

"All the News  
That's Fit to Print"

# The New York Times

Northern California: Plenty of sun  
shine. Some clouds along the coast  
early. Highs in 60s on coast to 80s in  
land valleys. Mainly clear tonight.  
Weather map appears on Page A13.

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## Opinion

### Outlaw Secret Settlements

TO THE EDITOR:

Re "'Business as Usual' on Secret Settlements, Even in Era of #MeToo" (front page, June 15):

Last year, I was asked to help draft a California bill outlawing secrecy in sexual predator cases, which Gov. Jerry Brown signed into law. Yet as your article notes, we got only half a loaf. The bill applies to filed complaints, not deals cut before litigation, like R. Kelly's and Harvey Weinstein's. These "hush money" payoffs are still secret except in New Jersey. We must all do better.

But #MeToo secrecy is only the tip of this iceberg. For years, companies with deadly products have used hush money to force plaintiffs to agree to secret settlements or overly broad "protective orders." This keeps the truth about deadly defects from public scrutiny, sometimes for decades.

The latest high-profile exposé: this spring's big verdicts against Monsanto over the herbicide Roundup's relationship to cancer. While bills I've written for the United States Senate and the California Legislature have not yet succeeded, we will have a new California bill next year.

The more the public becomes aware of the secrecy problem, the better our chances of passage.

RICHARD ZITRIN, SAN FRANCISCO

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