

Rep. Drake: Wisconsin Legislative Black Caucus opposes Tennessee House Resolutions Numbers 63, 64 to expel lawmakers for protest

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MADISON, WI—On April 3, Tennessee House Republicans introduced resolutions to expel three members of the Tennessee General Assembly for “disorderly behavior” after the trio led protest chants for gun reform on the floor of the chamber last week. Tennessee House Resolutions Numbers 63, 64, and 65 state that the members’ “conduct on March 30, 2023, constitutes disorderly behavior and justifies expulsion.”

As members of the Wisconsin Legislative Black Caucus, we oppose the resolutions to expel the Tennessee Three, and the results of the two young black lawmakers being expelled. Instead of valuing our democratic process and protecting our First Amendment right to assemble and protest public, Tennessee House Republicans introduced these resolutions as an attempt to silence the lawmakers who are doing their job and advocating for their constituents’ interests.

Taking a vote to expel elected members of the Tennessee House of Representatives for amplifying the voices of their constituents in a peaceful, non-violent manner undermines the democratic process. It is an egregious act of injustice by leaving some 200,000 constituents disenfranchised and without representation. Most importantly, it is a blatant act of racism and prejudice.

We are asking that the two lawmakers are sent back to the Tennessee State Legislature, and that the legislative body turns their focus to addressing the real challenges facing their communities.