

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 204

Reps. Carra, Friske, Maddock, DeSana and Schriver offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to censure Speaker of the House Joe Tate,
2 Representative of the Tenth House District, State of Michigan.

3 Whereas, Article IV, Section 16 of the Constitution of the
4 State of Michigan of 1963 provides, in relevant part: "Each house,
5 except as otherwise provided in this constitution, shall choose its
6 own officers and determine the rules of its proceedings"; and

7 Whereas, Article XI, Section 1 of the Constitution of the
8 State of Michigan of 1963 provides:

9 All officers, legislative, executive and judicial, before
10 entering upon the duties of their respective offices, shall
11 take and subscribe the following oath or affirmation: I do
12 solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the
13 Constitution of the United States and the constitution of this

1 state, and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the
2 office of according to the best of my ability.

3 ; and

4 Whereas, Article I, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State
5 of Michigan of 1963 provides: "No person shall be denied the equal
6 protection of the laws; nor shall any person be denied the
7 enjoyment of his civil or political rights or be discriminated
8 against in the exercise thereof because of religion, race, color or
9 national origin"; and

10 Whereas, House Rule 74(6) provides: "A Member shall conduct
11 himself or herself to justify the confidence placed in him or her
12 by the people and shall, by personal example and admonition to
13 colleagues, maintain the integrity and responsibility of his or her
14 office"; and

15 Whereas, House Rule 74(7) provides: "A Member shall not engage
16 in any conduct that materially impairs the ability of the Member to
17 perform the duties of his or her office or substantially impair the
18 public confidence in the House"; and

19 Whereas, House Rule 74(8) provides: "A Member shall adhere to
20 these rules and all applicable laws. Any violation of law or these
21 rules by a Member is subject to the House's plenary authority to
22 reprimand, censure, or expel its Members"; and

23 Whereas, Speaker of the House Joe Tate was elected to lead the
24 Michigan House of Representatives and, as presiding officer, is
25 directly culpable for allowing House Bill 4437 of 2023, a budget
26 bill which awarded state funding to small business owners as
27 provided in Article 9, Part 2, Section 1017, to reach the floor and
28 be considered for passage by this body. Section 1017(1) of House
29 Bill 4437 provided that the Department of Labor and Economic

1 Opportunity was to "award grants to minority-owned businesses or
2 nonprofit business organizations to implement small business
3 development initiatives for minority-owned businesses in this
4 state." Legislators both privately and publicly called for the
5 removal of this racial discrimination from the budget, yet Speaker
6 Tate exercised his authority to bring House Bill 4437 to the floor
7 without eradicating its blatant racism, ultimately leading to it
8 becoming law as Public Act 119 of 2023; and

9 Whereas, Some months later, in February 2024, a unjust
10 firestorm of disparagement rained down upon Representative Josh
11 Schriver for sharing a controversial tweet. Speaker Tate
12 sanctimoniously stoked these flames with a complicit media eager to
13 amplify the dishonesty. Any level-headed review of the surrounding
14 facts would reveal the entire episode as shameful and beyond
15 hypocritical. Representative Schriver is not a racist and did not
16 deserve public ridicule. Corporate media continued to chastise
17 Representative Schriver as Speaker Tate materially impaired him by
18 stripping the Representative of his only committee assignment,
19 depriving him of a personal staff, and suppressing his office
20 allotment. The House also hypocritically made show of denouncing
21 racism by adopting House Resolution 191 of 2024, which was clearly
22 intended as an unjust criticism of Representative Schriver's
23 conduct; and

24 Whereas, House Resolution 191 was adopted on Valentine's Day,
25 February 14 2024, which spewed ironic and hollow words masquerading
26 as noble and loving, nearly 61 years after Martin Luther King Jr.
27 communicated his transcendent dream. For the current year's fiscal
28 budget, 61 legislators entrusted to be the voice for over 90,000
29 Michiganders in their respective districts, voted in support of

1 this racially discriminatory budget; and

2 Whereas, In the days following Resolution 191's adoption,
3 Representative Steve Carra was repeatedly snubbed by the Speaker's
4 office. When they declined to respond to his meeting request on
5 five days' notice, Representative Carra made himself available to
6 meet with the Speaker by waiting outside Speaker Tate's office for
7 24 hours a day for two entire days and into the afternoon of a
8 third, aside from attending session and bathroom breaks.

9 Representative Carra gave Speaker Tate ample opportunity to
10 apologize to the people of Michigan for spearheading the effort
11 that brought forward a racially discriminatory budget; and

12 Whereas, Representative Carra magnanimously suggested that
13 Speaker Tate simply review Section 1017 of Public Act 119 and
14 communicate publicly that he overlooked the section, which would
15 indeed be understandable given that it was an appropriations act
16 allocating over 80 billion dollars and is nearly 400 pages long.
17 Speaker Tate rejected every opportunity given to him to clarify his
18 stance and assure the people of the state of Michigan that he will
19 never again pick winners and losers based on their race in a
20 subsequent budget; and

21 Whereas, Had Section 1017 said that from the 10 million
22 dollars appropriated "for white owned business support, the
23 department shall award grants to white-owned businesses or
24 nonprofit business organizations to implement small business
25 development initiatives for white-owned businesses in this state,"
26 it would undeniably and rightfully be met with the most severe
27 consequences this body could conceivably deliver for each and every
28 proponent of such heinous discrimination. The only difference
29 between Section 1017 of the actual budget and what is depicted in

1 this clause is that instead of saying "white" owned businesses, it
2 says "minority" owned businesses. Racism is wrong no matter what
3 and has no place in our state government; and

4 Whereas, Speaker Tate inappropriately disparaged
5 Representative Schriver, then brought forward House Resolution 191
6 to denounce racism after the Speaker formally *supported* racism in
7 the budget, and has subsequently dismissed every possible
8 opportunity to set the record straight as to where he stands
9 regarding racial discrimination; and

10 Whereas, After examining the facts presented herein and
11 Speaker Tate's actions, this House has no other option but to
12 conclude that Speaker Tate himself condones racism. His support for
13 racially discriminatory budgetary provisions and disregard for the
14 importance of this matter are inexcusable and unethical. His effort
15 to impugn Representative Schriver as a racist is beyond hypocrisy,
16 when his formal actions of allowing House Bill 4437 to be passed by
17 this body, was incalculably destructive to 10 million Michigan
18 citizens affected. The people of Michigan deserve an apology for
19 this uncivil distortion of truth and reprehensible
20 mischaracterization of a colleague for simply retweeting a
21 controversial statistical analysis; and

22 Whereas, Speaker Tate, as Representative of the Tenth House
23 District, has performed acts inconsistent with the trust vested in
24 and duties expected of a state representative. He has championed
25 unambiguous discrimination constituting blatant racism and has done
26 considerable harm to public confidence in state government. He has
27 failed to maintain the integrity and responsibility of his office,
28 and failed to meet his solemn obligations to the people of his
29 district and the state of Michigan; now, therefore, be it

1 Resolved by the House of Representatives, That Speaker Joe
2 Tate, Representative of the Tenth House District, is hereby
3 censured; and be it further

4 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to
5 Speaker Joe Tate.