

2. After weighing the evidence and making whatever changes seem necessary, report and pass the bill, and pass it this year.

3. Let those agencies which contend hardship under a Federal public records law then come to Congress and ask for legislation in specific instances where disclosure can be proved to be contrary to the public interest.

This subject has had a full airing. The laws of this country are made by Congress and it is high time that secrecy-minded Federal officials are given a reminder of that fact. You have been challenged with the claim that the department and agency officials can best decide what the country should know and what it should not be told. Now is the time for Congress to refute that claim by rebuffing pressures from selfish interests and making a law for the public good.

If you will meet this challenge, you will have the support and the gratitude of the grassroots press of America.

Thank you very much for hearing this plea.

Mr. Moss. Thank you very much.

Mr. Griffin?

Mr. GRIFFIN. I have no questions, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Moss. Mr. Macdonald.

Mr. MACDONALD. I have no questions, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Moss. Mr. Rumsfeld.

Mr. RUMSFELD. I have no questions, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Moss. We seem to be plagued by rollcalls.

I want to assure you that we are going to listen very carefully and we are going to weigh the evidence, and I hope that we pass the bill, and I hope we pass it this year. I again thank you for your appearance here and your association for its support of the legislation.

Thank you.

Mr. POTTER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Moss. We will recess until 3 p.m.

(There was a short recess.)

STATEMENT OF JOHN A. McCART, OPERATIONS DIRECTOR, GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES' COUNCIL, AFL-CIO

Mr. McCART. Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, I am John A. McCart, Operations Director of the Government Employees' Council, an organization comprised of 30 AFL-CIO unions representing employees in the wage board, classified, and postal services of the Federal Government.

We subscribe to the basic purpose of the bill under consideration today—providing the public with the maximum information possible about the operations of their National Government. Attainment of this objective is essential if citizens are to make intelligent decisions about the degree of efficiency of Government activities.

The first section of the bill enunciates this principle, outlines the steps to be taken by Federal agencies in disclosing such information, and the means available to the public to insure access to the information prescribed by the bill.

Following this general statement, H.R. 5012 then lists eight exceptions to the general disclosure principle. As the representative of unions and individuals employed by the Federal Government, the