

## Harassment of scientists not ‘necessary evil in quest for science accountability’

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.**

On January 10, the *New York Times* published an [op-ed](#) from Paul Thacker, a former Senate staffer who is critical of UCS’s efforts to protect scientists from harassment. Unfortunately, he misrepresents our work, [as he did previously](#) in a *PLOS Biology* op-ed that was [ultimately retracted](#) . . .

Further, in *The Times*, he conflates different types of requests and demands for information. He offers no solutions for creating a balance between transparency and privacy, erroneously suggesting that the harassment of scientists is a necessary evil for public accountability of science. Needless to say, we disagree. . .

Thacker’s argument is hollow when he says that “the harassment argument should not be used as an excuse to bar access to scientific research,” because access to the research is not precluded. To support his argument, he cites a number of examples of inappropriate political influence on science that have nothing to do with access to data and methodology. . .

It’s a classic bait and switch. Nobody — not UCS, not any credible science advocate — argues that access to scientific data and methodology should be off limits (except in narrow circumstances such as patient privacy or national security), especially when it is publicly funded. And many of us argue that we should be able to see documents that show financial relationships and any strings attached to those relationships.

**Read full, original post:** [The Public Interest Lies in Promoting Transparency AND Protecting Scientists from Harassment](#)