

Newspapers – both big and small – are vital to democracy.

Don't let the Legislature kill them off.

California newspapers – not just your hometown daily paper but smaller papers for underserved communities – could soon face a devastating financial blow. Without grasping the consequences, the Legislature may soon approve a bill requiring newspapers to treat part-time delivery workers as full-time employees. Newspapers have already been hit hard in the internet era. If this bill becomes law, many will go out of business – meaning there will be far fewer journalists playing the crucial role of holding the powerful accountable.

Here's what the leader of one media organization and the editorial pages of some California newspapers have to say about it:

Last week, I wrote an appeal to Gov. Newsom, Assembly member Lorena Gonzalez and our state legislators in Sacramento, urging them to not reclassify the contract couriers who deliver our African American-owned newspapers as employees.

But if AB 5 passes, it would not only hurt the Black press.

It would make business nearly impossible for the more than 100 Latinx, Asian-American, Native American and other small niche independent papers as well.

Across California, our ethnic media outlets are the lifeline to truthful and important information for over 80 percent of all minority groups combined. ...

Considering the great responsibility our ethnic media publications have in helping to strengthen our democracy here in California, we are calling on the leaders we've elected to represent and protect all of our interests to ... prevent Assembly Bill 5 from putting our ethnic media publications in California out of business.

Regina Brown Wilson, executive director, California Black Media

CBM | CALIFORNIA BLACK MEDIA

If you believe newspapers play an essential role in strengthening democracy and holding powerful leaders accountable, now is the

time to speak up about Assembly Bill 5.

At a time when the president of the United States is constantly

attacking and undermining the press ... the last thing journalism needs is the kind of threat currently posed by AB 5.

THE SACRAMENTO BEE

All we ask is that state lawmakers do us no harm — that, to help ensure the survival of local journalism, they let us continue operating under the same rules that have governed us for more than 40 years.

THE ORANGE COUNTY
REGISTER

Newspapers, which are critical to a well-functioning democracy, would become even more scarce

[if Assembly Bill 5 becomes law], and the public's access to credible, objective news about their communi-

ties and government will be diminished. Who will be the watchdog when newspapers are dead?

THE VALLEJO
Times-Herald

The last thing California needs is for its Legislature to deal another devastating blow to our industry.

Los Angeles Times

The California News Publishers Association is deeply concerned that the Legislature will adjourn without helping newspapers and carriers and the communities they serve. That would be a major blow to an industry already facing declining revenues. The failure of the Legislature to act would be a tipping point in the history of California newspapers and the public's right to know.

If Assembly Bill 5 is passed by the Legislature without an exemption for newspaper carriers, California newspapers will face an expensive new obstacle to their survival. If you want to help newspapers continue to perform their crucial watchdog role, please call your state senator and urge him or her to make sure that an exemption for newspaper carriers is included in AB 5 before it comes up for a vote on the Senate floor.

Not sure who represents you? Go to findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov to find out.



CALIFORNIA NEWS PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION