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Assemblywoman Rubio’s Save Local Journalism Act Sails Through Senate and Assembly, Heads to the Governor

AB 323 will stabilize ethnic and community news outlets, protect access to local news

SACRAMENTO, CA. -- Assemblywoman Blanca Rubio (D- Baldwin Park) today announced that her Assembly Bill 323, the Save Local Journalism Act, was passed by the State Senate and State Assembly and is on its way to the Governor’s desk.

AB 323 was voted off the Senate Floor and passed by the Assembly in the last few days of the 2019-2020 legislative session. The Senate passed AB 323 by a 39-0 vote; the final vote on the Assembly Floor was 60-2.

“AB 323 provides a bridge for our local newspapers to continue informing readers and their communities,” said Assemblywoman Rubio. “The First Amendment and our independent press are critical to the open exchange of diverse ideas and perspectives. My colleagues and I bring varied viewpoints to the Capitol, but as shown by the overwhelming bipartisan support for AB 323, we are united in our support for our local news outlets and the citizens they serve.”

AB 323 establishes a path for community and ethnic news outlets to reach underserved communities through state advertising and provides an additional year for ethnic, mid-size and daily newspapers to pursue alternate distribution models while preparing to comply with AB 5.

“We are living through times of unprecedented unrest and change, and the need has never been greater for specialized outlets that facilitate improved civic engagement and better cross-cultural communication,” said Regina Brown Wilson of California Black Media. “Assemblywoman Rubio’s

leadership and the unwavering support of AB 323’s coauthors and supporters make it possible for our outlets to continue their mission and better inform our communities.”

AB 323 was championed by principal coauthors Assemblymember Grayson and Senators Caballero, Dodd, Hertzberg, and McGuire; and coauthored by Assemblymembers Aguiar-Curry, Bauer-Kahan, Chu, Cooley, Cunningham, Diep, Flora, Frazier, Friedman, Gallagher, Irwin, Kamlager, Kiley, Levine, Low, Mayes, Mullin, Obernolte, O’Donnell, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Robert Rivas, and Smith, and Senators Allen, Archuleta, Bates, Chang, Galgiani, Glazer, Mitchell, Roth, Rubio, and Umberg.

“We are grateful to Assemblywoman Rubio, Senate and Assembly leadership, the bill’s coauthors, and every member of the Legislature for recognizing our financial predicament and working tirelessly to protect access to local news,” said Charles F. Champion, president and CEO of the California News Publishers Association. “Almost every recent survey shows that reliance on local news sources has grown over the last year. With the passage of AB 323, lawmakers have shown their faith in local news outlets as the most trusted resource for their communities, and we will continue to rise to fulfill this important need.”

“I am hopeful Governor Newsom will sign AB 323 into law because he values the importance of bringing news to our citizens in California,” added Assemblywoman Rubio.

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