Assembly Resolution No. 233

BY: M. of A. Zinerman

RECOGNIZING March 16, 2025, as Black Press Day

WHEREAS, For nearly two centuries, the Black Press has served as the steadfast voice of the African American community, championing the fight for freedom, justice, and equality since the publication of Freedom's Journal, the first Black-owned and operated newspaper, on March 16, 1827, in New York City; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to recognize Sunday, March 16, 2025, as Black Press Day; and

WHEREAS, When Black voices were silenced, the Black Press spoke boldly, leading the charge against slavery, segregation, and racial injustice, and providing a blueprint for resistance that helped shape landmark legislation, including the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act; and

WHEREAS, During the Civil Rights Movement, the Black Press documented the struggle, risked life and livelihood to expose state-sanctioned violence, and ensured that the world bore witness to the courage of those demanding full citizenship and human dignity; and

WHEREAS, Today, Black journalists remain underrepresented in mainstream media, comprising just 6% of all reporters, while Black media continues to publish up to six times more coverage on critical issues such as systemic racism, health disparities, voting rights, economic justice, and police reform than traditional news outlets; and

WHEREAS, The Black Press has always been more than a news source-it is a movement, a means of survival, and a catalyst for societal transformation, shaping public opinion, empowering communities, and holding power to account in ways that mainstream outlets have historically failed to do; and

WHEREAS, In the modern digital era, technology and social media have drastically changed how news is disseminated, often allowing misinformation and bias to spread unchecked, making the role of the Black Press even more crucial in ensuring that truth prevails and that Black stories are told with accuracy, depth, and historical context; and

WHEREAS, Prominent Black journalists such as Joy Reid, host of The ReidOut on MSNBC, and Roland Martin, founder of Roland Martin Unfiltered, have utilized both traditional media and digital platforms to challenge misinformation, expose racial injustice, and amplify the voices of Black communities, proving that the fight for truthful, equitable reporting remains as vital today as it was during the Civil Rights Movement; and

WHEREAS, The Black Press remains essential in the current U.S. political climate, a time of banned books, rising attacks on voting

rights, economic inequality, racial disparities in healthcare, and the ongoing fight against mass incarceration, reinforcing its role as the fourth estate that holds power accountable; and

WHEREAS, The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), often referred to as the "Black Press of America," has played a critical role in educating, equipping, and inspiring generations of Black Americans with intelligence, diplomacy, and strategic thinking, ensuring that our youth remain engaged in the pursuit of justice and equity; and

WHEREAS, The State of New York is home to several historic and influential Black newspapers-including Our Time Press, The New York Beacon, New York Amsterdam News, The Buffalo Criterion, Daily Challenge, New York Carib News, and The City Sun- most of which continue to inform, empower, and mobilize Black communities, despite systemic challenges to their survival; and

WHEREAS, Black-owned newspapers and media outlets are at risk due to shifts in advertising dollars away from community journalism, making it imperative for the New York State government, businesses, and residents to invest in and support Black media as a vital institution in democracy; and

WHEREAS, The 2025 Black History Month theme, African Americans in Labor, recognizes journalism as a noble profession and underscores the sacrifices made by Black journalists to ensure that our stories, struggles, and triumphs are never erased; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body calls on all New Yorkers to recognize, support, and invest in the Black Press, ensuring its survival and continued impact on our communities, our democracy, and our nation's future; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to recognize March 16, 2025, as Black Press Day; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the following news organizations: Our Time Press, The New York Beacon, New York Amsterdam News, The Buffalo Criterion, Daily Challenge, and New York Carib News.