The *Washington Post*'s lead editorial today talks about the need for a federal shield law :

*One need only look at the aggressive actions taken last month against Toni Locy, formerly of U SA Today
, to see why the legislation is needed. She not only was slapped with an onerous fine for refusing to name her sources but was also prohibited from accepting financial help to pay the fine. And last week, the
New York Times
reported that possible sources have been hauled before a grand jury by federal prosecutors and confronted with records of phone calls to Times reporter James Risen.*

This is why The Washington Post Co. and other media organizations have lobbied strongly for this bill. The District of Columbia and 49 states have laws or consent decrees that protect the vital relationship between journalists and their sources. There should be a similar shield at the federal level. The House passed similar legislation by a vote of 398 to 21 last fall. Once the reworked Senate bill is ready, Majority Leader Harry M. Reid (D-Nev.) should schedule a vote.