

# Federal shield law protects public's right to know

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On the surface, a law limiting the circumstances under which a reporter could be subpoenaed by federal authorities to disclose their sources might appear to be special-interest legislation.

It's not.

When a federal prosecutor subpoenas a reporter – as the New York Times' Judith Miller was subpoenaed several years ago in connection with the leak of CIA employee Judith Plame's name to a columnist – the reporter isn't really the target.

Instead, the real target is the reporter's sources – men and women who have the audacity to try to shine a little light on what those in power prefer to keep in the dark.

The real target is your right to know.

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