

# BGA/IRE SURVEY

The Better Government Association (“BGA”) is a government watchdog group located in Chicago, Illinois. The BGA is conducting this survey with IRE, Inc. to assess how effective freedom of information laws are around country. The BGA has sought out journalists to survey because journalists have the most experience with these laws and deal with them on a regular basis. In addition to filling out the survey, we ask that you also include what state you are working in, how long you have been a journalist and approximately how many requests you have made. We ask that only journalists that have made five or more requests fill out this survey. Please circle the response that best fits your opinion. Thanks for helping.

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of years as a journalist: \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate number of requests made for public documents: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. I am generally satisfied with the FOI law in my state.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Strongly Disagree    Disagree            Neutral              Agree                Strongly Agree

**2. It is important for me as a journalist to have open access to public records.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Strongly Disagree    Disagree            Neutral              Agree                Strongly Agree

**3. In my state, FOIA requests receive quick responses.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Strongly Disagree    Disagree            Neutral              Agree                Strongly Agree

**4. Legitimate FOIA requests are often denied.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Strongly Disagree    Disagree            Neutral              Agree                Strongly Agree

**5. The appeals process for FOIA request denial is fair and impartial.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Strongly Disagree    Disagree            Neutral              Agree                Strongly Agree

**6. Public officials abuse their discretion when denying FOI requests.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Strongly Disagree    Disagree            Neutral              Agree                Strongly Agree

**7. I feel confident that my FOI requests will be honored.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Strongly Disagree    Disagree            Neutral              Agree                Strongly Agree

**8. Important information goes unpublished because of the weak FOI law in my state.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Strongly Disagree    Disagree            Neutral              Agree                Strongly Agree

**9. The cost of litigation is a deterrence to filing a lawsuit to enforce my state’s FOI law.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Strongly Disagree    Disagree            Neutral              Agree                Strongly Agree

**10. Public officials are held accountable for refusing legitimate FOI requests.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Strongly Disagree    Disagree            Neutral              Agree                Strongly Agree

**When you have completed this survey, please fax it back to the BGA at (312) 427-8340.**