Victory:

**Charges Dropped**

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harges were dropped in September against a radio reporter who was arrested after he persisted in asking questions of Health and Human Services Secretary Tom Price in a hallway at the West Virginia Capitol.

“The state has determined, after a careful review of the facts, that Mr. Heyman’s conduct, while it may have been aggressive journalism, was not unlawful and did not violate the law with which he was charged,” a joint press release from the prosecutor’s office and Heyman’s legal team said.

Heyman, a reporter for Public News Service since 2009, had been arrested May 9 for “willfully disrupting a state governmental process or meeting,” a misdemeanor. He faced six months in prison if he was found guilty.

“Mr. Heyman certainly appreciates the state’s decision and affirmatively states that he was simply doing his job as a reporter by asking questions of a federal official as that official walked through the Capitol,” said the statement.

Advocates for press freedom had condemned Heyman’s arrest.

“This is a chilling attack on the right to report,” NewsGuild President Bernie Lunzer said at the time. “The arrest is part of a pattern of escalating attacks on the media since the Trump administration took office, which the union is determined to fight.”

Price refused to criticize the arrest, saying the West Virginia Capitol Police did “what they thought was appropriate.”

Heyman repeatedly asked Price about the Republican health care bill, which had passed the House five days earlier.

Heyman said he told police officers he was a reporter at the time of the arrest. He was wearing his press credentials over a shirt bearing the Public News Service’s insignia when he was charged.

Cutline:

Radio reporter Dan Heyman and his attorney, Tim DiPiero.