

Joint Statement of Press Freedom and Civil Liberties Groups Condemning Government Invasion of *Washington Post* Reporter's Home

January 15, 2026

Government invasion into a reporter's home and the seizure of journalistic materials is exactly the kind of scenario our First Amendment was conceived to protect against.

The FBI's targeting of *Washington Post* reporter Hannah Natanson is alarming given the record of the Trump administration. The president himself has long sought to undermine and remove critical speech about his administration, suing media outlets for their coverage of the administration and calling for the jailing of journalists for doing their job. Attorney General Pam Bondi has weakened protections for the press. The administration has limited visas for journalists, and the Defense Department has kicked out reporters who won't pledge to follow official narratives. Department of Homeland Security agents have physically brutalized members of the media on the ground covering protests. One journalist was even detained for doing his job and filming the police while covering a protest in June and then deported.

Hannah Natanson's reporting focused on exposing what is happening inside our federal government — a topic of immense public interest. Such coverage raises questions about the pretext for the FBI's targeting and invasion of Natanson's home as well as the seizure of her journalistic materials outside the bounds of the Privacy Protection Act.

Our First Amendment protects freedom of the press — including journalistic publication of leaked government secrets — as well as freedom for the public to access such information.

In order to ensure that these constitutional rights are protected, Congress needs to exercise oversight of the Department of Justice by calling Attorney General Bondi before Congress; reintroduce and pass the PRESS Act; reform the Espionage Act so journalists and whistleblowers aren't treated like spies; and, introduce a resolution to confirm that recording the activities of law enforcement is a protected activity under the First Amendment.

Signed by,

American Civil Liberties Union
American Society of Journalists and Authors
Committee to Protect Journalists
Defending Rights & Dissent

Demand Progress
Electronic Frontier Foundation
First Amendment Foundation (Florida)
Free Press Action
Freedom of the Press Foundation
Georgia First Amendment Foundation
Institute for Nonprofit News
Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE)
Journalism & Women Symposium (JAWS)
Muslim Advocates
National Press Photographers Association
National Writers Union
NLGJA: The Association of LGBTQ+ Journalists
PEN America
Public Knowledge
Radio Television Digital News Association
Reporters Without Borders (RSF)
Society of Professional Journalists
Student Press Law Center
The Media and Democracy Project (MAD)
The Asian American Journalists Association (AAJA)
The Association of LGBTQ+ Journalists
The National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ)
The National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ)
The NewsGuild-CWA
Whistleblower & Source Protection Program (WHISPeR) at ExposeFacts
Writers Guild of America East, AFL-CIO