

Lee (PA)	Ocasio-Cortez	Sorensen
Leger Fernandez	Olshewski	Soto
Levin	Omar	Stansbury
Liccardo	Pallone	Stanton
Lieu	Panetta	Stevens
Lofgren	Pappas	Strickland
Magaziner	Pelosi	Subramanyam
Mannion	Peters	Suozi
Matsui	Pettersen	Sykes
McBath	Pingree	Takano
McBride	Pocan	Thanedar
McClain Delaney	Pou	Thompson (CA)
McClellan	Pressley	Thompson (MS)
McCollum	Quigley	Titus
McDonald Rivet	Ramirez	Tlaib
McGarvey	Randall	Tokuda
McGovern	Raskin	Tonko
McIver	Riley (NY)	Torres (CA)
Meeks	Rivas	Torres (NY)
Mejia	Ross	Trahan
Menefee	Roy	Tran
Menendez	Ruiz	Underwood
Meng	Ryan	Vargas
Mfume	Salinas	Vasquez
Min	Sánchez	Veasey
Moore (WI)	Scanlon	Vindman
Morelle	Schakowsky	Walkinshaw
Morrison	Schneider	Wasserman
Moskowitz	Scholten	Schultz
Mrvan	Schrier	Waters
Mullin	Scott (VA)	Watson Coleman
Nadler	Sessions	Whitesides
Neguse	Sewell	Williams (GA)
Norcross	Sherman	Wilson (FL)
Norman	Simon	

NOT VOTING—14

Craig	Lynch	Neal
Donalds	McCaull	Obornolte
Dunn (FL)	Miller (IL)	Smith (WA)
Garamendi	Mills	Velázquez
Kaptur	Moulton	

□ 1420

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MAKING IN ORDER AT ANY TIME CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. 1498, IN THE MATTER OF ALLEGATIONS RELATING TO REPRESENTATIVE CHUCK EDWARDS

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order at any time to consider H. Res. 1498 in the House without intervention of any point of order if called on by the chair of the Committee on Ethics or his designee; that the resolution be considered as read; and that the previous question be considered as ordered on the resolution to adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except for 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by myself and Representative EDWARDS of North Carolina, or their designee.

I call up H. Res. 1498 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Mississippi?

There was no objection.

IN THE MATTER OF ALLEGATIONS RELATING TO REPRESENTATIVE CHUCK EDWARDS

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the order of the House of today, I call up the resolution (H. Res. 1498) in the matter of allegations relating to Representative CHUCK EDWARDS, and

ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of today, the resolution is considered read.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1498

Resolved, That (1) the House adopt the Report of the Committee on Ethics dated July 22, 2026, In the Matter of Allegations Relating to Representative Chuck Edwards; (2) Representative Edwards of North Carolina be censured; (3) Representative Edwards forthwith present himself in the well of the House for pronouncement of the censure; and (4) Representative Edwards be censured with the public reading of this resolution by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The resolution shall be debatable for 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by Representative GUEST of Mississippi and Representative EDWARDS of North Carolina, or their respective designees.

The gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. GUEST) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. EDWARDS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi.

□ 1430

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on H. Res. 1498.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Mississippi?

There was no objection.

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The Committee on Ethics conducted a monthslong investigation into the activity of Mr. EDWARDS, and the committee released a report on August 3 and made the following findings.

First, the committee found no—and I do repeat the word “no”—evidence that Mr. EDWARDS engaged in sexual activity or that he explicitly propositioned any individuals under his employment.

The committee did find that Mr. EDWARDS’ conduct toward two young female staffers was inappropriate and violated rules prohibiting sexual harassment.

Mr. Speaker, sexual harassment can be shown generally in one of two ways. The first is unwelcome sexual advances premised on a quid pro quo exchange; i.e., there is a tangible job benefit that is conditioned on the employee engaging in a relationship with his or her employer. The second way sexual harassment can be shown is an abusive work environment that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the victim’s employment.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the House be in order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is correct.

The gravity of this resolution requires the attention of everybody in

the Chamber. If you have to have conversations, would you please take them off the floor.

The gentleman from Mississippi is recognized.

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, the allegations in this matter do not implicate a quid pro quo sexual harassment but, rather, that EDWARDS’ conduct and behavior create a hostile work environment.

Under Federal law, a hostile work environment must be objectively and subjectively offensive, one that a reasonable person would find hostile or abusive and one that the victim, in fact, did perceive to be so.

Determining whether an employee was subject to such an environment depends on a totality of the circumstances test. That test includes the frequency, severity, and offensiveness of the conduct at issue.

Mr. Speaker, in this case, the committee reviewed Representative EDWARDS’ conduct and determined that he engaged in persistent unprofessional and inappropriate conduct toward two young female staffers.

While Representative EDWARDS denies that his conduct was intended to be sexual or romantic, his pattern of behavior would lead a reasonable person to interpret it as such.

The behavior includes: providing the young women with lavish and recurrent gifts, making comments regarding their appearance and dress, inviting them to intimate dinners and vacations, sending notes regarding his affection, and inviting them to other activities as a way to spend time together.

Representative EDWARDS was aware that his excessive attention toward these young ladies led to rumors and innuendos that he was engaged in a romantic relationship with one or both staffers.

Representative EDWARDS was also aware that the women were uncomfortable with his behavior. The women communicated their feeling of discomfort to senior staff who then spoke with Representative EDWARDS on their behalf. Representative EDWARDS did not appreciate the action of senior staff expressing the discomfort felt by the two women and continued his behavior.

The committee found that Representative EDWARDS was, at a minimum, blind to the reality and, at worst, dismissive of the impact his conduct had on the careers and well-being of the women on his staff.

Representative EDWARDS’ conduct was singling out certain staffers and isolating them from other members of the staff, making frequent comments regarding a person’s appearance and weight, sending messages in the middle of the night, texting staff deeply personal and seemingly romantic thoughts, intruding on personal occasions without invitation, paying for personal vacations, and spending thousands of dollars on gifts for staffers.

When taken individually, this conduct is, at a minimum, inappropriate, but these actions, when taken in combination with each other and when viewed under a totality of the circumstances test, led the committee to find that Representative EDWARDS engaged in unprofessional conduct toward two young female staffers. Said conduct created a hostile work environment that resulted in both staffers leaving the employment of Mr. EDWARDS' office.

Furthermore, the Committee on Ethics recommends a floor sanction should be imposed, and Representative EDWARDS should be censured for his conduct.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to simply ask my colleagues to vote against a resolution of censure. I rise to ask this House to do something more fundamental: Judge me on the facts, not on the inference, insinuation, or headlines.

First, sincerely, I want to say something directly and publicly to the two women who have been at the center of all of this: I am sorry. I am sorry that my actions, my judgment, or the way that I expressed a friendship ever put either of you in an uncomfortable position. My intentions were only grounded in what I understood our friendship to be and in genuine admiration and respect that I had for each of you, not only as professionals but as people—people who were willing to share so much of your stories and your back-grounds with me.

I recognize now that my understanding of those relationships may not have always matched yours. You didn't ask to have your names, friendships, work, or private lives subjected to public speculation. You deserve better than to be caught in the middle of a controversy involving me.

You are both talented, intelligent, strong women who served the people of western North Carolina with dedication. Nothing about this episode should diminish that service or your accomplishments.

Most importantly, I want to apologize to my wife, Teresa, and to my family. You are the people that I love most in this world, and yet, you are the ones who have had to carry a burden that you did not create and did not deserve.

Teresa, you stood beside me through a lifetime of challenges, sacrifices, successes, and disappointments. You supported my public service and endured the demands that came with it. I am deeply sorry that my judgment and my actions put you in a position where you had to endure embarrassment, hurt, public scrutiny, and questions that no wife should ever have to face.

□ 1440

Mr. Speaker, regret is not an admission of sexual harassment. I can ac-

knowledge poor judgment, regret the discomfort that some of my actions may have caused, and apologize to those who were hurt by this episode, while still disputing a conclusion that the evidence just simply does not support.

I have detailed most of that in a letter to my colleagues. Some will read it, some have, and some will simply cast judgment. I am going to spare this body the time to review all of those details, but a few points bear discussing.

The committee concluded that I engaged in no sexual activity. The committee concluded that I did not explicitly proposition any staff member. The committee concluded that the allegations in this matter do not implicate quid pro quo sexual harassment, and the committee concluded that I did not violate Federal sexual harassment law. That law, by the way, was very specifically defined by Congress.

Those findings matter. Yet, despite those findings, the committee bridged a substantial evidentiary gap, called that gap sexual harassment. My colleagues should ask themselves whether the evidence truly supports that conclusion and whether it justifies one of the most serious punishments that this House can impose on one of its Members.

I provided the committee approximately 186,000 emails, text messages, voicemails, and other documents. That enormous record told the story of a long-standing relationship with those women that began years before we entered Congress. The two coworkers at issue and I worked together in my North Carolina Senate office. We worked on campaigns together. We came to Congress together. We traveled together on official business. We exchanged gifts reciprocally. We helped one another professionally and personally.

These were not one-sided relationships manufactured after the fact as a defense. The committee had evidence of that history, and they ignored it. Even the communications selected by the committee showed reciprocity: staff initiating dinners and activities, expressing affection, complimenting me, making future plans, and maintaining relationships after their employment ended.

That context matters, because selective totality is not totality at all, as the committee itself would have you believe. I am not asking anyone in this Chamber to approve of every interaction that I had, every compliment that I gave, or every gift that I purchased. Looking back, I don't approve of all of them either.

I am asking you to distinguish between conduct that you might personally have handled differently and conduct that warrants the solemn judgment of censure by the United States House of Representatives.

Friendship doesn't excuse misconduct, but neither can friendship be erased from the analysis when the com-

mittee asks what conduct meant. Context cannot matter only when it supports an accusation and then disappear when it points the other way.

Generosity is not sexual harassment. Caring deeply about the people with whom you have worked for years is not sexual harassment, and conduct that is otherwise permissible does not automatically become misconduct simply because enough individual moments are assembled together and viewed through the darkest possible lens.

Possibility is not proof. Inference is not evidence, and selective context is not totality.

There is another principle at stake here that extends far beyond me. Censure should not be imposed because Members believe they might have exercised better judgment. It should not be imposed because conduct can be interpreted unfavorably after the fact, and it certainly should not be imposed merely because voting against censure may be politically uncomfortable.

A censure by this House carries the weight of history. Once imposed, the nuance disappears. The qualifications disappear. The committee's findings that there was no sexual activity, no explicit proposition, no quid pro quo harassment, and no violation of Federal sexual harassment law will disappear. What will remain is one word attached permanently to my name: Censured.

This committee's report is loaded with contextual and testimonial omissions, and there are two claims that I find particularly interesting.

First, it claims what a reasonable observer might interpret. If the committee invokes a reasonable observer, then that observer should be given the whole context, not selected episodes stripped from years of relationships, as has been the case here. It should provide all relative context and view the circumstances as a whole, not merely what one particular person felt or what was isolated as a fact that might suggest. This report fails in those requirements.

Then it goes on to say how that same reasonable person could interpret my actions. Mr. Speaker, we spend a lot of time here in D.C. working to eliminate our coulds and shoulds, to avoid the vagueness of our laws and standards. Yet, this report chooses to invoke that same hypothetical that we work so hard to avoid.

So I ask each of you, Republican and Democrat alike, to look beyond the headlines and examine what the committee actually found. I am not asking for special treatment. I am asking for fair treatment. I am asking you to decide whether the punishment before you is supported by the evidence, proportional to the conduct actually established, and consistent with the standards that this House should apply to every Member, regardless of party or circumstance.

I have spent my public life trying to serve the people who entrusted me with

this office. I am imperfect. I have made mistakes, but I do not believe I committed sexual harassment. The factual findings of this investigation do not justify branding me as though I did.

Members of this House are not required to agree with every choice I made in order to vote against this censure. You need only conclude that the evidence does not justify the punishment.

I respectfully ask my colleagues to vote "no," not as a favor to me. Vote "no" because censure should require more than inference. Vote "no" because fairness demands that the whole record matter, and vote "no" because the judgment of this House should rest on what was proven, not on what can merely be presumed.

I close by reminding you: The committee concluded that I engaged in no sexual activity. The committee concluded that I did not explicitly proposition any staff member. The committee concluded that the allegations in this matter do not implicate quid pro quo sexual harassment, and the committee concluded that I did not violate Federal sexual harassment law.

Those are not my characterizations of this report. I will say again, those are not my characterizations of this report. Those are the committee's own conclusions.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, before I recognize my next speaker, I would point out that the arguments made by Mr. EDWARDS are facts that are contained in the report. They are part of the opening statement that I gave, the statement as to which the committee found no evidence that he was involved in a romantic relationship and found that he did not directly proposition any individuals who were in his employment.

And so there has been an attempt by this committee to put forth evidence that we believe supports sexual harassment but also to show evidence in the light that is being portrayed by Mr. EDWARDS, that some of the innuendos that were circulating at one time were not true and correct.

□ 1450

This committee worked very diligently, Mr. Speaker, to try to gather evidence and to try and present that in a fair format—evidence that both supports the findings of the committee and then at times evidence that supports the findings of those people who are charged or who are under investigation by the Ethics Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. DESAULNIER), the ranking member of the House Committee on Ethics.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I will start by thanking the chairman, whom I have great respect for, and our collegiality is focused on enforcing the rules of this body. I also thank all of

the committee members, who were thoughtful and bipartisan on this particular subject matter, and all of the things that come before the Ethics Committee. I also thank our non-partisan, professional committee staff for their tireless efforts and devoted service to this House and this country.

Our committee's investigation of Representative EDWARDS' conduct spanned 4 months and included interviews of 16 individuals and a review of nearly 1,500 pages of documents.

Our subsequent censure recommendation reflects our bipartisan and unwavering commitment to a congressional workplace free of sexual harassment and discrimination. Unfortunately, Representative EDWARDS, in my opinion, failed that standard.

For more than 2 years, Representative EDWARDS lavished two of his female staffers with gifts of jewelry, designer purses, shoes, flowers, gifts, and vacations, to name just a few examples.

He commented on their appearance and dress in their congressional office, remarking favorably on their weight and telling them they looked pretty and breathtaking in certain clothing.

He invited them on intimate one-on-one outings and trips to restaurants, casinos, and live performances.

He sent them personal texts late at night and wrote them deeply personal letters and poems expressing his affection. He even skipped a vote series to decorate a Christmas tree at one of the staffer's homes.

These are not innocuous, isolated incidences. They are part of sustained, unprofessional, and inappropriate conduct by Representative EDWARDS toward two young women he employed.

Neither individual felt free to reject Representative EDWARDS' attention without fear of professional consequences.

Despite attempts to communicate their discomfort, his behavior continued, and both ultimately left their congressional employment.

One woman told the committee that she felt she could not resist Representative EDWARDS because she "did not think having a Member of Congress against me would benefit my career."

This statement gets to the heart of the matter—the power and balance between Members of Congress and their staff.

Representative EDWARDS' interpretation of his own conduct does not change how the women experienced it. Whether or not he occasionally gave gifts to, or received them from, other staff is irrelevant to how he treated these two women, who felt his behavior was uncomfortable and unwanted.

Representative EDWARDS may not have made physical advances or explicit propositions, but sexual harassment does not require either. His conduct was inappropriate, unwelcome, and, most importantly, created a hostile work environment.

As a result, the House of Representatives lost two staffers, and, for that, I believe he should be censured.

In the House, censure is not simply a punishment directed at an individual Member. It is a collective statement by this institution that we will and will not tolerate certain behaviors. Today, with this censure resolution, we can make our standard clear. Professional boundaries must be respected. When congressional employees say that conduct is unwelcome, they will be heard, and that conduct will not be allowed to continue.

There must be zero tolerance for sexual harassment and misconduct in the Halls of Congress, but zero tolerance does not mean zero due process. Representative EDWARDS was fully informed of the allegations and sat for a voluntary interview. He ultimately waived certain procedural steps so that the committee could recommend a House-level sanction.

In exchange for accepting this recommended censure, he reviewed and was allowed to respond to the committee's report.

For sexual harassment to truly have no place in the congressional workplace, the principle cannot exist only on paper in a committee report. It must be modeled for accountability.

To deliver that accountability, to defend the integrity of this institution, and to affirm that every congressional employee deserves a safe and respectful workplace free from sexual harassment, I would urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chair of the committee one more time for his work on this matter.

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ).

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me time.

CHUCK EDWARDS' behavior over the past 2 years is disgusting and horrible. The sexual harassment of two young women on his staff and his abhorrent abuse of power is outlandish and disturbing.

He not only threatened the careers and safety of his staff with his behavior, but he broke the promise he made to Americans to act with dignity and integrity.

Since he continues to show no remorse, it is obvious that Edwards refuses to understand sexual harassment or his abuse of power. If we don't take action today, there is no opportunity for these women to receive justice.

Mr. Speaker, every Member must vote to censure him.

Over the course of these 2 years, he sent two young women on his staff mountains of expensive gifts, including designer purses, personalized handguns, and jewelry. He took them on intimate dinners, trips, and sent them late-night messages, despite the women making it clear they were uncomfortable. He even skipped votes. He skipped votes to decorate one of the staffer's Christmas tree.

One of the staff, as we heard, essentially said she feared retaliation. When

she said: "I worry about having somebody with that power against me," that is fear of retaliation.

Not only did he disrespect these women, he disregarded his duties to his constituents. For him, decorating a Christmas tree was more important than showing up to the vote, as his constituents expected when they sent him to Congress.

Even after this investigation, he continues to deny that this behavior was harassment. I basically do not see any remorse in his 22 pages or what he spoke today. Those 22 pages are basically a rant defending his actions.

He is someone who fails to see how what he has done has negatively impacted the lives and careers of these two young women. Because of Mr. EDWARDS' harassment, these two women don't work here anymore.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Committee on Ethics. I thank them for their thorough and efficient investigation. I thank the chair and the ranking member for their work. Without their investigation, we may never have known that EDWARDS spent years sexually harassing two young women on his staff.

This is textbook sexual harassment, and Congress must take action; but I say that the penalty should match the harassment. The precedent of censure, I believe, is not enough. These women lost their jobs because of Mr. EDWARDS' behavior. He should lose his.

It is time we reform the rules in Congress so abusers like EDWARDS are at least stripped of committee assignments or expelled if the offense calls for it—after an investigation and after a vote of the full floor—which is what we are doing today, because serving in Congress is a privilege and not an honor. It is not a right.

□ 1500

The American people continue to expect us to act with dignity, and if that trust is broken, there must be accountability.

We need to protect women in the House from retaliation and make sure that the men who abuse their power face real, substantive consequences. That is exactly why the Democratic Women's Caucus, together with the GOP Women's Caucus, has been working to end the widespread problem of sexual misconduct on the Hill. We are fighting to make Congress a place where our staffers feel safe coming to work.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote for the censure.

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. IVEY), a fellow member of the House Ethics Committee.

Mr. IVEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I thank the chair, the ranking member, and all of my colleagues, as well, for the hard work and nonpartisan work, I must say, as well, that we put

in, but especially the staff, who I thought did an outstanding job, yet again, in this investigation and in the report that they wrote.

I will speak to two different groups of people today. The first is my colleagues. The second is the young women—and I will come back to this in a minute—who I had a chance to speak to a few weeks ago, in the same week that Mr. Swalwell and Mr. Gonzales had resigned from the House. I will come back to that in a moment.

My colleagues, after they found out I was on the Ethics Committee, would frequently come up and ask me on different topics: What is over the line? What can I do to not get in trouble? How do I stay out of trouble, that sort of thing.

On these issues, this is a particular set that we have talked about on a couple of occasions, so I wanted to point out a couple of things here.

I commend Mr. EDWARDS for the comments that he made and the legal document that he filed, but one of the things it really failed to do was address the specific allegations about the gifts and how inappropriate, frankly, they obviously were on their face.

As the report details on page 4 of the report: "Both women received numerous gifts from Representative EDWARDS, including jewelry totaling over \$1,000, designer purses, guns, shoes, flowers, a laptop and cell phone, KitchenAid mixer, robotic vacuum, vacations, tickets to performances, and one-on-one dinners."

The tickets to performances, that wasn't just any performance. That was "Hamilton" on Broadway.

Mr. Speaker, my anniversary is coming up. I have been married 38 years as of Thursday, and my wife really wanted to go to see "Hamilton." When I took a look at what those prices were, I said: Babe, we are going to have to wait until it comes on the off-Broadway tour.

He put up the money to send them there anyway, and those are the types of things, those are the types of gifts, that kind of jump out at you. This isn't like a birthday card. This isn't congratulations on your wedding or that new baby that was born. These are gifts that people, Members, should not be giving to staffers.

I worked for a Congressman and three Senators as a staffer beginning back in 1987. We didn't pass around gifts like this. We just didn't.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for us to make sure we understand that, as Members, we want to mentor and help our young people move on and move up. I have to say that in that 40 years, I have seen people who fell into this situation, frequently women, where there were accusations or sexual harassment taking place or sexual relationships taking place. Some of my personal friends were forced out of their jobs in 1987 and 1988.

We didn't have the types of protections then that we do now. In fact, Con-

gress explicitly exempted itself from these sorts of restrictions. We have to make sure that now that they are in place, we use them to the fullest extent because those people, primarily women, it was damaging to their careers, and it stays with them.

That was before the internet age. These women today, in this instance, that is not good mentoring. This is something that could follow them for the rest of their careers, and it won't be beneficial to them.

Let's make sure, as we work through this with our staff, that we don't do things that actually injure our staffers who are doing good work for us and trying to make a difference.

One other point I want to make, and this is directly to the staffers. I had a chance to speak to a group, just coincidentally, during that week of the Gonzales and Swalwell resignations. It was a group of young people, mainly interns but not solely. Some of them were young people here on the Hill in their late teens and early twenties.

I asked them: How many of you heard about the resignations of Mr. Swalwell and Mr. Gonzales? There were about 40 of them in the room. Every hand went up.

I asked them then: How many of you know that we have an entity here, the Office of Employee Advocacy, that you can turn to and get assistance if you find yourself in that situation? Only two hands went up.

I talked to them and encouraged them about reaching out to this sort of professional assistance. It is a confidential attorney-client relationship. It makes a difference. Instead of them trying to parse out at age 19 or 20 or 22 or 25 the best way to proceed, get the sort of legal guidance to help you make it through there.

We have to do a better job of making sure that when that question is posed, not just 2 hands go up, but all 40 hands go up, so that when young men and women, especially women, find themselves in these kinds of situations, they don't have to try and figure out how to go forward. They don't have to go to the staff director, as what happened here, and get whatever guidance they might get, recognizing that the staff directors were in a precarious situation, too, when you have a Member committing this kind of misconduct. Let's make sure that they have that type of assistance.

Mr. Speaker, the last point I will make on this, and this is in the wake of some of the other—not investigations before the committee right now, but some of the other things we have heard. There are going to come times when we need to go outside of the House of Representatives and refer these cases to law enforcement because some of the sexual misconduct isn't just sexual harassment. It is sexual assault.

To the colleagues listening out there right now, don't do anything to approach these lines. They know that

this is over the line. He knows this was over the line, and he knew it when he was doing it. Let's make sure that we stop it in its tracks and give these young people, young women in particular, the type of assistance that they need.

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers. I move adoption of H. Res. 1498, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired. Pursuant to the order of the House of today, the previous question is ordered on the resolution.

The question is on adoption of the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question are postponed.

RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING THAT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FIND MICHAEL JOSEPH IN CONTEMPT OF CONGRESS FOR REFUSAL TO COMPLY WITH SUBPOENAS DULY ISSUED BY THE COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1504) which is printed in House Report 119-693, regarding proceedings against Michael Joseph and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1504

Resolved, That Michael Joseph shall be found to be in contempt of Congress for failure to comply with the subpoena *duces tecum* issued to him on September 11, 2025.

Resolved, That Michael Joseph shall be found to be in contempt of Congress for failure to comply with the subpoena *ad testificandum* issued to him on September 11, 2025.

Resolved, That pursuant to 2 U.S.C. §§192 and 194, the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall certify the Report of the Committee on Ethics, detailing the refusal of Michael Joseph to produce documents and appear before the Investigative Subcommittee as directed by these subpoenas, to the United States Attorney for the District of Columbia, to the end that Mr. Joseph be proceeded against in the manner and form provided by law.

Resolved, That the Speaker of the House shall otherwise take all appropriate action to enforce the subpoenas.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. GUEST) and the gentleman from California (Mr. DESAULNIER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi.

□ 1510

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the resolution printed in House Report 119-693.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Mississippi?

There was no objection.

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as the chair of the Committee on Ethics, I rise in support of the resolutions which call for Michael Joseph and Hector Roos to be held in contempt of Congress for their failure to comply with documentary and testimonial subpoenas issued on September 11, 2025, and August 12, 2026, respectively.

Article I, Section 5 of the Constitution provides that each House may punish its Members for disorderly behavior, and with the concurrence of two-thirds, expel a Member.

The House has charged the Committee on Ethics with the duty of implementing this provision on its behalf. The committee recommends and enforces ethical standards that ensure Members and staff act in a manner befitting the public trust.

Pursuant to that authority, the House has authorized the committee and its subcommittees to require by subpoena or otherwise the attendance and testimony of such witnesses and their production of such books, records, correspondence, memoranda, papers, and documents as it considers necessary to carry out its investigative functions.

House rules do not specify that personal service is the only method of effecting service of its subpoenas. An individual has a legal obligation to comply with a duly issued and valid congressional subpoena, unless a valid privilege or other legal justification excuses compliance. An individual who fails to comply with a House subpoena may be cited for contempt of Congress.

In this case, the committee impaneled an investigative subcommittee to inquire into certain allegations regarding former Representative Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick.

In order to conduct a thorough investigation, the investigative subcommittee authorized, and the committee issued, subpoenas for documents and testimonies to Mr. Joseph and Mr. Roos.

Mr. Roos was a senior campaign staffer who filed inaccurate reports with the Federal Election Commission and made in kind contributions to the campaign.

Mr. Roos was served with documentary and testimonial subpoenas issued on August 12, 2025, by the United States Marshals Service. He did not appear for his deposition on September 25, 2025, nor did he produce the documents at any time. Mr. Roos did not

provide a valid legal justification for his noncompliance.

Mr. Joseph was the President of a company that improperly provided corporate funds for the Congresswoman's campaign and influenced her staff to submit community funding project requests for entities that he supported.

Mr. Joseph was served with documentary and testimonial subpoenas issued on March 11, 2025. Mr. Joseph accepted service. Later, he responded he could not comply because as an attorney it would violate attorney-client privilege.

Committee rules provide that the presiding member of the subcommittee may consider objections on the basis of privilege and request his objection be put in writing. Although Mr. Joseph did not do so, the investigative subcommittee nonetheless considered his objection and determined it was not a valid assertion of the attorney-client privilege.

Nonetheless, Mr. Joseph did not appear for his deposition on October 7, 2025, nor did he produce documents at any time. Mr. Joseph did not provide a valid legal justification for his non-compliance.

The investigative subcommittee offered both Mr. Roos and Mr. Joseph a final opportunity to comply with subpoenas, but neither did so.

Therefore, the investigative subcommittee voted on March 18, 2026, to adopt reports recommending the committee submit a resolution recommending the House cite Mr. Roos and Mr. Joseph for contempt of Congress pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 194 and 192.

On May 13, 2026, the committee adopted its own reports incorporating by reference the reports of the investigative subcommittee and concurring with this recommendation. The reports were transmitted to the Clerk of the House and made public on June 22, 2026, and have been made available to Members of the House and the public on the committee's website since Friday.

The committee cannot fulfill its obligations to safeguard the integrity of the House when witnesses ignore its subpoenas, and the House cannot accept such willful disregard of its authority.

Mr. Roos and Mr. Joseph willfully failed to comply with multiple subpoenas issued by the committee. They impeded the investigative subcommittee's investigations into the allegations concerning former Representative Cherfilus-McCormick.

Those allegations were serious and included violations of Federal law to which Mr. Roos and Mr. Joseph were party. Their conduct warrants referrals to the United States Department of Justice for contempt of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the resolution holding Michael Joseph in contempt of Congress for his failure to