

## **The Joint Center Commends Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) for Hiring Trudy Perkins, the First Black Senate Communications Director in a Personal Office in Over a Year**

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WASHINGTON -- Today, the **Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies** commends **U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH)** for hiring Trudy Perkins as communications director in his personal office.

Perkins is the first Black communications director in the U.S. Senate since the August 2018 departure of D.J. Jordan. With the addition of Perkins, African Americans account for 3.5 percent of the approximately 340 top Senate staffers who serve as chiefs of staff, legislative directors, communications directors, or full committee staff directors. The Democrats' share of these top staffers has grown from just over 33 percent in 2015 (1 of 3) to almost 75 percent today (9 of 12). The Republicans' share of these top staffers has decreased from 67 percent in 2015 (2 of 3) to 25 percent today (3 of 12).

Prior to her new position, Perkins served as communications specialist (2002-2003), communications director (2003-2005), and deputy chief of staff/communications director (2005-2020) for the late Congressman Elijah Cummings. Before working on Capitol Hill, Perkins worked as a television news producer in Maryland and New York for five years. She obtained her B.S. in Business Administration at the State University of New York at Oswego, and earned a Broadcast Journalism Certificate from The New School of Radio and Television in Albany, New York.

“Senator Sherrod Brown’s ability to identify and successfully hire someone of Ms. Perkins’s caliber and expertise for this critical position demonstrates his leadership in the U.S. Senate. I hope other Senators follow his lead and recruit talented Black staff to top staff positions,” said **Dr. LaShonda Brenson, Senior Fellow of Diversity & Inclusion of the Joint Center**.

Diverse hires help Members of Congress understand the diverse perspectives of their districts and states, and provide an accurate representation of all Americans in their offices. Sen. Brown’s recent hire of Ms. Perkins shows a step in the right direction towards building a stronger Congress. In forthcoming reports that share and analyze 2020 data on the diversity of top and mid-level congressional staff, the Joint Center will work to ensure Members of Congress continue to make progress.

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**WHERE :**

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The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, America’s Black think tank, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 1970 and based in Washington, DC. The Joint Center's mission is to inform and illuminate the nation's major public policy debates through research, analysis, and information dissemination

in order to improve the socioeconomic status of Black communities in the United States; expand their effective participation in the political and public policy arenas; and promote communication and relationships across racial and ethnic lines to strengthen the nation's pluralistic society.