

evaluate each of the hundreds of remaining Transferred Cases on its individual merits.” (Doc. 30, p. 5). The parties also state that because other judges in this district have agreed to seal the settlement agreements, this Court should do the same for the sake of consistency.

The courts are public institutions. When litigants elect to bring their cases here the cases become a matter of public record. The public has an interest in knowing what transpires in the courts and should have reasonable access to court business. Accordingly, cases and settlements should not be sealed except for good reasons. National or state security, or real (as opposed to imaginary) danger to life, limb, property or health may be good reasons. But just not wanting the public to know what a particular litigant is doing or has done is not a good reason. Except in an unusual case, the Court does not believe that it should approve a settlement and then deny access to the public as to what it has done, and just because other judges may choose to handle cases before them differently does not mean that this Court should abandon its standard policy of transparency in its cases.

The Court finds that the reasons stated by the parties do not constitute good cause for filing the settlement agreement under seal. Accordingly, the Motion (Doc. 30) is denied.

SO ORDERED, this the 5th day of February, 2010.

s/ Hugh Lawson
HUGH LAWSON, SENIOR JUDGE

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