



Black Feminist Future

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Black Feminist Future urgently calls on Congress to #BringBrittneyHome, for the swift, safe return of the WNBA star Brittney Griner

BFF and other racial justice organizations share #BringBrittneyHome campaign demands in a letter to State Department officials

Washington, D.C., May 18, 2022 - Leaders of Black Feminist Future (BFF), a political hub committed to building Black feminist power, are amplifying their call for U.S. officials to take swift action to prioritize the swift and safe release of Brittney Griner, the WNBA star who has been detained by the Russian government under suspicious pretenses since February. Last week, BFF leaders met with **Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX) and Rep. Colin Allred (D-TX)**, to share the campaign's demands.

In the wake of the Russian court's decision last week to extend Brittney's pretrial detention period, the campaign is doubling down in its efforts. Speaking on behalf of the campaign, **BFF Executive Director, Paris Hatcher** said, "We cannot express strongly enough our disappointment and frustration that the Russian court has extended Brittney Griner's pretrial detention. Despite the Biden administration acknowledging that Brittney was wrongfully detained, the U.S. government has not prioritized her case—ultimately exposing her to prolonged danger each additional day she is held in Russia. This outcome has shown once again that those who are not white, cisgender males will not be offered immediate prioritization."

Hatcher added, "If Griner's family and teammates aren't able to fight for her swift release, it is up to us—the Black people who see ourselves and our communities in Brittney Griner—to keep shouting and keep fighting until the U.S. government hears our rallying cries and finally brings her home where she belongs."

Following their meetings with **Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX) and Rep. Colin Allred (D-TX)**, both congresspeople agreed action was needed, especially in response to the extension of Brittney Griner's detainment.

"Brittney Griner is a hostage in Russia caught up in Putin's cowardly attempt to bully the world," said Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee. "After working for months to establish Brittney as a hostage wrongly held; I am glad today to join with the courageous stand that is being taken by the Black Feminist Future along with the many people in America who are outraged about Brittney's detention and united in their effort to demand her freedom now. It is important for her to be released so that she can return to her family and her community and her sport. She has been held without justification and I will not rest until Brittney is once again free at home in the United States welcomed back by her family, her community, and her team. Justice for Brittney Griner Now!"

Black Feminist Future has also sent a demand letter to congressional leaders and U.S. State Department officials outlining the demands of the #BringBrittneyHome campaign and urging officials to prioritize Brittney's case and take swift action to bring her home safely. The letter has been signed by leading racial

justice organizations **Color of Change, the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, Last Prisoner Project, Justice for Families, and Our Dream.**

Representatives of the [Last Prisoner Project](#) shared, "Brittney is just one of many LGBTQ+ individuals to be impacted by the justice system because of their cannabis use. What some Americans don't realize is that Brittney could've been arrested and sentenced to jail time in at least 19 states, and, depending on the amount of hashish oil (currently unknown), she could've been at risk of receiving a similar sentence under U.S. federal drug trafficking guidelines."

Brittney Griner has now been in Russian custody for nearly three months and was first detained in February after Moscow airport customs officials allegedly found vape cartridges containing hashish oil in her luggage. She faces up to 10 years in prison. Brittney's case has been turned over to the U.S. Special Advisor for Hostage Affairs, marking an escalation of priority.

The #BringBrittneyHome campaign's demands are as follows:

- We demand the U.S. government prioritize the swift and safe release and return of Brittney Griner back to the United States - facing no charges.
- We demand ongoing visible proof of Brittney Griner's safety and wellbeing as well as consistent communication and wellness checks while in custody.
- We demand Brittney Griner have access to the same benefits and protections as any other U.S. citizen, including but not limited to, consistent U.S. consular access.

Black Feminist Future will continue the fight to #BringBrittneyHome by raising awareness in the media, on social media, across their networks, and with Brittney's fans to address the longstanding history of discrimination and ill-treatment towards Black and queer people in Russia, putting Brittney at an even great risk of harm. The #BringBrittneyHome campaign's petition has been signed by nearly 3,500 people with more signatures coming in each day. Take action by signing Black Feminist Future's petition at <https://blackfeministfuture.org/bringbrittneyhome/>.

Black Feminist Future envisions a world where all Black women, girls, and gender-expansive folks are: safe, joyful, cared for, powerful, self-determining, and thriving. We envision a world where freedom is our birthright and we are in abundant, nurturing, and interdependent relationships with our communities and the earth.