

## Laura Prather in Texas Press Association: ‘News Outlets Report Public Records Requests Delayed, Denied’

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**PRACTICES** Media Entertainment and Sports, Intellectual Property, AI and Technology, Media and Entertainment Litigation

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[Laura Prather](#), partner and head of Haynes Boone’s media law practice, was quoted in a *Texas Press Association* article. Read an excerpt below:

In the weeks following the mass shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, when 19 children and two teachers were killed and 17 other adults and children were injured, official stories have changed, information released by various agencies has been corrected and/or retracted and law enforcement’s actions have been scrutinized, prompting some state and local officials to stop releasing public records related to investigations into the massacre.

The Uvalde Leader-News has covered the tragedy, the community’s devastation in the aftermath and each step in the city and school district’s response, helping survivors and families demand answers. ...

In an interview with the *Texas Tribune* and *ProPublica*, First Amendment attorney **Laura Prather** said the reason the state allows agencies to withhold information when it is part of an ongoing investigation is to protect someone who was accused of a crime but didn’t ultimately get convicted, “not to protect law enforcement for their actions in circumstances like this, where the shooter is dead.”

“The public has the right to know what happened that day, and right now they can only act on rumors and conflicting information,” said Prather, who is representing *ProPublica* in an unrelated defamation lawsuit. She said law enforcement must be transparent in order to earn the public’s trust, but agencies are instead using their discretionary powers “to thwart the public from getting information that they are rightly entitled to.”

Because state law allows government officials to withhold information in cases that don’t result in a conviction, it creates a loophole that lets governments deny records in cases where the offender was killed and will never be tried.

To read the full article from *Texas Press Association*, click [here](#).