

I am a constituent of House District 23, and have been since its current inception. I live just south of lovely Independence.

Thank you for allowing me to participate, and thank you to Chair Holvey, House Minority Leader Drazen, Majority Leader Smith-Warner and the other distinguished members of the committee for accepting and persevering with this odious task. I know that it cannot be an enjoyable endeavor.

I speak today in support of the resolution, HR3, to find Representative Mike Nearman, House District 23, engaged in disorderly behavior, and expels him from the Oregon Legislature. This office belongs to the residents of HD23, not him. It is clear by his actions that Mr. Nearman cannot represent district constituents within the bounds of the law. He has sullied our district, the greater house body, and our democracy with his willful and wanton disregard of statute, the Constitution, and his oath, and he therefor is not fit to remain in office.

There is already a determination by independent investigation that Mr. Nearman "more likely than not" intentionally assisted in and was thereby responsible for the breach of the State Capitol building on December 21, 2020. This malfeasance on the part of an elected representative is bad enough, but we now know based on video and audio evidence obtained last week, that Mr. Nearman was more than just a player in this act. He was, it appears, a conspirator and an instigator in the violent action against democracy that took place in December of last year, placing all of his fellow legislators, their staff, and Capitol building employees in danger. Mr. Nearman committed this dangerous and selfish deed simply because he felt that he knew better about what was good for "the people" than did the Governor, and 89 other legislators conducting business in the building at the time.

I was born and raised in Oregon. In 60 years here, I cannot recall a more dangerous and egregious act plotted and carried out against the democratically elected government of the state and its citizens by an elected official, and certainly not by a member of the Oregon Legislature. And in my study of history, any time before that. You are all aware that this is an unprecedented and deeply serious matter.

I am a retired Naval Officer. I swore a solemn oath to "Support and Defend" the Constitution. That oath is sacred to me. Even now, years after leaving service, I still believe in upholding that oath. As with all of the members here, Mr. Nearman swore a very similar oath when sworn in as an Oregon State Representative. It is clear that Mr. Nearman has broken that oath with his conspiracy to allow invaders into our State Capitol.

Had I ever done anything like that in the military, I would have been court-martialed. It's called treason. I hope that people can see how dangerous and pernicious his actions were, and are, both physically and ideologically. People, law enforcement, got hurt; public property was damaged, and our concept of a safe place for democracy is shattered.

With this clear and present danger manifest, I sincerely ask this committee to move this resolution to the House floor, with a unanimous vote to expel Mr. Nearman from the hallowed halls of the Oregon State House of Representatives.

Additionally, with regard to this incident, I would like note that conspiring to commit treason, and carrying it out, is a felony. It doesn't matter if you are on the right or on the left, Republican or Democrat. This is not "all political" as Mr. Nearman has claimed. This is criminal. Felony conspiracy charges should be added to Mr. Nearman's current misdemeanor charges, and he should be tried in a court of law for his actions.

Thank you for your time.