



CALIFORNIA

'Double the legal limit': Assemblymember, L.A. council candidate arrested on suspected DUI



Assemblymember Wendy Carrillo, shown in April, was arrested early Friday on suspicion of drunk driving. She is a candidate for City Council in L.A.'s March election. (Allen J. Schaben / Los Angeles Times)

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State Assemblymember Wendy Carrillo, who is running for a hotly contested Eastside seat on the Los Angeles City Council, was arrested early Friday morning on suspicion of drunk driving after crashing her car and testing more than twice the state's alcohol limit for being behind the wheel, police said.

Police responded around 1:30 a.m. to the 6200 block of Monterey Road in Northeast Los Angeles, where a motorist had a collision with two parked cars, according to a law enforcement source familiar with the incident who was not authorized to speak publicly about it and requested anonymity.

Carrillo, 43, was booked at around 4 a.m. on suspicion of driving under the influence and being involved in a traffic collision while having a high blood-alcohol count, according to a summary of the arrest provided by LAPD Capt. Kelly Muniz.

Assemblymember and City Council candidate Wendy Carrillo leaves the detention facility after her drunk driving arrest.

Having a high blood-alcohol count indicates the suspect's alcohol level was "double the legal limit or more," Muniz said.

In a cellphone video obtained by [Fox11](#) from the owner of one of the cars she allegedly hit, Carrillo appears to slur her speech and briefly lose her balance as two officers conduct a field sobriety test. "I'm sorry, I sneezed and lost [control] of the vehicle," she tells the officers.

Before the test is completed, one of the officers explains to bystanders “in the interest of transparency” that the LAPD has a policy that allows for this type of investigation to be conducted in a private location when a dignitary or elected official is involved.

“It does not change the fact that she has been drinking, and she has been involved in a crash,” the officer says.

The LAPD released a statement saying that it was aware of the Fox report. “Chief Moore directed the local command to review the officers’ body worn video regarding the officers’ action and at this point the officer’s actions do not appear to be inappropriate,” according to the statement.

“A critical aspect of a field sobriety test is to provide a reasonable location for the individual being examined to evaluate impairment without obstruction or distraction,” the statement continued. “The officers conducting the investigation are given the discretion to perform the test at a location that best affords the evaluation of the individuals in an objective manner.”

One witness at the scene of the car crash said he heard a loud bang just as the collision occurred. The 32-year-old witness, who said he had been visiting a friend on Monterey Road, told The Times he went out to the street and saw Carrillo and her car, which had its airbags deployed.

Carrillo’s car had struck another car, which then hit his, said the witness, who declined to provide his name out of privacy concerns. The man said he spoke with Carrillo, then called 911. “She had very slurred speech and was very disoriented,” the witness said.



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California lawmaker Dave Min arrested, cited with drunk driving

May 3, 2023

Carrillo, approached by The Times on Friday afternoon as she emerged from the LAPD's Metropolitan Detention Center, declined to say whether she had been driving drunk. She also would not say where she had been before the crash, or whether she intends to remain in the council race. She said she had not been arrested for DUI previously.

In a statement issued by her office, Carrillo expressed thanks that no one was harmed in the crash and said she is cooperating with law enforcement.

"As a public servant, I am aware that I must adhere to a higher standard that demands personal accountability for my conduct and I accept responsibility for my actions," she said. "I sincerely apologize to my family, constituents, colleagues and staff for any actions of mine that have fallen short of that expectation. I intend to seek the necessary help and support."

If Carrillo is charged and convicted, the consequences could be more severe than a typical DUI, since it involved a collision and high blood-alcohol content, said Lara Yeretsian, a criminal law attorney.

"Does that mean she's going to serve time? Most likely not," Yeretsian said. "However, she may have to complete a longer first-time DUI offender program and have more terms and conditions of probation."

Carrillo, who worked at one point for former Councilmember Jose Huizar, was elected in 2017 to represent an Eastside Assembly district. She is now one of about a dozen people running in the March city election to unseat Councilmember Kevin de León in a district that stretches from downtown to Boyle Heights, El Sereno and Eagle Rock.

Her arrest comes about six months after another state legislator was arrested on suspicion of drunk driving. In May, state Sen. Dave Min (D-Irvine) [was arrested](#) on suspicion of drunk driving and released from Sacramento County jail.

Min later confirmed that he was cited with a misdemeanor DUI, saying his behavior was “irresponsible.” He is now [running for Congress](#) in an Orange County district where Republicans are expected to spend heavily.

Riverside City Councilmember and Assembly candidate Clarissa Cervantes also was arrested this summer on suspicion of driving under the influence, weeks after having a prior DUI conviction dismissed in court.

Those incidents prompted Assemblymember Bill Essayli, a Republican representing Riverside, to introduce a bill to temporarily prohibit state lawmakers convicted of driving under the influence from being able to operate state pool cars while they are in Sacramento.

The proposal was rejected during a procedural vote in the Assembly, where Democrats hold a supermajority. Essayli, who plans to reintroduce the measure next year, called on Carrillo to resign and said she should, at minimum, have her privileges to use state cars revoked.

Friday’s arrest has introduced a new incendiary element to the race to represent Council District 14, which covers a portion of the Eastside. Boyle Heights resident Nadine Diaz, a geriatric social worker who is running for the seat, said in an interview that she believes Carrillo needs to pull out of the contest.

“Obviously she needs help,” said Diaz, who previously ran for the council seat in 2015. “It’s unfortunate what happened to her, but she should drop out and take care of the situation and her well-being.”

Assemblymember Miguel Santiago (D-Los Angeles) had no comment on Carrillo’s legal woes.

De León, who faced widespread calls to step down in the wake of last year’s audio scandal, declined to say whether Carrillo should exit the race.

“I’m just glad everyone is safe and no one was hurt,” he said in a statement.

A representative of Ysabel Jurado, a tenants’ rights advocate who also is running, said voters can decide whom they trust to represent the district.

“Ysabel isn’t interested in carceral cancel culture,” said Jurado spokesperson Anna Bahr. “She believes in accountability.”



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