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To amend Federal Law as it deals with freedom of speech

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In the House of Representatives

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January 4, 2021

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The Journalism Act of 2021

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## Section 1

A newly formed nine-person Federal Integrity Court is created by this Act. It shall be considered organizationally as being another Federal District Court and its offices shall be in St. Louis, Mo. Only the Justice Department may refer cases to this court. No grand jury may be convened. The Federal Integrity Court shall have its judges nominated by the Supreme Court from the pool of Federal District Judges and confirmed by the United States Senate by simple majority. The Senate shall vote on each judge within ninety days of nomination or the nominated judge shall be considered appointed. The first nine judges, shall be confirmed by December 31, 2022. Starting in 2025, three judges shall be replaced every three years. The retirement sequence of the first nine judges shall be determined by placing the numbers one through nine in a hat with each of the initial judges drawing from that hat on the first day the court is in session. The retirement sequence of the first nine judges will be based on the number each judge draws. Judges may not serve more than one term. After that, judges will rotate off the Federal Integrity Court after serving nine years.

Information obtained and/or used by the Federal Integrity Court shall remain sealed for life and is unavailable to any other court except as described below. The Court may not release its finding of guilt or innocence or that an individual or company is being tried. Should the court return a guilty verdict, plaintiff may file to the Appeals Court. In this event, if requested by plaintiff, the court may release sealed information to the Appeals Court.

All organizations and individuals working in the field of journalism within the United States are subject to this Act. This Court only reviews articles deemed by the Justice Department to be of national significance in the fields of business, politics, federal government, science or health. Journalism shall be defined as follows: the occupation of reporting, writing, editing, photographing, or broadcasting news by any methodology or of conducting any news organization as a business.

Organizations and individuals using unnamed sources as an information source in articles they publish must maintain a log of all sources. The logs must include full name of source, complete documentation of information received, all contact dates, times and locations and/or method(s) of delivery pertaining to the article in question.

If subpoenaed by the Federal Integrity Court, the requested information must be delivered to the Court by the requested date specified. The Court may use the information to subpoena all sources for the expressed purpose of ascertaining the validity of both the source and the information the source delivered. If it is determined by this Court that beyond a reasonable shadow of doubt the information is not accurate to the extent that it is purposely and/or intentionally misleading the public, the company and journalist shall be found guilty of delivering intentionally misleading news to the public. At least three judges must vote guilty for a guilty verdict to be returned. Should the organization or individual fail to deliver the required logs, a guilty verdict must be returned by the Court.

Unnamed sources are not a party to a finding by this Court, nor are sources ever to be made public, even during any appeal process.

The punishment for such a guilty finding shall be for organization: a fine of up to \$10,000,000 (minimum \$1,000,000) and up to two years (minimum of six months) in a medium security federal prison for both immediate supervisor of the writer/contributor of the article with identical sentencing for the writer/contributor.

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610 words excluding boilerplate

Last up-dated: 9/7/2020

Revision # 4

Note:

Like all proposals from the Laws Made Simple Group, this bill is designed to be accepted as is, without any changes in wording, amounts, dates and without any amendments. Most bills presented for consideration contain fewer than one thousand words. The Group requests that the Speaker of the House employ the "Up and Down" voting method for its bills being offered for consideration. While our overall goal is to reduce federal expenditures, we rely on the expertise of others to calculate the real cost of this proposal.