



House of Representatives

Jeff Jones
Representative - District 167
139-358 Altama Connector
Brunswick, GA 31525
(912) 386-0428
jeff@votejeffjones.com
facebook.com/votejeffjones
www.Votejeffjones.com

Coverdell Legislative Office Building
18 Capitol Square SW, Suite 501
Atlanta, GA 30334
(404) 656-0186
FAX (404) 651-8086
Jeff.Jones@house.ga.gov

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June 5, 2020

The Honorable Brian P. Kemp
Governor of the State of Georgia
203 Capitol Plaza SW
Atlanta, GA 30334-1600

Subj: Removal of Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney Jackie Johnson;
Appointment of Attorney Keith Higgins, DA Candidate, as BJC District Attorney

Dear Governor Kemp,

The Glynn County community is experiencing a high degree of pain and grief as a result of Ahmaud Arbery's tragic death in February, 2020. Ahmaud's death has caused our community to introspectively analyze and evaluate our area judiciary leadership, specifically Jackie Johnson, the Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney. Fortunately, our community has dealt with the pain of Ahmaud's horrific death in a peaceful and relatively calm manner. In many ways, Ahmaud's tragic death is bringing our community together in unexpected and positive ways.

By this letter, I am expressing my strong support for the removal of District Attorney Jackie Johnson from her position as the Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney. Locally, many of us have been aware for years of the gross mismanagement and abject politicized manner in which the BJC DA's office has functioned. Rather than elaborate here, I am confident that the GBI investigation, in particular the DA office's handling of Ahmaud Arbery's death, will expose and support my statement pointing out the systematic mismanagement of the BJC DA's office.

Also, by this letter, I want to encourage the Governor's office to give careful and thoughtful consideration to appointing the most viable and capable candidate to fill the soon to be vacated Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's position – Attorney Keith Higgins. Keith is the only alternative candidate vying for the seat in this election cycle, in addition to DA Johnson.

Keith is very well respected locally and has a tremendous amount of support by a broad cross-section of the local community in his seeking election to the BJC DA office. Despite running for the seat as an Independent, a decision he made in recognition that to do so was the only way to appear on the General Election ballot in November, Keith is a true and solid conservative. Keith will return honor and integrity to the BJC DA's office.

Keith has been an attorney for more than 30 years. From 1988 – 2010, Keith served admirably and honorably as an Assistant District Attorney in the Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office. Keith has invaluable knowledge about police procedures, and is uniquely positioned - at this time - to serve as our next Brunswick Judicial Circuit DA, returning the respect of our community so important for the DA's office. Keith is an experienced trial lawyer and negotiator. He is the right man at the right time to serve as the new BJC DA.

As a community, we hope and pray that Ahmaud Arbery's death will not be in vain and that his death will be a catalyst for much needed and long overdue change in the Brunswick Judicial Circuit DA's office.

In closing, it is my hope and the desire of many in our community that the Governor's office will select Keith Higgins as the next Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney.

Sincerely,

Jeff Jones