

Anonymous Source Bill

A Bill to Approve Journalist Rights to Withhold Sources

Section 1: This Bill will protect any journalist in the United States from disclosing a source that chooses to be anonymous. A journalist is to be defined as any person, who regularly gathers, prepares, collect, photographs, records, writes, edits, reports or publishes news/information. A source is a person, group or organization that provides information related to a journalist posting.

Section 2: The Bill will provide a journalist the right to ignore the request of information if there is not enough evidence that is substantial to a felony court case or a threat to National Security. If this Bill is to be passed, the law will be self governed and any disputes can be taken up by the United States Judiciary System.

Section 3: This Bill will need no special funding as it will be implemented as a clause to the First Amendment.

Section 4: This Bill will be enacted by the United States Congress.

Section 5: This Bill will be effective upon passage of the Bill from the United States Congress.

Section 6: All current legislation in conflict with this Bill will be declared null and void upon passage of this Bill.

Authorship Speech

1. Providing a journalist amnesty to reveal anonymous sources poses several problems. For example, there have been cases where journalists muted their articles in fear that their sources would become upset. In other cases, such as *Branzburg V. Hayes*, Branzburg was put under pressure to release sources on an article about hashish. Branzburg promised the individual not to reveal his identity. It was ruled that they didn't show "convincingly and substantial relation between the information sought and subject of overriding and compelling state interest."
2. If this pressure that is put onto journalists continues, news and information that is vital for society may go unpublished. This Bill protects not only the journalists from breaking secrecy, but the sources wishes to remain secret.
3. This Bill gives the security of anonymity as well as protection to those who would be forced to break it. Under this Bill, a journalist cannot be forced to break the seal of anonymity unless subpoenaed by a U.S. Court regarding a felony case.
4. This Bill works on the simple fact of written law. If this Bill is passed it becomes the new status quo and law of the Land.