

## **EDITORS OPPOSE FORCING SF REPORTERS TO TESTIFY**

A federal judge's ruling this week that two San Francisco Chronicle reporters must reveal their sources for leaked grand jury testimony is wrong and must not be allowed to stand, the president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors said today.

ASNE President David A. Zeeck, executive editor of The News Tribune in Tacoma, Wash., said that reporting by Mark Fainaru-Wada and Lance Williams on the grand jury testimony in the steroids case involving San Francisco Giants star Barry Bonds and others was "an exemplar of public service. It is journalism that brought to light problems in major league baseball that prompted adoption of new rules to curb the use of performance enhancing drugs."

"If reporters risk jail time every time sensitive or embarrassing information gets out, there will be a chilling effect on the news gathering process," Zeeck said. "This ruling should be overturned on appeal."

Zeeck also said that the San Francisco case should focus efforts in Congress to move forward with approval of a federal shield law.

Most states, including California, have such shield laws, but this protection does not exist on the federal level. A bill introduced in both the House and Senate with bipartisan support this year, the Free Flow of Information Act, could remedy this issue. Without such protection, Zeeck said, the public is the real loser.

The American Society of Newspaper Editors, with about 750 members, is the principal organization of American newspaper editors. It is active in a number of areas, including open government, freedom of the press, journalism credibility and ethics, newsroom management, diversity and readership.

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