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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND
COOPERATION IN EUROPE (U.S.
HELSINKI COMMISSION)

April 5, 2023

Representative Cameron Sexton
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Tennessee General Assembly
425 Rep. John Lewis Way N.
Suite 600 Cordell Hull Bldg.
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Speaker Sexton,

As a former 25-year state Senator and current Member of Congress, I understand the need for compliance with rules in a legislative body. The three Democratic Members did violate the rules of decorum, however I believe expulsion to be too extreme a consequence. There have only been a few previous expulsions in Tennessee history, all due to violations of statutory law, such as bribery. Heightened emotions prompted by the horrific Covenant School shootings that resulted in the death of six Tennesseans, including three nine-year-old's, should be a mitigating factor in any disciplinary response.

As I understand it, each Member was already removed from their committee assignments after last week's demonstrations. Additionally, expelling these Members will result in the disenfranchisement of their constituents, who voted for them. It would also result in the special expense of primary and general elections.

I urge you to consider a lesser consequence for Representatives Justin Pearson, Gloria Johnson and Justin Jones and appreciate that you will consider this request in anticipation of your final decision.

As always, I remain,

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Cohen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steve Cohen
Member of Congress