



In a stunning break with First Amendment policy, House Republicans directed Capitol Hill police to detain a highly regarded documentary crew that was attempting to film a Wednesday hearing on a controversial natural gas procurement practice. Initial reports from sources suggested that an ABC News camera was also prevented from taping the hearing; ABC has since denied that they sent a crew to the hearing.

Fox had hoped to film Wednesday's hearing for a follow-up to "Gasland." A colleague of Fox's at his production company was unable to comment on the morning's events, but HuffPost expects a statement soon and will update this story accordingly.

Fox did not have formal Capitol Hill credentials, but such formalities are rarely enforced against high-profile journalists. Temporary passes are easy to obtain, and if Republicans had objected on procedural grounds, they could have simply sent the the crew to the front desk, rather than ordering police to arrest journalists. The right to a free press is protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Documentary crews are almost never denied access to public meetings of elected government officials.

A separate ABC News crew, which did have official Capitol Hill credentials, was also denied access to the public hearing.

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