Mole"** (App. 10, p. 10, lines 1-3), and then cited their absence as the justification for silencing him. Fifth, the audio and video of the hearing—the only objective proof of her demeanor and bias—have conveniently "disappeared" (see Section III, supra). Sixth, as documented in App. 11, Petitioner placed the Court on written notice of the PACER lockout, the unequal access to the Zoom link, and the denial of e-filing access on the morning of March 20, 2026—before the hearing began. The Magistrate Judge did not address these issues on the record. A reasonable observer, aware of these facts, would absolutely question the Magistrate Judge's impartiality.

As to District Judge Eskridge: He did not merely fail to act. He was directly informed. On March 20 and March 23, 2026, Petitioner submitted emergency pleas directly to Judge Eskridge's chambers. These pleas explicitly requested that Judge Eskridge: (1) recuse Magistrate Judge Ho for bias and misconduct; (2) address the unconstitutional filing bar that prevented Petitioner from accessing the court; (3) grant an emergency hearing before the foreclosure sale; and (4) restore Petitioner's

access to his own case. Judge Eskridge did not respond. Not to the request for recusal. Not to the notification that his subordinate had unconstitutionally barred Petitioner from the court. Not to the plea for an emergency hearing. He did not respond to any of it for over seven months. A judge who is busy can issue a one-line order. What Judge Eskridge did was different. He chose to look the other way. He chose to let the foreclosure sale proceed. He chose to let the filing bar stand. He chose to let the magistrate judge's conduct go unaddressed. In doing so, he co-signed her conduct. A reasonable observer, aware that Judge Eskridge was directly informed of these issues and did nothing for over seven months, would question his impartiality as well.

The failure to recuse—by both judges—requires the vacatur of all subsequent orders and a reassignment of the case to a different judge.

VIII. The Court's E-Filing, PACER, and "Security Risk" Policies Violated the Equal Protection Clause.

The district court denied Petitioner e-filing access, forcing him to file every document in person at the courthouse. This imposed a financial burden on an indigent litigant—costs for gas, parking, and time—that represented parties do not bear. The court then locked Petitioner out of PACER over an unpaid balance of $58.70, which grew to over $130 while he was unable to access his own docket to monitor the case. The Clerk's Office also required Petitioner to appear in person to file documents, while all attorneys filed electronically.

The denial of e-filing access was justified, in part, by labeling Petitioner a "security risk" based on unspecified "information security concerns." App. 2. The court never explained what those concerns were. It never identified any evidence that Petitioner had ever misused a court filing system. It simply labeled an indigent pro se litigant a security risk and barred him from the electronic filing system that all attorneys use every day. This unexplained label, applied to the only pro se litigant in the case while represented counsel received automatic access, creates an appearance that the denial was based on status rather than security.

The Court was on notice of these barriers before the hearing. As documented in App. 11, Petitioner filed an Emergency Notice on the morning of March 20, 2026, specifically identifying the PACER lockout, the denial of e-filing access, and the unequal burden imposed on him as an indigent pro se litigant. The Court took no action to remedy these barriers.

This is a wealth-based barrier to the courts. The Supreme Court has held that "there can be no equal justice where the kind of trial a man gets depends on the amount of money he has." *Griffin v. Illinois*, 351 U.S. 12, 19 (1956). The Court has also struck down financial barriers that deny litigants meaningful access to the courts. *See Boddie v. Connecticut*, 401 U.S. 371 (1971). Here, the district court's policies created a two-tiered system: attorneys could file documents 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from their offices, without the travel costs, time off work, or parking expenses that in-person filing requires. Petitioner, by contrast, was locked out of the electronic filing system entirely and forced to pay for the privilege of filing.

Even setting aside the appearance of bias, the practical effect of the denial is a burden on all working people who cannot afford to take time off work to file

documents in person. The courthouse is open only during limited business hours. Attorneys can file documents 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from their offices, without leaving their desks. Petitioner, by contrast, was forced to file every document in person. He had to take time off work, fight traffic, and pay for gas and parking to file a single motion. For a working person, this is not a minor inconvenience. It is a structural barrier that makes meaningful participation in litigation nearly impossible. The court's policy assumes that pro se litigants have unlimited time and money. Most do not.

The Constitution guarantees equal access to the courts, not access conditioned on wealth or status. The denial of e-filing access to an indigent litigant, while granting it freely to represented parties, violates the equal protection component of the Fifth Amendment's Due Process Clause.

IX. Mandatory Zoom Link Transparency and the Structural Denial of Access.

As detailed in Section VII, supra, the Magistrate Judge forced Petitioner to beg for the Zoom link at 7:02 AM on the morning of the hearing, while defense counsel received their credentials automatically. This is not a mere administrative inconvenience. It is a structural denial of access to the hearing itself. A litigant who cannot access the hearing cannot be heard. And a litigant who cannot be heard cannot receive a fair trial.

This Court should require that all Zoom meeting links for court proceedings be filed directly into the docket and visible to all parties. This simple procedural rule would eliminate the possibility of a judge acting in bad faith—or even appearing to act in bad faith—by withholding access to a hearing and then using the litigant's absence as a basis for dismissal. It would also eliminate the need for litigants to beg for access to their own hearings, which is a demeaning and unnecessary burden that falls disproportionately on pro se litigants.

Transparency in court proceedings is not optional. It is a constitutional requirement. The public has a right to access court proceedings, and litigants have a right to participate in them. A system that forces a litigant to beg for the link to his own hearing—while represented parties receive it automatically—is not transparent. It is a system that invites abuse. This Court should require that all Zoom links be published in the docket, visible to all parties, so that no litigant ever has to beg for the ability to appear at his own hearing.

CONCLUSION

The petition for a writ of certiorari should be granted.

Respectfully submitted,



/s/ Joshua DeAnthony Woodson

JOSHUA DEANTHONY WOODSON

Petitioner, Pro Se

16518 Pentonshire Lane

Houston, TX 77090

(432) 528-5771

Jwoodson1333@gmail.com

October 28, 2026