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**MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Joshua D. Peters**

State Representative  
District 076

January 26, 2015

The Honorable Gina Mitten  
Minority Caucus Chair  
Missouri House of Representatives

Dear Representative Mitten, Madam Chair:

I'm writing to you after long and serious reflection concerning the remarks made by State Representative Keith English in the Democratic Caucus today. In responding to one member of our caucus who was questioning his acceptance of the gift of a third floor office from the majority, Representative English made an unacceptable, insulting and racially charged remark. There was no justifiable reason for invoking the name of Michael Brown in the way, which he did.

Prior to this outburst I had been sympathetic to allowing Representative English to keep the office he secured as the result of being courted by the Republican Majority, provided it was not done to secure his vote on upcoming issues before the House. But his remarks not only insulted the person they were directed towards, but were deeply offensive to all African American members of the caucus and those he was elected to represent.

It is disappointing to say that in fact, his comment is a reflection of his true beliefs for, not long-ago, he apologized for an offensive social media post concerning the NAACP march to Jefferson City on behalf of their concerns over the Michael Brown shooting.

When Republican elected officials around the country have made racist remarks, Democrats have called out their Republican colleagues for not condemning one of their own. It is a sad day when we are forced to do so by the inappropriate and offensive comments of one of our own, but do so we must.

As we seek to heal our community and state following Ferguson, the last thing we need are voices of intolerance creating more divisions. I believe our caucus should hold Representative English accountable by condemning his remarks and expelling him. Thank you for your consideration of this call for action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joshua D. Peters".

Joshua D. Peters  
Member of the 98<sup>th</sup> General Assembly