

House Expels Don Shooter (R, LD13)

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***Prepared by Anne L. Schneider, PH.D. All opinions are those of the author.
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The Arizona House voted 56-3 today to expel Rep. Don Shooter, R, Yuma, for sexual harassment involving multiple women and creating a hostile work environment for his colleagues, staff, and others.

There was heart-felt testimony from almost all the Representatives, including women who had been harassed as well as men who described how they too had subjected to a continuous hostile work environment that involved obscene remarks about their wives. Representatives described the vote as heartbreaking and difficult, but with pride for what they were doing today.

An independent investigation showed there had been a pervasive pattern of inappropriate behavior including long-term sexual harassment with multiple victims, obscenity, and advances toward colleagues, staff, and lobbyists. Many were in tears as they spoke on the floor of the House today.

They thanked the women who had the courage to speak out. "...this is a step to eradicate sexual harassment from the workplace. It has gone on far too long," one of the women said. One of the men commented in explaining his vote: "We need to take a stand, and do what's right."

Some called for an end also to retaliation against people including killing their bills out of spite. Some mentioned they had been threatened if they voted for expulsion.

Three members voted against expulsion, including Rep. Shooter. Those opposed explained their opposition on due process grounds and that all are imperfect.

The House had apparently gathered originally to consider a vote of censure, but a letter from Rep. Shooter that was distributed to members purported to reflect the perspective of a victim that due process had not been followed. Upon examination, however, the letter was found to be false and not the perspective of the victim at all. At that point, the motion was made to expel, rather than censure. Rep. Mitchell, Shooter's seatmate and fellow Republican from Yuma, spoke out about the sexual harassment and obscenities he and his wife had been subjected to for six years by Rep. Shooter.

A vote of expulsion requires 2/3 majority. He was found in violation of the House code of conduct. The report can be read at this [link](#):

Expulsion is covered in the Arizona Constitution. Here's the rule:

The House may punish its members for disorderly behavior and may, with the concurrence of two-thirds of the members elected to the House, expel any member (Arizona Constitution, Article IV, Part 2, Section 11). A

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