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**CADF FILES LAWSUIT CHALLENGING DENIAL OF PRESS CREDENTIALS TO  
ARI HOFFMAN, BRANDI KRUSE, AND JONATHAN CHOE**

*Olympia, Washington* — The Citizen Action Defense Fund (CADF) filed a lawsuit today against the Washington State House of Representatives and the Washington State Capitol Correspondents Association (WSCCA) on behalf of three prominent journalists—Ari Hoffman, Brandi Kruse, and Jonathan Choe—after all three were denied legislative press credentials to cover proceedings at the Washington State Capitol.

The denial of press passes violates the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, including core protections for freedom of the press and due process. In addition, the House’s credentialing process is opaque, lacks clear and objective standards, and improperly delegates decision-making authority to a private association with undisclosed rules and procedures.

“Access to the people’s House is not a privilege reserved for a select few,” said Ari Hoffman, award-winning journalist and lead plaintiff in the suit. “When the government controls who can report on it based on vague or subjective criteria, that strikes at the heart of the First Amendment. The public has a right to an independent press, and journalists have a constitutional right to gather the news.”

Each of the three journalists has an established record of covering state government and public policy. Despite this, all were denied permanent press credentials without a transparent explanation or meaningful opportunity to challenge the decision.

“Denying press credentials without transparent standards is about control, not access,” said Brandi Kruse, journalist and host of the unDivided podcast. “The public deserves open government, and that requires allowing journalists to do their jobs without arbitrary gatekeeping.”

In addition to seeking injunctive relief to require the issuance of press credentials, CADF is asking the court to order the House and WSCCA to adopt clear, viewpoint-neutral standards governing press access going forward.

“The Capitol belongs to the people of Washington, not to political gatekeepers,” said Jonathan Choe, journalist and Senior Fellow at the Discovery Institute. “Journalists must be able to cover their government without arbitrary barriers.”