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August 10, 2023

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Senator from Oregon
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin Kiley
3rd Congressional District of California
1032 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Wyden and Representative Kiley,

On behalf of the over 2.1 million members of AMAC – Association of Mature American Citizens, including over 40,500 members in Oregon, and 4,600 members in CA-03, I write to offer our support for S. 2074 and H.R. 4250; together the PRESS Act.

Descendent from natural law, our precious freedom of speech is a primary, fundamental, inalienable natural right. Listed first, evincing its eminence, the First Amendment of our Constitution merely codifies into our law what God pronounced. And what a magnificent pronouncement it is that protects "we the people" from unbridled tyranny. We have the right to speak, to speak out for, with, and against our government; and to influence the course of our future. Let us and our press freely and fully exercise that right.

To that extent, and at the federal level, the PRESS Act serves to protect journalists who are protecting their sources. It effectively establishes a "shield law" that corresponds to state level protections already in place in most states. This is a critical component of free speech because informants may be unwilling to share information, important to the public regarding government people and programs if they feel they or their families will be targeted by a weaponized law enforcement agency, or other similar entity. Indeed, shield laws have been tested in jurisprudence under common law over the course of decades. These bills cover not only journalists individually, but service providers that store and transmit information on their behalf.

Thank you, Senator Wyden, and Representative Kiley, for protecting reporters from exploitative state spying to support our First Amendment freedom of the press. AMAC is pleased to offer our organization's full support for your efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Carlstrom".

Bob Carlstrom
President
AMAC Action