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### **CONTACT**

Jackson Peel  
Communications Director  
House Democratic Caucus  
[Jackson.Peel@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:Jackson.Peel@myfloridahouse.gov)  
850-717-5297

## **Florida House Democrats Respond to Jacksonville Shooting**

**JACKSONVILLE, Fla.** – Today, a gunman with swastikas decorating his weapons murdered three people in an apparent racist attack on the Black community in Jacksonville, Florida. This happened on the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the [Jacksonville Landing mass shooting](#), and one day before the 63<sup>rd</sup> [anniversary of infamous Ax Handle Saturday](#).

**Leader Fentrice Driskell (D- Tampa)** issued the following statement, “Our hearts go out to the victims and families impacted by the mass shooting in Jacksonville today. Authorities have made clear that the killings were racially motivated and that the shooter intentionally targeted Black people. This was a hate crime in a Florida that has become a hotbed of extremism. Our nation needs healing, as does our state. Black history is under attack. Unarmed Black mothers get shot by angry neighbors through their locked front doors. Children get taught that slavery had a personal benefit. This is not 1920s Florida. This is present-day Florida.

We mourn this horrible day for Jacksonville, a diverse and dynamic city whose people did not deserve this. And as we emerge from that mourning, I have faith that we will collectively renew our efforts to defeat extremism and racism in every form, wherever it rears its ugly head. Because - as true Americans know - we are stronger together.”

**Representative Angie Nixon (D- Jacksonville)** said, “My heart breaks for the victims of this horrific act of senseless, hateful violence and the lifelong grief, loss, and pain of their loved ones. This isn’t freedom.

True freedom means all Floridians regardless of who we are or what we look like, can live free from harm. But Florida’s political leaders have not passed policies that put the safety of all communities first. We must come together to change that.

As our community processes this grave loss and grieves, my goal is we work together to create real solutions that will keep this from happening again. We need reasonable restrictions that ensure our communities can be safe from gun violence and that includes eliminating access to uniquely dangerous firearms equipped to facilitate mass shootings.

I invite members of the community to join us on Monday to remember and honor the victims, their families, and process this pain together.”

**Representative Diane Hart (D- Tampa)**, Chair of the Florida Legislative Black Caucus, added, “First, let me say that my heart goes out to the victims and families of today’s senseless mass shooting. We are hearing reports that the shooter left a racist and hate filled manifesto detailing today’s plan.

There is no place for hate and racism in our state, and it is unfortunate and all too often that an individual’s racist feelings have led to the death of innocent people.

It should not be lost on us that this incident took place near Edward Waters University an HBCU. This was not a coincidence, and if our state does not take the proper action now, it unfortunately will not be the last.

As chair of the Florida Legislative Black Caucus I am calling on our State’s leaders to take this seriously and work with us and our communities to not only deal with the rise in senseless gun violence, but the racism that continues to rear its ugly head in this state.”

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