

On the Apparent Suicide of Georgia State Senator Robert Brown

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Statement of Cynthia McKinney on the death of State Senator Robert Brown

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"We all are diminished by Robert's irreplaceable absence. And I have lost a dear friend."

It was with shock and disbelief that I received a phone call yesterday evening around 6:18 informing me that State Senator Robert Brown had been found dead in his home. Later, I learned that the coroner reported that he died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound. I am still stunned and dazed and confused. I don't understand this at all. State Senator Brown and I were working on a project to infuse Georgia politics with a much-needed added dimension: that is, independent voting. Due to Georgia ballot access and other election laws, it is veritably impossible for voters to declare their independence from both the Democratic and Republican parties' monopoly over Georgia politics. State Senator Robert Brown came to see how the current political landscape could be improved in our State by widening the political discourse to include voters who consider themselves as "independents."



Robert and I talked for hours at a time approximately once a month about the progress of various projects in addition to our independent voter project. We had also discussed putting a newspaper together for Middle Georgia that catered to the independent voter. And the unresolved situation of Black Farmers was also a part of our conversation. Due to travel commitments, I was late with my "check-in" with Robert and had just mentioned to family and friends last week that I needed to check in with Robert. This news is just devastating.

The loss to Georgia is unmeasurable. State Senator Robert Brown loved Georgia. He loved Macon. I endorsed him in his recent run for that city's Mayor. The media demonization of him was such that I received a call during his campaign from a supporter saying that "they [the media] were treating Robert worse than" the media treat me! I checked in with Robert and we had a laugh about it. It is no laughing matter, however. Despite Robert not winning the Mayor's race, with me he continually discussed his commitment to changing the level of engagement in Georgia politics, particularly of Georgia's Black voters.

Robert was a servant leader, never thinking of himself, but always of the people of this State and their needs.

I am still in a state of shock and am searching for information and answers.

We all are diminished by Robert's irreplaceable absence.

And I have lost a dear friend.

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