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**RESOLUTION  
OF THE AD HOC DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE  
OF THE  
REPUBLICAN PARTY OF CUYAHOGA COUNTY**

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**WHEREAS**, the Chairman of the Republican Party of Cuyahoga County (“the Party”) has formed an Ad Hoc Disciplinary Committee (“Disciplinary Committee”) pursuant to the Party’s bylaws and Roberts Rules of Order;

**WHEREAS**, on or about February 2, 2023, the Chairman of the Party has referred the name of Thomas F. Patton for consideration for discipline;

**WHEREAS**, it has been alleged that Thomas F. Patton is a party official; and

**WHEREAS**, this Disciplinary Committee has sent notice to Thomas F. Patton that it will hold a trial under Roberts Rules of Order for purposes of taking disciplinary action against him, including identifying the charge and specifications made against him, the procedure the trial would take, and the time and place for the trial;

**NOW THEREFORE**, the Disciplinary Committee, having held the trial on March 6, 2023, finds as follows:

1. Thomas F. Patton is a party official, to wit a member of the Party’s Central Committee, having been elected as precinct committee member for Strongsville 2-B at the March 17, 2020 primary election.
2. On November 16, 2022, the Ohio House Republican Caucus held a caucus vote for the purposes of selecting a new Speaker of the House for the upcoming 135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.
3. At the November 16 caucus meeting, the Ohio House Republican Caucus ultimately selected Representative Derek Merrin as Speaker-Elect.
4. At the November 16 caucus meeting, there was a vote of acclamation for unanimous consent for the caucus members to support Derek Merrin, to which none of the caucus members present, including Thomas F. Patton, voiced any objection.

5. On December 22, 2022, the president of the Strongsville GOP PAC texted Thomas F. Patton of talk the Strongsville GOP PAC president had heard about an attempt to “push Merrin out of speakership.”
6. Thomas F. Patton denied hearing of any such attempt.
7. On December 23, 2022, Thomas F. Patton texted the Strongsville GOP PAC president that he had received a message from a Brian Mike, who said Thomas F. Patton “was part of a movement to overthrow the Merrin election. I called BULLSHIT.” Brian Mike said Thomas F. Patton “was supporting Stephens in this ‘challenge.’ I haven’t spoken to him since the night he lost. ON MY GRANDKIDS EYES!!! Is this Brian Mike just a shit starter.”
8. On January 2, 2023, the Strongsville GOP PAC president again texted Thomas F. Patton about the Merrin-Stephens battle for Speaker.
9. Thomas F. Patton responded that same day and alleged that he had not talked to any of the “3 individuals looking at it.”
10. On January 3, 2023, the Strongsville GOP PAC president implored Thomas F. Patton not to vote for Stephens.
11. After denying any involvement with Stephens for the previous 11 days, Thomas F. Patton replied, “Merrin bad for me. He was planning doing RTW [right to work] & Prevailing wage bills.”
12. Although on January 2, 2023, Thomas F. Patton claimed that there were three individuals looking to push Merrin out, Thomas F. Patton later sent a contradictory text on January 3, 2023, to the Strongsville GOP PAC president that he “wasn’t sure who the alternative to Merrin would be till Sunday [January 1] night”, which was one day prior to when Thomas F. Patton had heard there were allegedly three individuals who were looking to push Merrin out.
13. In seconding Representative Merrin’s nomination for speaker, Representative James M. Hoops referenced the Ohio House GOP Caucus’ vote for unanimity.
14. The vote for unanimity has since been acknowledged by Representatives Sara Carruthers and Ron Ferguson.

15. On March 3, 2023, Thomas F. Patton submitted a written statement detailing his position and defense on the charge and specifications to the Committee.

16. Attached hereto are the following:

- a. Notice of the trial;
- b. Thomas F. Patton's response;
- c. Text message exchange between Thomas F. Patton and the Strongsville GOP PAC president; and
- d. Screenshot of January 3, 2023, tweet from Jack Windsor.

17. Thomas F. Patton did not appear for the March 6, 2023, trial.

18. Thomas F. Patton is subject to discipline for (1) other "conduct that violates the spirit of [the RPCC Bylaws] \* \* \*" (see Party Bylaws at Article II(C)(2)); (2) "conduct tending to injure the good name of the organization, disturb its well-being, or hamper it in its work,' or the like \* \* \*" (see Section 63:24 of Roberts Rules of Order); and (3) conduct contravening the Ethics portion of the Party's Platform ("The Republican Party of Cuyahoga County (RPCC) commits itself to applying a code of high ethical standards in action, word, and deed, and encourages all of its members, including elected and public officials \* \* \* to apply these standards in \* \* \* personal characteristics of integrity, honesty, morality, civility, conviction, trust, and leadership, doing no harm in word or deed, transparency of actions \* \* \*. Elected and appointed officials \* \* \* and party leaders must demonstrate the highest commitment to ethics in their political campaigns and their terms of office. Republican elected officials and candidates should lead by example and exhibit ethical behavior, over and above standards \* \* \*.").

**ACCORDINGLY**, the Disciplinary Committee finds Thomas F. Patton guilty of the charge of violating Article II(C)(2) of the Party's Bylaws.

The Disciplinary Committee hereby recommends that the Party's Central and Executive Committees formally censure Thomas F. Patton.

The Disciplinary Committee further recommends the Party's Central and Executive Committees remove Thomas F. Patton from their respective committees for the remainder of his term on each of those respective committees; and further recommends that Thomas F. Patton be prohibited from obtaining any and all endorsements from the Republican Party of Cuyahoga County from the effective date of this Resolution through the seating of a new Central Committee subsequent

to the election of Central Committee precinct members to be held at the 2024 primary election.

**BE IT SO RESOLVED THIS 10th DAY OF MARCH 2023.**

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Via regular mail & e-mail

February 20, 2023

Representative Thomas F. Patton  
17157 Rabbit Run Dr.  
Strongsville, OH 44136  
Tom.patton24@gmail.com

My name is Matthew Abens, and I write to you today as Chairman of the Republican Party of Cuyahoga County's ("RPCC") Ad Hoc Committee for Discipline. As you should be aware, this disciplinary committee was established following the passage of a resolution on February 2, 2023, referring a complaint about you to a disciplinary investigation and trial.

As a member of the Central and Executive Committees, as well as being an elected officeholder, you are an officer of the RPCC. Consequently, you are beholden to the bylaws of the RPCC, which implements the provisions of Roberts Rules of Order, and the RPCC's platform.

The allegation the Disciplinary Committee has the responsibility to investigate and conduct a trial on is that your decision to cast your vote on January 3, 2023, in the Ohio Speaker of the House race for Jason Stephens violated the GOP House Caucus' vote of unanimous consent that was decided on or about November 16, 2022. That vote of unanimous consent pledged unanimity from the GOP caucus members to vote for Derek Merrin as Speaker of the House. Consequently, it is alleged that your vote constitutes "conduct that violates the spirit of [the RPCC Bylaws]" and "may be grounds for censure by the COMMITTEE in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order." See RPCC Bylaws at Article II(C)(2).

In addition, because the RPCC Bylaws incorporate by reference Roberts Rules of Order, it is alleged that the above-described conduct runs afoul of the Bylaws pursuant to Section 63:24 of Roberts Rules of Order, the relevant portion of which states, "if the bylaws of the society provide for the imposition of penalties for offenses defined in the bylaws or an adopted code of conduct or similar set of rules, a charge may consist of such a defines offense. If such particular offenses are not defined or are not applicable, a member may be charged with conduct tending to injure the good name of the organization, disturb its well-being, or hamper it in its work, or the like \* \* \*."

Finally, your conduct is alleged to violate the Ethics portion of the RPCC Platform, which provides, in pertinent part, "The Republican Party of Cuyahoga County (RPCC) commits itself to applying a code of high ethical standards in action, word, and deed, and encourages all of its members, including elected and public officials \* \* \* to apply these standards in \* \* \* personal characteristics of integrity, honesty, morality, civility, conviction, trust, and leadership, doing no harm in word or deed, transparency of actions \* \* \*. Elected and appointed officials \* \* \* and party leaders must demonstrate the highest commitment to ethics in their political campaigns and their terms of office. Republican elected officials and candidates should lead by example and exhibit ethical behavior, over and above standards \* \* \*."

Taking all of this into consideration, the elements of this charge, therefore, are (1) you are a member of the Committee, and (2) you committed misconduct in violation of the RPCC Bylaws and RPCC Platform.

The specifications for this charge are that (1) you voted for Jason Stephens as Speaker of the House in contravention of the Ohio GOP Caucus' vote of unanimity and (2) you gave written assurances to constituents that you were not going to switch your vote and break the rule of unanimity.

A trial on the charge and specifications will be held on March 6, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. The location will be the new RPCC office located at 6200 Rockside Woods Blvd., Independence, Ohio.

In the alternative, to avoid this trial, you may simply respond (1) respond in writing to the charge and specifications set forth above and submit it to the Disciplinary Committee by no later than March 1, 2023; or (2) you may choose to resign your membership in the Central and Executive Committees. This, of course, would not affect your status as a member of the Republican Party. Please keep in mind, the Disciplinary Committee is not recommending or requesting either course of action.

At the trial you may plead guilty or not guilty to the foregoing charge and specification(s). If you plead not guilty, the procedure will be as follows:

1. Brief opening statements by the "manager" for the "prosecution," and then by you.
2. Evidence presented by the manager.
3. Evidence from you and/or your witness(es).
4. Rebuttal evidence.
5. Any questions from the Discipline Committee members.
6. Closing arguments.

If you plead guilty, there will be a summary of the facts and both sides can present any arguments they deem appropriate.

If you choose to not attend, we shall proceed in your absence.

Afterwards, the Ad Hoc Committee will convene in confidence and render a recommended verdict and penalty. Penalties can include, but are not limited to, no action, censure, suspension of your position of officer or termination of your position as officer. *See* RROO 63:33 and RPCC Bylaws Article II, Section 1(C)(2).

The Ad Hoc Committee will advise you of its recommendation and will submit its proposed action to the Committee. The Committee will then review the findings and recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee at the Committee's next meeting, which is tentatively scheduled for April 1, 2023. You will have an opportunity to respond to the recommendation at the Committee's meeting if you choose to do so.

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions. If I do not hear from you, please know that we wish you the best in all of your endeavors.

Sincerely,

*Matthew Abens*

Matthew Abens

Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee for Discipline

# 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

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## 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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**

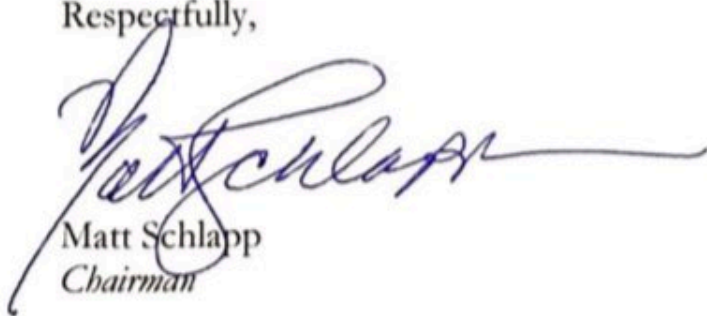
Dear Representative Stephens:

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 4<sup>th</sup> most conservative among the fifty states since we began rating state legislatures in 2015, however it has dropped to 12<sup>th</sup> 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

← New Conversation

TP Tom Patton (M)



12/22/22 10:16 PM

I hear Stephens is lobbying Dems and pro-union Rs are going to back him...attempt to push Merrin out of speakership. You hearing same?

First I've heard of that one

Ok good

Honest to God

Good. Rumors are usually purposefully started. Wonder what the motive is

I'd not be surprised is someone made a move....I don't recall EVER having a conversation



| type a message



← **New Conversation**

TP Tom Patton (M)



Y Honest to God

Good. Rumors are usually purposefully started. Wonder what the motive is

Y I'd not be surprised is someone made a move....I don't recall EVER having a conversation with Stephens. What part of the State?

Not sure. I heard from someone in the SW but it could have started anywhere

I will tell you this race for State chair is going to be interesting

Y Who are you supporting?



Compose message...



6:00 69%

5G 69%



## New Conversation

TP

Tom Patton (M)



12/23/22 11:27 AM

I'm just saying. I got a message from a "Brian Mike" a little bit ago. Said he heard I was doing something he hoped I wasn't doing. I asked him what he heard. Said I was part of a movement to overthrow the Merrin election. I called BULLSHIT. Demanded a NAME. He finally said he heard it on Jack Windsor and Bob Frantz on the radio. Do you know these guys? He said I was supporting Stephens in this "challenge". I haven't spoken to him since the night he lost. ON MY GRANDKIDS EYES!!! Is this Brian Mike just a shit starter. I didn't even know he was in my Facebook

12/23/22 11:41 AM



Message



New Conversation

TP Tom Patton (M)



12/23/22 11:41 AM

I know both of them. I'll put a stop to it right now

Did he say they named you by name?

He said they mentioned me and Scott Oselager. I cannot imagine Scott participating in anything like this. Hell, I was lukewarm on Stephens to begin with. I was with Baldrige, the firefighter.

"Did he say they named you by name?"

I'll get back to you

"I'll get back to you"



Message in a blue bubble



← New Conversation

TP Tom Patton (M)



name?

He said they mentioned me and Scott Oselager. I cannot imagine Scott participating in anything like this. Hell, I was lukewarm on Stephens to begin with. I was with Baldrige, the firefighter.

👉 "Did he say they named you by name?"

I'll get back to you

👉 "I'll get back to you"

Tell them I want a NAME.

Please

12/28/22 9:35 PM



[input field]



New Conversation

TP Tom Patton (M)



1/2/23 3:41 PM

This Merrin/Stephens thing is looking really bad. Will destroy the party. Please impress uppn your colleagues not to make the deal with the devil.

1/2/23 3:50 PM

I hear there are now 3 individuals looking at it. I haven't talked to any of them. But I'm shocked that Derek is taking on a strong list of anti labor bills. But I appreciate his honesty for telling me.

1/3/23 2:39 PM

I'm implore you... don't go with Stephens

1/3/23 4:11 PM



← New Conversation

TP Tom Patton (M)



1/3/23 4:11 PM

Merrin bad for me. He was planning on doing RTW & Prevailing wage bills.

Not bad for Republicans... sorry he was bad for YOU

The only R that got elected in Cuyahoga this last November. Will a ton of LABOR SUPPORT & money. Would I have won without them? You would know better than anyone.

1/3/23 4:31 PM

You could have told me. I stood up for you and had your back and now I look like a complete fool. Glad your union buddies are happy with you



[input field]



← New Conversation

TP Tom Patton (M)



1/3/23 4:31 PM

You could have told me. I stood up for you and had your back and now I look like a complete fool. Glad your union buddies are happy with you

Delivered

1/3/23 4:39 PM

I've ALWAYS had your back. Even before you came into power. I was tired, wasn't sure who the alternative to Merrin would be till Sunday night. How many votes in 20 years to you and my club members disagree on?? My democrat opponents would have cast 0 PLENTY. Yet I continue to deliver to my County and my District. Give me that much credit at least





**jackwindsor** 

@jackwindsor

Rep Hoops seconds Callender's nomination of Merrin. Reminds House members that the caucus made a commitment and that commitment was a unanimous approval to vote for Merrin.

2:45 PM · 03 Jan 23 · **1,704** Views