

Mr. President:

The revised signing statement -- done by  
Bill Moyers -- is ready for your signature.

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## STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The measure I sign today, S. 1160, revises section 3 of the Administrative Procedure Act to provide guidelines for the public availability of the records of Federal departments and agencies.

This legislation springs from one of our most essential principles: a democracy works best when the people have all the information that the security of the nation will permit.

At the same time, the welfare of the nation or the rights of individuals may require that some documents not be made available. As long as threats to peace exist, for example, there must be military secrets, a citizen must be able in confidence to complain to his government and to provide information just as he is--and should be--free to confide in the press without fear of reprisal or being required to discuss or reveal his sources.

Fairness to individuals also requires that information accumulated in personnel files be protected from disclosure. Officials within government must be able to communicate with one another fully and frankly without publicity. They cannot operate effectively if required to disclose information prematurely or to make public investigative files and and internal instructions that guide them in arriving at their decisions.

TRANSFERRED TO HANDWRITING FILE

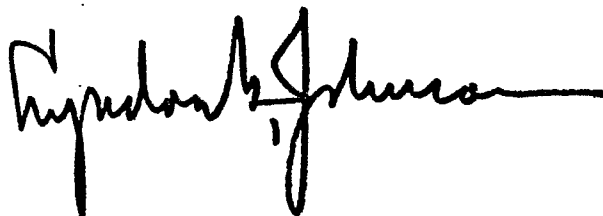
I know that the sponsors of this bill recognize these important interests and intend to provide for both the need of the public for access to information and the need of government to protect certain categories of information. Both are vital to the welfare of our people. Moreover, this bill in no way impairs the President's power under our Constitution to provide for confidentiality when the National Interest so requires. There are some who have expressed concern that the language of this bill will be construed in such a way as to impair government operations. I do not share this concern.

I have always believed that freedom of information is so vital that only the national security, not the desire of public officials or private collectors should determine when it must be restricted.

I am hopeful that the needs which I have mentioned can be served by a constructive approach to the wording and spirit and legislative history of this measure. I am instructing every official in this Administration to cooperate to this end and to make information available to the full extent consistent with individual privacy and with the national interest.

TRANSFERRED TO HANDWRITING FILE

I signed this measure with a deep sense of pride that the  
United States is an open society.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lyndon B. Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

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*Draft II*

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The measure I sign today, S. 1160, revises section 3 of the Administrative Procedure Act to provide guidelines for the public availability of the records of Federal departments and agencies.

This legislation springs from one of our most essential principles: a democracy works best when the people <sup>have all the info</sup> know what ~~their government is doing~~. *that the security of the nation will permit.* They must have access to the policies and rules by which departments and agencies operate. Government officials should not be able to pull curtains of secrecy around decisions which can be revealed without injury to the public interest. Good government functions best in the full light of day.

At the same time, the welfare of the nation or the rights of individuals may require that some documents not be made available. As long as threats to peace exist, for example, there must be military secrets, a citizen must be able in confidence to complain to his government and to provide information just as he is--and should be--free to confide in the press without

fear of ~~intimidation or reprisal~~. *or being required to discuss or reveal his sources.*

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I signed this measure with a deep sense of pride that the United States is an open society, in which the decisions and policies--as well as the mistakes--of public officials are always subjected to the scrutiny and judgement of the people.

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I am hopeful that the needs which I have mentioned can be served by a constructive approach to the wording and spirit and legislative history of this measure. I am instructing every official in this Administration to cooperate to this end and to make information available to the full extent consistent with individual privacy and with the national interest.

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The measure I sign today, S. 1160, revises section 3 of the Administrative Procedure Act to provide guidelines for the public availability of the records of Federal departments and agencies.

This legislation springs from one of our most essential principles: a democracy works best when the people know what their government is doing. They must have access to the policies and rules by which departments and agencies operate. Government officials should not be able to pull curtains of secrecy around decisions which can be revealed without injury to the public interest. Good government functions best in the full light of day.

At the same time, the welfare of the nation or the rights of individuals may require that some documents not be made available. As long as threats to peace exist, for example, there must be military secrets, a citizen must be able in confidence to complain to his government and to provide information just as he is--and should be--free to confide in the press without fear of intimidation or reprisal.

Fairness to individuals also requires that information accumulated in personnel files be protected from disclosure. Officials within government must be able to communicate with one another fully and frankly without publicity. They cannot

operate effectively if required to disclose information prematurely or to make public investigative files and internal instructions that guide them in arriving at their decisions.

I know that the sponsors of this bill recognize these important interests and intend to provide for both the need of the public for access to information and the need of government to protect certain categories of information. Both are vital to the welfare of our people. Moreover, this bill in no way impairs the President's power under our constitution to provide for confidentiality when the national interest so requires. There are some who have expressed concern that the language of this bill will be construed in such a way as to impair government operations. I do not share this concern.

I have always believed that freedom of information is so vital that only the national security, not the whim of public officials, should determine when it must be restricted.

I am hopeful that the needs which I have mentioned can be served by a constructive approach to the wording and spirit and legislative history of this measure. I am instructing every official in this Administration to cooperate to this end and to make information available to the full extent consistent with individual privacy and with the national interest.

I signed this measure with a deep sense of pride that the United States is an open society in which the decisions and policies--as well as the mistakes--of public officials are always subjected to the scrutiny and judgement of the people.

We have talked  
to Bill Moyers and  
given him this  
statement along with  
your thought about  
newspapers protecting  
their sources of  
information. He will  
work on it and  
be back in touch  
later.

J. E.

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The measure I sign today, S. 1160, revises section 3 of the Administrative Procedure Act to provide guidelines for the public availability of the records of Federal departments and agencies.

This legislation <sup>Spring has come and it is most essential</sup> implements a principle of paramount importance ~~to our democratic system.~~ <sup>a</sup> ~~A~~ <sup>works</sup> ~~democracy~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~functions~~ best when people have access to information about their government. They must be able to ascertain the policies and rules by which departments and agencies operate. Mistakes should not be hidden by pulling the curtains of secrecy around a decision which can be revealed without injury to the public interest. Good government functions best in the open, in the full light of day.

At the same time, the welfare of the nation or the rights of individuals may require that some documents not be made available to the public. As long as threats to peace exist, there must be military secrets. A citizen must have the right to complain to his government and to give information in confidence. Fairness to individuals requires that information accumulated in personnel files be protected from disclosure. Officials within government must be able to communicate with one another fully and frankly, free from publicity. They cannot operate effectively or fairly if they are required to disclose information

prematurely or to make public the investigative files and internal instructions that guide them in arriving at their decisions.

I know that the sponsors of this bill recognize these important interests and intended to provide for both the need of the public for access to information and the need of government to protect certain categories of information. Both needs are vital to the welfare of all the people. Moreover, this bill in no way impairs the President's power under our Constitution to provide for confidentiality when the national interest so requires. There are some who have expressed concern that the language of this bill will be construed in such a way as to impair government operations. I do not share this concern.

I have always felt that freedom of information is so important to our form of government that it should not be restricted except when there is an important reason for doing so. I am hopeful that all the needs which I have mentioned can be served through a constructive approach toward the wording and spirit and legislative history of this measure. I know that everyone in this Administration will work conscientiously to make information available to the fullest extent consistent with individual privacy and the national interest.

I sign this measure with a deep sense of pride that our nation, unlike some nations, values highly the right of the people to know how their government is operating.