



HR0189

LRB103 31839 MST 60467 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, On March 27, 2023, three children and three adults were killed in a mass shooting at The Covenant School in Nashville, Tennessee; and

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WHEREAS, The loss of lives spurred thousands of Tennesseans to make their voices heard through protests at the Tennessee State Capitol, advocating for reform of laws governing firearm access and availability; and

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WHEREAS, Channeling the voices of their constituents who were among those demonstrating, Reps. Justin Jones, Justin Pearson, and Gloria Johnson attempted to speak in support of reforming gun laws but were denied, and their microphones were cut off, preventing them from speaking on that topic and on any measure or order of business; denied the ability to speak using their desks and microphones, they instead echoed the chants for reform from Tennesseans present at their capitol; and

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WHEREAS, Immediately, the Tennessee House of Representatives majority began an extraordinary campaign of retaliation against Reps. Jones, Pearson, and Johnson, including stripping them of committee assignments, removing their access to their office space and parking, and

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1 threatening expulsion, the most extreme action a legislative
2 body can take against one of its members; and

3 WHEREAS, Expelling a member from the legislative body is
4 an act so extraordinary that, since the Civil War, the
5 Tennessee House had only previously used it to remove members
6 attempting to block ratification of the 14th Amendment to the
7 United States Constitution, which granted citizenship to
8 formerly enslaved people and equal protection of the law to
9 all Americans, and to remove members for bribery and sexual
10 misconduct; and

11 WHEREAS, Even pursuing the extraordinary step of
12 expulsion, the Tennessee House majority never intended to have
13 a fair proceeding for Reps. Jones, Pearson, and Johnson, with
14 one member of Tennessee's House leadership referring to Rep.
15 Jones as a "former representative" prior to the filing of any
16 expulsion resolution, any hearings, or proceedings on
17 expulsion and without pursuing any other form of conflict
18 resolution for alleged violations of decorum; and

19 WHEREAS, On April 6, 2023, after less than a day of
20 proceedings, Reps. Jones and Pearson were expelled from the
21 Tennessee House for these alleged violations of decorum, but
22 Rep. Johnson was not; this, despite lawmakers from the
23 majority party admitting that the expulsion resolutions

1 contained "deficiencies", dishonored the legislative process
2 and occurred without the Tennessee House's normal step of
3 empaneling an ethics committee to review alleged violations of
4 their rules; therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
6 HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
7 we condemn the expulsion of Tennessee State Representatives
8 Justin Jones and Justin Pearson and condemn the attempted
9 expulsion of Tennessee State Rep. Gloria Johnson from the
10 Tennessee House of Representatives; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
12 presented to Reps. Jones, Pearson, and Johnson as a symbol of
13 our respect and esteem.