



OHIO STATE REPRESENTATIVE BERNADINE KENNEDY KENT (D) – DISTRICT 25

September 29, 2020

To my fellow Americans:

My name is Bernadine Kennedy Kent. I am a lifelong Democrat and an Ohio lawmaker representing the 25th District located in the Capital City of Columbus, Ohio. Today, following in the bold first step of Georgia State Representative Vernon Jones, I am both honored and humbled to be the second Democrat State Representative to publicly announce my endorsement of President Donald J. Trump.

From my perspective as a lawmaker who was elected for the first time in 2016, following a lifetime as an educator and child advocate, I have admired President Trump's dedication to law and order and his respect for our Constitution. His strong leadership and willingness to fight for educational and economic empowerment for minorities has brought unprecedented hope to the American people.

President Trump has provided a record number of Black Americans with a real shot at the American dream. Under President Trump's leadership, Black Americans have experienced record-low unemployment and the poverty rate among the black community has fallen to its lowest level in U.S. history. A large part of this success is due to President Trump's willingness to listen to the ideas of Senator Tim Scott and the concerns of invested citizens from diverse communities in economic distress. This effort produced a groundbreaking solution called "Opportunity Zones," a way to create jobs and spur investment in disadvantaged communities. We all recognize that gainful employment and economic development is the best deterrent against violence and social unrest, so I want to thank President Trump for his commitment to ensuring the success of the Black community in every way.

President Trump is also serving the Black community with reliable access to quality higher education. As a proud Central State University graduate, I am beyond thankful for President Trump's willingness to prioritize the success of my own alma mater, as well as other Historically Black Colleges and Universities. President Trump has appropriated more money to HBCUs in one year than any other president. In addition, the Trump Administration continues to work with HBCUs to expand apprenticeship opportunities, career choices, and ensure they are receiving adequate support. HBCUs are said to have trained roughly 50 percent of black teachers and doctors in the United States today. Most students at these historically black colleges are low-income, first-generation students. President Trump's historic action, permanently providing HBCUs with more than \$250 million a year has ensured the legacy of these colleges and universities that are near and dear to my heart, as well as the futures of their graduates for generations to come.

I would like to thank my husband James Whitaker, a Green Beret Vietnam combat veteran for supporting me in this decision. My husband is a product of a military family and the son of a Tuskegee Airman. He has always believed in our nation's Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, the Constitution as well as his oath to protect the United States from terrorism, both foreign and domestic.

My husband is also a lifelong Democrat. That changed, however, following the muddled mistreatment and unlawful action taken against me by the Ohio Democratic Caucus following a dispute over my advocacy for two child victims of physical and sexual abuse. Following my traumatic experience on May 22nd caught on Statehouse security video, my husband proclaimed his intent to vote for President Trump and walked away from the Democrat Party. After considering this scarring event, as well as other negative experiences in my legislative career, I, along with other citizens, came to the conclusion that the Democrat Party does not have the people's best interest in mind.

No matter what my feelings are towards the Democrat Party, one thing is crystal clear: my values truly align with President Donald J. Trump's willingness to work with those of differing opinions and perspectives more so than with Joe Biden's divisive rhetoric, promotion of mass incarceration, and disrespectful, insensitive ideologies that substantiates his infamous comment "...if you're still deciding between me and Trump, then you ain't Black..." during an interview on a popular African American radio program earlier this year.

Not only am I Black, I am a proud American and delighted to endorse President Trump for re-election. Furthermore, I am honored to share with people my intent to vote for him and spread the word on the value of his leadership and his dedication to the American people.

Sincerely,
Bernadine Kennedy Kent
Ohio State Representative (D) – District 25