ALEXANDER KOLODIN
1700 WEST WASHINGTON, SUITE H
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007-2844
CAPITOL PHONE: (602) 926-3560
TOLL FREE: 1-800-352-8404
akolodin@azleg.gov

DISTRICT 3

Arizona House of Representatives
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

COMMITTEES:
JUDICIARY
MUNICIPAL OVERSIGHT & ELECTIONS, Vice-Chairman
NATURAL RESOURCES, ENERGY & WATER

4/19/2023

Statement on the Expulsion of Representative Harris

To the Voters of LD3:

I write to provide a more fulsome explanation of my opposition to the expulsion of Representative Harris, which has created a significant amount of discord among loyal Republicans. Where one falls in this debate seems to center on an individual's opinions of Representative Harris and her conduct. I believe, however, that there are issues at play that go beyond any one person.

The Arizona Constitution provides that "All political power is inherent in the people." Art. 2, Sec. 2. The voters of her district knew perfectly well what they were getting when they elected Liz Harris. They made their views about her known in both the primary election (where she was the top vote-getter) as well as in the general election, where she received 43,829 votes. Those views were recently reconfirmed by the PCs of her district when they nominated her as their first choice to be her own replacement.

Historically, expulsion from the legislature has been rare. In recent history it has occurred only because a member was alleged to have engaged in criminal activity directly related to their office. In other words, the individuals' continued presence directly threatened the ability of the legislature to function in a lawful fashion.

Other than in such extraordinary instances, I firmly believe that it is not a proper function of my office to second guess the choices of voters in other districts. After all, I serve with many members with whom I vehemently disagree and even a few who I wish were more honest – but I never doubt their right to hold office. For I am not their constituent. Even had Representative Harris been a liberal Democrat, my position - and vote - would have been exactly the same. The people are entitled to their choice.

If Representative Harris's voters are unhappy with her conduct while in office, they may recall her or simply elect someone else to represent them in 2024. But unless or until voters demonstrate a contrary intent, Representative Harris should be reinstated to the office to which the people have elevated her.

In the meantime, I would be remiss in not acknowledging the twelve other members who, despite significant personal risk, fought alongside me to defend these fundamental principles of our Republic and the will of the voters of LD13, both behind the scenes and during the moment of truth. Their vote was not an easy one, but it was the right thing to do and I am proud to serve with them.

For Arizona,

Alexander Kolodin

Representative Alexander Kolodin (LD-3)