

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today said that a federal shield law is a necessary to “strengthen our democracy and protect the Bill of Rights” as he and the House passed H.R. 2102, the Free Flow of Information Act, with a 398-21 vote.

“Ensuring that journalists have the tools they need to hold our government accountable and root out public corruption is essential to strengthening our democracy and protecting the Bill of Rights,” said Mitchell. “Journalists simply cannot do what our democracy demands of them if confidential sources believe they will be easily revealed.”

The Free Flow of Information Act protects journalists from being legally compelled to identify their confidential sources except in circumstances involving national security or imminent physical harm.

Reporters using confidential sources have exposed serious issues such as the dilapidated conditions at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, the Abu Ghraib prison scandal and the Watergate scandal.

Earlier this week, The Arizona Republic opined, “the public interest is better served when reporters can do their jobs and keep promises of confidentiality without fear of being thrown in jail. The public interest is better served when men and women of conscience can blow the whistle on governmental abuse without fear of losing their jobs.” [Source:

[The Arizona Republic](#)

, October 14, 2007]