

TOM PATTON

Our REPRESENTATIVE

TO: Matt Abens, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee for Discipline
FROM: State Representative Thomas F. Patton (R-Strongsville)
SUBJECT: Response to Referral to Committee
DATE: March 3, 2023

I. A History of Republican Success

Let me start by stating that I appreciate the work of the Republican Party of Cuyahoga County (RPCC) as a whole and I hope that we can continue to work together to elect Republicans in our County. I am, however, greatly disappointed that this baseless resolution full of misinformation and manipulative interpretations of our Bylaws has led to the formation of this Ad Hoc Committee. Certain individuals' personal agendas are attempting to paint a disparaging picture of my 20 plus years of service to my constituents, the Republican Party, and the State of Ohio. It is counterproductive and is taking valuable time away from the good work of the Republican Party.

My election record shows that my constituents have overwhelmingly agreed with my core positions on tax cuts, job creation, economic development, preserving and protecting human life, defending the 2nd Amendment, investing in education, and fostering a friendly business environment. Simply put, I've made it my goal to make our District and our State a better place to raise a family and succeed in the workforce.

I have proudly served my constituents since my first election to the Statehouse in 2002. Whether it has been House Districts 7, 18, or 17 or Senate District 24, I have had the blessing of my constituents to return to Columbus represent THEIR interests in my re-elections in 2004, 2006, 2008, 2012, 2016, 2018, 2020, and 2022 respectively. I am the longest tenured Republican from Cuyahoga County in the Statehouse and perhaps more importantly, was *the only* Republican in a contested race to prevail in our county on 2022 Election Night. In the Ohio House, I am the only Republican in Cuyahoga County as the other nine are all represented by Democrats. My goal is always to represent the best interests of my constituents and Northeast Ohio and my vote for Representative Jason Stephens for Ohio House Speaker was the best way to achieve that goal.

II. No Violation of Bylaws

With respect to the Resolution, I have not done anything but be truly faithful to our party, to the Bylaws, and to our candidates. First and foremost, my actions did not violate Article II(C)(2) as I voted for a Republican Speaker with a conservative record in his over two decades of service as a county auditor, county commissioner, and state representative – ALL as a Republican. Representative Stephens was endorsed by the Ohio Right to Life PAC and the National Rifle Association in his 2022 race. Further when paired up against the other candidates for Speaker, it was Representative Jason Stephens that received the CPAC endorsement (See Attachment 1). [Red meat: Ohioans Jim Jordan and JD Vance play to the CPAC crowd\(Cleveland.com, 3/3/2023\)](#). It is also disingenuous to allege that I violated this Article by only

quoting a portion of that Article - “conduct that violates the spirit of [the RPCC Bylaws]”. When read as a whole, it is clear that no such violation Article II(C)(2) occurred. To state otherwise is nothing other than an ill-conceived and misguided interpretation. Article II(C)(2) in its entirety reads as follows:

“All members and officers of the COMMITTEE and any subdivision of the COMMITTEE are *strongly urged to support only Republicans for partisan political office* and the active support or endorsement of a member of another party for partisan political office or other conduct that violates the spirit of these rules may be grounds for censure by the COMMITTEE in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order.” (Emphasis added).

I did not engage in any behavior that violated the article on its face or even in spirit. It is undisputed that I voted for a *Republican* candidate for Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives. Moreover, I keep hearing similarly false accounts that a “unit rule” or “unanimity rule” exists within the Ohio House Republican Caucus. I am a Member of that caucus (and nobody else from Cuyahoga County is, sadly, and especially not the individuals mistakenly alleging misconduct). As a longstanding Member of the caucus, I assure you that there is no such “rule.”

Legislators caucus to discuss policy and then vote their conscience and in the best interests of their constituents on the House Floor. Not only is there not a “unit rule” or “unanimity rule”, but the Rules of the House explicitly state that every Member gets to vote on the position of Speaker of the House regardless of party affiliation. If the Democrats voted for Representative Stephens, that was up to them. I never spoke to one Democrat about their vote prior to their vote. Moreover, Speaker Stephens’ actions since that time have only solidified my belief that he has the temperament, intelligence, and leadership style to best serve my District and constituents.

Peculiarly enough, I do not recall certain members of the RPCC doing anything to support my efforts when I voted for incumbent Speaker Ryan Smith when he was unseated by Larry Householder (who is currently on trial for a variety of criminal charges as I’m sure you are all aware). It is worth noting that Representative Derek Merrin voted with the Democrats to elect Speaker Householder in 2019. I did not see the outrage at that point in time and the situation was merely characterized – and even applauded – as shrewd political maneuvering. There was no discussion of “censure” or “discipline” or any violations of “unit rules” or other Bylaws by this party, or any Republican Party across the state.

Returning to Article II(C)(2), as it relates to Members’ conduct in contested elections, I again reiterate that not only did I support a Republican Speaker, nominated by the Republican Party in his district and duly elected, but I consistently support Republican candidates not just for partisan, but for non-partisan offices. That section is the topic that your Committee is empowered to examine, and as stated earlier, not only have I adhered to my duties as an Executive Committee Member, but you can also ask the hundreds of state, local, and municipal Republican candidates and races that I have helped and supported over the years.

III. Republican Teamwork Moving Forward

I deeply respect that the RPPC has supported my efforts over the years, and of course, I have been a strong supporter of the RPCC. I do not know nor care to speculate upon some individuals' motivations to instigate this process and attempt to blemish my distinguished record, particularly when I have made the RPCC proud by consistently winning election after election in a Democratic County and proudly carry the GOP banner. Republican Mayors, City Council Members, and other local officials in my District ask me for my support and I render it, because we are all on the same team.

I will continue to support Republicans and work to build our Party into a broad-based coalition of citizens who stand with our platform. Your work is simple: there are no violations of any Bylaws as I unequivocally supported a Republican for Speaker and that candidate won. Let there be no doubt, I will be ready to stand before the people again in 2024. I appreciate your time and consideration and look forward to working with you all on Republican principles going forward.



November 15, 2022

Re: CPAC – Endorsement of Rep. Jason Stephens for Ohio Speaker of the House

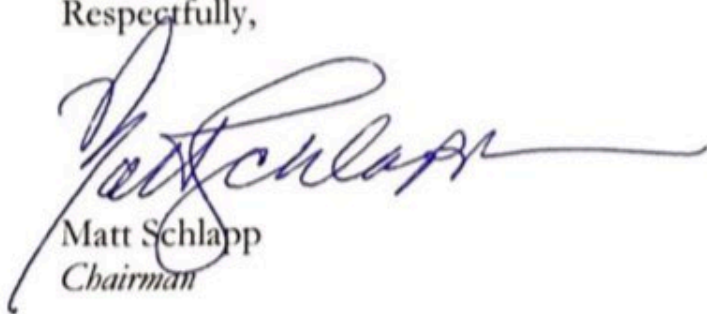
Dear Representative Stephens:

Last week's election results are a clear message that our nation needs leaders in state's who will embrace a conservative agenda to benefit all Americans. Given your conservative voting record in the Ohio House of Representatives (CPAC Foundation 82% lifetime rating) and extensive background of public service in local government, we are pleased to endorse your candidacy for Speaker of the House.

The Ohio legislature ranks as the 4th most conservative among the fifty states since we began rating state legislatures in 2015, however it has dropped to 12th in recent years. There is always more that can be done to stand up for policies which deliver results for constituents in Ohio. Whether it is guarding parental rights in the education of our children, strengthening election integrity protections, or enacting a pro-growth economic agenda, we look forward to working with you in 2023 and beyond.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, or David Safavian, CPAC Senior Vice President, at (202) 347-9388.

Respectfully,



Matt Schlapp
Chairman