



The American public has an inalienable right to exercise beliefs, speak freely, access a free press, assemble and petition the government. Through accurate newsgathering and reporting, the news media help the public understand what the government is doing in its name.

News Media for Open Government (NMOG) is a broad coalition of news media and journalism organizations working to ensure laws, policies and practices preserve and protect freedom of the press, open government and the free flow of information in our democratic society.

Our Mission

The NMOG coalition upholds and strengthens the relationship between the government and a free press that is rooted in the First Amendment. We work to protect and strengthen common practices for newsgathering and responsibly handling sensitive stories, including access to experts and decisionmakers and protecting sources.

Our Principles

- A free press is necessary for people to be informed and to participate in democracy. Efforts by the government and others to delegitimize the press are a direct attack on democracy.
- Open government instills public trust that promotes access to information and is essential to our democracy and national well-being.
- Americans depend on news media to inform them about governmental activities and to exercise the right of access to appropriate government information on the public's behalf.
- In a democracy, government must function under a presumption of openness, balancing this as necessary with legitimate national security needs and the confidentiality concerns of individual privacy.

Our Priorities

1. **Freedom of the Press** should be supported, not stigmatized. NMOG opposes policies that chill the daily communications between government officials and the press and jeopardize the safety of journalists. NMOG supports a federal shield law (protecting journalists from revealing their sources), anti-SLAPP protections (to prevent the intimidation and silencing of speech) and making it a federal crime to injure or threaten a journalist to prevent them from gathering or reporting the news.
2. **The Free Flow of Information** should be preserved and strengthened. Journalists should not be impeded from their newsgathering functions by law enforcement or other federal entities. NMOG works with both Congress and federal agencies, like the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), to make sure the federal government is open, accessible and accountable. NMOG supports the issuance of Advisory Opinions by OGIS to federal agencies to reduce unnecessary and costly FOIA litigation for the government, businesses, and individual citizens. NMOG also supports the establishment of a federal electronic filing system for the press to report misconduct by Federal, state or local law enforcement.
3. **The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)** should be reinforced and enhanced. Over-classification, unconstrained non-disclosure agreements, and indiscriminate use of "sensitive" designations to withhold information ill serve our nation's security interests and thwart the public's right to know.

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