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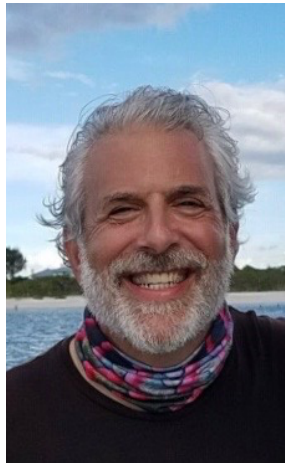
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**Tallahassee** — Robert “Bobby” Block, managing editor of Florida Today, will become the Florida First Amendment Foundation’s executive director. He succeeds former U.S. Attorney Pamela Marsh, who accepted a position at the Levin College of Law at the University of Florida in June.



Block’s career in journalism and advocacy spans four decades. He contributed to the Wall Street Journal’s coverage of 9/11, which earned a 2002 Pulitzer Prize for Breaking News. He is co-author of the book “Disaster: Hurricane Katrina and the Failure of Homeland Security” and has also reported on conflicts around the world, including coverage of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda as it happened, as well as the summary executions of more than 8,000 men and boys from the Bosnian village of Srebrenica by Serbian forces in 1995.

His appointment as FAF executive director, starting February 1<sup>st</sup>, comes when direct attacks on the First Amendment rights of Florida’s citizens are increasing with callous disregard for the law. Both state and local governments are restricting citizens’ access to public meetings and records. The right to question state and local officials and hold them accountable has become fraught with problems. Government bodies that are legally required by Florida’s Constitution to act with transparency and in the sunshine are moving more and more into the shade.

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**“Never has the work of the Foundation been more essential than it is now at a time when reporters and citizens across Florida are being stonewalled and denied their right to access government information. Public records and Sunshine laws are being routinely disregarded across Florida with seemingly no fear of reprisals. This cannot be allowed to stand for the sake of our democracy,”** Block said.

“I have fought for truth and accountability my entire professional life, first overseas, then in Washington and now in my home state. Nothing could be more meaningful to me than empowering citizens, journalists and lawyers to protect our most treasured rights to worship freely, to gather and protest, to speak out against corruption and misrule, and to oversee the inner workings of government. I cannot adequately describe how thrilled I am to stand with you in defense of those rights as the head of FAF.”

Block’s career has included reporting for The Wall Street Journal, the Tribune Company, Reuters and The Independent of London. He has been a contributor to the New York Review of Books.

“Robert Block’s stellar career of fighting for truth and accountability made him the perfect choice to lead the Foundation into the future. We are excited to see him bring to life his innovative ideas to empower citizens and journalists alike, as well as pull back attempts to cloak the public’s right to know what’s happening in our government,” said Trimmel Gomes, Vice Chair of the Foundation’s board of trustees.

“We are all are in good hands with Bobby directing our First Amendment Foundation,” said FAF board chair Caitie Munoz. “His clear passion for protecting the First Amendment has been evident throughout his career. Now, he will bring that passion to serving Floridians.”

Under Block’s leadership FAF will focus on expanding its educational offerings and opportunities to the public and increase partnerships with institutions and organizations passionate about the First Amendment, in the furtherance of government accountability and public access to information.

### **About The Florida First Amendment Foundation**

The Florida First Amendment Foundation is a non-partisan non-profit organization that believes government openness and transparency are critical to citizen trust and involvement in our democratic society. The Foundation serves as a highly visible and accessible source of authoritative information, expertise and assistance to the public. The Foundation advocates for the rights of freedom of speech and press as enshrined in the U.S. Constitution, as well as for

open meetings and access to public records protected by the Florida constitution and state statutes.

FAF does this work primarily through education programs, litigation and legislative advocacy. Through ongoing monitoring of the state's laws and decision-making and the education of government officials and citizens, the Foundation promotes the public's constitutional right to oversee and participate freely in the governance process.

**How to get involved with the Florida FAF and support the mission**

The foundation counts on the support of our members and donors to preserve sunshine in Florida. Your financial support and commitment ensure that we can continue our work in open government. We are the only organization helping citizens, businesses and government officials alike fight for greater transparency at all levels. That has our commitment since 1985.

**[Join us or renew your membership today!](#)**

Sincerely yours,

FIRST AMENDMENT FOUNDATION, INC.