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FULL TEXT

Politics

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Brandy Zadrozny

Bonnie Bacarisse

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Representative Robert Fisher, the Republican who was recently unmasked as the creator and chief moderator of The Red Pill, one of the internet's most notorious forums for misogyny, resigned on Wednesday following a New Hampshire legislative committee's passing of a recommendation that no action be taken against him and a call from Democrats that the Attorney General investigate him for lying under oath.

Fisher had previously refused to resign, resisting demands from within his own party, including New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu, a Republican, who called Fisher's online comments "horrendous and repulsive."

Fisher's role in The Red Pill was first reported in two separate Daily Beast investigations which linked domain records for Red Pill websites to others for Fisher's personal and campaign use. In hundreds of online remarks made

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under usernames Pk_atheist and redpillschool, Fisher espoused a belief that women had inferior intellects and were useful only for sex. According to his comments online, he also believed that feminists used false rape accusations as a weapon, and that men should protect themselves by recording sexual encounters.

"Feminists are obsessed with rape because we live in a rape fantasy culture, where feminists wish they were hot enough to be rape-able," he wrote in one post from April 2014.

A statement provided by Republican House Speaker Shawn Jasper read in part, "It is unfortunate that the debate surrounding his actions while serving in the House have detracted from the good things that we have accomplished this session. But I welcome his resignation for the good of the institution and I hope that we can now move forward with our important legislative agenda."

Reaction by women in the crowd after the party line 8-6 vote to take no action against Rep. Fisher. #nhpolitlcs pic.twitter.com/1NKjaLbnRw

- David Meuse (@JdmMeuse) May 17, 2017

Though Fisher was not present at Wednesday's hearing to determine if he should be punished by his fellow legislators, he testified last week at a public inquiry into his online statements. There he admitted in part to his creation of The Red Pill, but alleged he had not been active in the forum for years. Reading mostly from The Daily Beast investigation, Democratic Representative Tim Smith, a network administrator and systems administrator by day, refuted Fisher's under-oath testimony on Wednesday with a lengthy reading of the evidence.

Citing "no proof before us," chairman Richard Hinch suggested if Smith was implying Fisher had committed perjury by denying the recent association, "you may want to walk across the street to the Attorney General's office."

Following the vote, House Democratic Leader Steve Shurtleff released a statement announcing his intention follow through and ask the Attorney General "to investigate the allegations that Fisher still runs the Red Pill forum."

Vice chairman Sherman Packard, a Republican, called Fisher's comments "reprehensible," while moving for a vote of no discipline based on the Constitution's protection of free speech.

Several Democrats on the committee spoke in support of a recommendation with more teeth. Allison Nutting, the only woman under 40 on the committee, noted that the comments Fisher made on The Red Pill "are about women like me," and said inaction by the body made it harder to get young women to run for office. Calling the House, "an environment that I feel uncomfortable in," Nutting said, "it's hard to feel like a supported member of the community if we do nothing."

Then the committee did just that. With eight Republicans voting for and six Democrats voting against (Rep Smith voted, "Hell no!") the committee decided that "no action" should be taken when a full House votes on the matter next month, choosing the least punitive of the possible options before them, which included reprimand, censure, or expulsion.

Amid the shouts of "shame!" one audience member rose and said, "Your daughters will be ashamed of you, your wives will be ashamed of you."

Fisher's resignation will be officially accepted at a Thursday meeting of the House. The Daily Beast was unable to reach Fisher for comment on Wednesday. His phone has been disconnected and private messages to redpillschool were not returned.

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