

Melissa Hortman
Speaker of the House

District 36B
Anoka
Hennepin



Minnesota House of Representatives

July 21, 2021

Dear Representative Daudt,

The recent reports and actions of Representative John Thompson are deeply troubling, which is why I have called for his immediate resignation. With regard to all matters pertaining to complaints about the behavior of Representative Thompson, I will fulfill the roles the Speaker must during such complicated matters. In this instance, that means that I will follow the same protocol that I did in May of 2019, when another member of the House had an interaction with law enforcement. I will refer any ethics complaint I might receive to the Ethics Committee pursuant to House Rules. In the absence of an ethics complaint, I will take action at the conclusion of court proceedings.

The Speaker presides over the House, and generally does not personally direct an ethics complaint. Ethics complaints may be filed by any two members under oath. In the matters surrounding Representative Thompson, there is already one extant Ethics Committee hearing, on Friday, July 23rd. The role of the Speaker is to receive notification of actions recommended by the Ethics Committee, and to preside in a fair and neutral manner with regards to those recommendations.

The Speaker may and often should also take actions outside of the ethics process. House Counsel generally advises waiting until a court case is decided, in order to be both fair to the member involved, and to avoid weighing in on ongoing legal processes. At the right point, and after due consideration of possible ethics complaints, I will communicate any decisions taken to the body.

Your letter suggested that you may file a complaint at some point. This is your right as a member of the House. There is no need to tie your decisions to those of any other member, and in fact, it is not advisable or ethical for any member to attempt to leverage the decisions of any other member in such matters.

Sincerely,

Melissa Hortman
Speaker of the House

