

December 13, 2022

Chairman J. McCauley Brown  
Republican Party of Kentucky  
105 W 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Frankfort, KY 40601

Re: December 5, 2022 letter from Cheryl Benitez, Chair, Republican Party of Hardin County (attached)

Chairman Brown,

I am the elected spokesperson of the Republican Party of Jessamine County regarding the matter of our County's censure of Mitch McConnell on July 20, 2022. (copy attached)

**Censure:** express severe disapproval of (someone or something) especially in a formal statement

The Republican Party of Jessamine County censure of Senator McConnell was not lightly taken. While I believe the censure speaks clearly for itself, it arises out of Senator McConnell's support and vote for the Democrat authored "Bipartisan Safer Communities Act". The offensive part of this law was the provision of 750 million dollars in federal tax money for states which have passed Red Flag laws. Simply put, a Red Flag law permits the confiscation of guns without due process of law. The platform of the Republican Party, unchanged from 2016, says on the bottom of page 12:

**We also oppose any effort to deprive individuals of their right to keep and bear arms without due process of law.**

I should not need to tell you that the second amendment is under constant assault by the Democrat Party. I should also not need to remind you that most Republicans are VERY concerned about any erosion of our right to bear arms, fearing a slippery slope and the death of the 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment by a thousand cuts.

Therefore, it was profoundly sad when Senator McConnell, the leader of the Republicans in the Senate, decided to vote with the Democrats for that Democrat law. He said he was "proud" to support it. We in the Jessamine County Republican Party felt that that was so imprudent on his part that it was necessary to respond to this betrayal of our party platform. We expressed our formal disapproval in our censure. At the same meeting which adopted the censure resolution I was elected spokesperson and tasked with publicizing our action.

Subsequent to a press release and press interviews I set up a website at: [www.censuremitch.com](http://www.censuremitch.com)

Other counties have taken note of our action and have adopted the same or very similar censures. Hardin County is one such county.

The duly elected precinct captains of the Republican Party of Hardin County that serve on their County Committee have by majority vote adopted their own censure which you will find on the website above. As Ms. Benitez explains in her letter, the officers of the Hardin County party disagreed with the majority.

She and they are certainly entitled to their opinion and they are not alone although they are in the minority.

What leads me to write to you are the positions taken by Ms. Benitez and her co-signers in the letter that is a matter of appeal to RPK. She claims it is outside the scope of a county party to censure a Republican politician.

That notion is repugnant to me. I think I speak for many Republicans who would agree that defending our party from the actions of Republicans who join with Democrats to pass legislation that is in direct conflict with our party's written platform is certainly within our rights, the most fundamental being the right to freedom of speech and the right to freely associate.

Ms. Benitez would have us believe that the ONLY responsibility of a member of a County Republican Party is to "recruit Republican candidates and to work for the election of Republican candidates." It is my view that individual American citizens who are Republicans and members of our party are NOT indentured servants or slaves on a Republican Party plantation. If we believe that there is something wrong in our party or with the action(s) of a political representative it is highly offensive to suggest that we must be silent.

The Republican Party rules say:

**5 PRECINCT COMMITTEE: The Precinct shall be the basic organizational unit of the Republican Party of Kentucky and managed through the precinct committee.**

Our state is divided into 120 counties, each having many voting precincts each of which has voters registered as Republicans. Our rules say that the party is organized first at the precinct level and that each precinct is to be represented by 3 precinct officers (called captains) who serve as the representatives of the Republican voters in that precinct. All other officers and committees of the Republican Party of Kentucky, whether at the county, district or state levels, flow from those precinct officers. Are the leaders who are ultimately elected by precinct officers now in a position to tell us that we must be silent and do what we are told? That notion is absurd and preposterous. I find it breath taking that Ms. Benitez does not grasp that.

And will the Republican Party of Kentucky attempt to silence its precinct officers when the Republican Party nationally and in other states have freely, and with much publicity, taken votes to pass resolutions of censure in many other cases.

For example, the Republican National Committee, our federal organization, censured Liz Cheney and Adam Kinzinger for their role on the January 6<sup>th</sup> committee. Whether you agree or not with that censure, is it your position of the RPK that the RNC was "out of order" and acting beyond the purview of its authority?

The Colorado GOP censured Vickie Tonkins for failing to support nominees.

The Arizona GOP censured Rusty Bowers over his January 6<sup>th</sup> testimony.

The Alaska GOP censured Mitch McConnell for supporting Lisa Murkowski over Kelly Tshibaka. (that censure recently withdrawn)

This list could go on and on but in the heat of these formal disapprovals I do not recall hearing of any Republican Party organization taking the position that an organized group of the Republican Party was prohibited by rules from censuring a politician that they disagree with.

I have also done a word search of “censure” in the Rules of the Republican party of Kentucky. The word “censure” does not appear in the rules and yet the act of censure has been an age-old political practice to formally express disapproval. While I was at it, I also looked up the word “disapproval”, it was not there. The word “formal” appears 4 times, not related to any kind of disapproval. The words “condemn” and “condemnation” are not found. The rules are silent on this.

It is my sincere hope that the RPK treats this complaint (appeal) with the view that it is nothing more than crying over spilled milk. A censure resolution was passed by majority vote of the Republican Party of Hardin County and it should stand until such time as the Republican Party of Hardin County, by majority vote, withdraws that censure. The officers of that party should be reminded that we function democratically which means that the majority win and the minority lose subject to no law or rule being broken. I believe that no rule or law has been broken. To now try to extrapolate such a rule from the current rules is like watching the Supreme Court finding a right to abortion in our Constitution (federal or state).

Therefore, taking any action to silence those precinct captains would be a grave mistake. I believe it would lead to embarrassment for the RPK that none of us want. What Jessamine County and Hardin County Republicans want is for our political representatives to pay attention to those issues that are very important to us, and to act to advance those matters in their roles as our political representatives. And when they fail to do so, they should expect our unhappiness. And when they act in opposition to our party platform they can expect strong disapproval.

In the event that any hearings are called in relation to this complaint (appeal), I respectfully request the opportunity to attend those hearings as an observer. Given that any adverse decision to the censure(s) could impact Jessamine County, I would like to be well informed as to what has gone on in the adjudication process.

If you would like to discuss this with me I would be happy to talk by phone or come to Frankfort to speak with you in person.

Sincerely,

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