
Posted on Fri, Aug. 04, 2006

Bond's proposal on leaks

Law would go against ideals of free society



Bond

Sen. Kit Bond has gone way too far in an effort to curtail the public's right to information on government operations.

Supposedly to protect national security, the Missouri Republican wants Congress to pass a law that would severely punish government workers who leak classified information to the news media.

Bond should withdraw his proposal immediately. It obviously is not well thought out. Its wide-ranging chilling effect would potentially restrict the public's right to know and would promote government secrecy. Prosecutors could bring charges without even showing that national security had been damaged.

Bond opined on the Senate floor that his bill was needed because "each violation of trust guarantees chaos and violence in the world."

Oh, come on, senator. It is vital that the people know what their government is up to.

Bond's plan would squelch the "free flow of information that is essential to a democratic society," as former President Bill Clinton put it when he vetoed a similar proposal in 2000. It was a bad idea then and it's a bad idea now.