

TESTIMONY ON HJ0001– UNFAVORABLE

Honoring Charlie Kirk

Rules and Executive Nominations Committee, March 16, 2026

TO: Chair Anne Healey, Vice Chair Marvin Holmes, Jr., and members of the Rules and Executive Nominations Committee

People of all political persuasions were appalled by the assassination of Charlie Kirk and have spoken out to condemn the growing political violence in this country. We recognize that political violence harms not only individuals but undermines the exercise of the constitutional right to free speech. By stifling discussion and debate, political violence undermines the very foundation of our democracy.

In addition to condemning violence, it is equally imperative that our leaders and influencers “turn down the temperature” on the “political rhetoric” that is a key driver of political violence. There have been many calls to cease such divisive language and to promote civil discourse that can help us maintain a sense of unity even when we disagree.

While one can applaud this resolution’s call to “reject political violence, recommit to respectful debate, uphold American values, and respect one another” that is not, unfortunately, the primary goal of this resolution. That goal is to glorify one victim of political violence. Even more concerning is the fact that the chosen victim is someone who is viewed by many – rightly or wrongly – as a divisive figure. In fact, rather than promoting unity, this bill seems expressly designed to be provocative.

Those who knew and followed Mr. Kirk will mourn and honor him as they see fit. But our condemnation of political violence does not compel us to glorify the victims of that violence. Instead, let us seek unity in speaking out against political violence wherever and whenever it occurs, to mourn all victims, and to recognize that such violence deserves no place in our society.

I urge the committee to reject this resolution.

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