The *Los Angeles Times* has an editorial today, making yet another case for a federal media shield bill.

It is the public, not the news media, that ultimately benefits most from the sort of aggressive journalism that sometimes requires pledges of confidentiality. That's why both the House and Senate versions of the bill empower judges to determine if "the public interest in compelling disclosure of the information or document involved outweighs the public interest in gathering or disseminating news or information."

Even without added protections, dedicated journalists will protect their sources. But a federal shield law -- like those already on the books in most states -- would reinforce the need for investigative journalism in a democratic society and protect reporters who undertake it. The stories they write will benefit the nation.