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MEMBER, HOUSE FREEDOM CAUCUS



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
CHAIRMAN, BORDER SECURITY AND ENFORCEMENT
TRANSPORTATION AND MARITIME SECURITY
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND
THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE
NATIONAL SECURITY, THE
BORDER, AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Respected Colleagues,

Although I completely respect the work of our colleagues on the Ethics Committee, I have serious concerns about the way this particular case is being handled, and I'll oppose the George Santos expulsion.

In the 7 years I've been a Member of Congress, many Members have been subject to campaign expenditure ethics investigations. To my recollection, Members have always had the opportunity to settle the matter by restitution, even if they disagreed with the Ethics Committee conclusions. Further, in many prior instances of allegations of misconduct, I recall no massive media release from the Ethics Committee. After a bit of a whispered brushfire the matter just went away. Maybe the Member left Congress maybe the Member didn't leave Congress... but they weren't publicly crucified and expelled. The very fact that we have all read the "investigative report" indicates a level of public character assassination that I have not witnessed through 4 terms of Congressional service. It's troubling to me, that a Republican led Ethics Committee would present itself as so judgmental. Previous Ethics Committee investigations have always been conducted quietly, reflective of our Constitutional standards of innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. Reports of similar allegations of campaign finance violations like family vacations overseas and cosmetic dental procedures and sexual adventures of every sort have not historically been released to the public. This particular Ethics Committee investigation seems to be quite public, and I'm not seeing any allowance for the Member to make restitution of alleged campaign finance violations. Full media disclosure combined with intention to move straight to expulsion appears weaponized to me.

Colleagues, you can believe what you like, but the 56 page "Investigative Subcommittee Report" "is most certainly NOT written within the parameters normally found in an unbiased, impartial investigative report. It's FILLED with conjecture, opinion, and pejorative language that no professional investigative report should include, no experienced cop would present to a DA, and no impartial DA would ever present to a court as unbiased. You may accept this report as grounds for expulsion from Congress, but I say no. It's not right, the totality of circumstance appears biased, it stinks of politics, and I'll oppose this action in every way. Perhaps my colleagues should step back from expulsion, look in the mirror, reflect upon the long established historical record of Congressional behavior, consider the Founders intent, and let We the People of New York determine their representative. This report is posing as an objective presentation of fact, yet it is most certainly written with notable disregard for professional objectivity, and it is wrapped in a media incensed public disclosure that any reasonable man can see is the Congressional equivalent of a public crucifixion. I'm stunned that Members would cheer for this public shaming and expulsion. It's like witnessing an otherwise fair and compassionate village gather to celebrate the burning of an alleged witch.

Since the Civil War, only 2 Members of Congress have been expelled, and both had been convicted in court of Federal crimes. That's the standard, and the House of Representatives should not deviate from that standard. I'm a solid no on expulsion, and I encourage every Member to carefully consider what kind of precedent we're setting.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Clay Higgins".

Clay Higgins
Member of Congress

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