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**Black Caucus Releases Statement on Expulsion of Black Legislators in Tennessee**

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** - On Thursday, April 6th, the Tennessee House of Representatives voted to expel black lawmakers **Representatives Justin Jones** and **Justin Pearson** from the State Legislature for their role in a protest calling for more gun control in the aftermath of a deadly school shooting in Nashville. Their colleague, **Representative Gloria Johnson** who also participated in the demonstration earlier this week, survived her expulsion vote. Johnson is white.

The controversy began when **Representatives Jones** and **Pearson** publicly called for stricter gun control measures in the state of Tennessee, following a horrifying school shooting in which six lives were lost.

**Representative Dianne Hart (D-Tampa)** issued the following statement: “ I am saddened by the unjust actions taken by the Tennessee Legislature. They are subverting the will of their voters at the expense of Black men, who were advocating on behalf of the constituents they represent.”

**Representative Marie Woodson (D-Hollywood)** issued the following statement: “This blatant and bold act of racism is cruel and unacceptable. I condemn the abhorrent actions of the Tennessee legislature and call for the immediate reinstatement of Representatives Justin Pearson and Justin Jones.”

**Representative Felicia Robinson ( D-Miami Gardens)** issued the following statement: “ Un-American is how I describe expelling Legislators advocating for their constituents, actually doing the job they were elected to do. My hopes and prayers are that the true American people of Tennessee see this, the people of America see this, and let this motivate them to action. Recognize that America is MINE. If I lived in Tennessee, Tennessee is MINE. In my case, Florida is MINE, and because it’s mine, I must be engaged, protect, and fight for it. Otherwise, we allow others to dictate and destroy the Democracy America was founded on.”

The Tennessee House of Representatives' decision to expel these members has drawn criticism from various civil rights and advocacy groups as well as the Biden Administration.

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