

Statement from Councilor Christopher Laurent Regarding the Proposed Censure

To the residents of the 14th District and my fellow members of the District Council,

I was elected to serve the people of the 14th District, and I have approached that responsibility with sincerity, dedication, and a genuine desire to improve public safety and civic engagement. While I recognize that disagreements are inevitable in public service, I am deeply disappointed that those disagreements have culminated in a proposed censure that I believe is both unfair and misleading.

The document presented against me is not simply a criticism of my actions—it is a sweeping indictment of my character, motives, and integrity. It presents disputed allegations as established facts, attributes intent without evidence, and reaches legal conclusions that are beyond the authority of this Council to make.

I reject the suggestion that I have acted in bad faith or sought to undermine democracy. Throughout my service, I have exercised my independent judgment as an elected official, sometimes disagreeing with the majority of the Council. Healthy disagreement is not misconduct; it is an inherent part of representative government. The voters elected three independent councilors, not three people expected to agree on every issue.

The proposed resolution criticizes my decisions as Chair, my communications with the public, and my efforts to engage community organizations. Many of these issues reflect genuine disagreements over the interpretation of our bylaws and the best way to carry out the Council's mission. Those disagreements should have been addressed through dialogue, clarification, or amendments to our procedures—not through personal attacks or accusations of dishonesty and criminality.

I also reject the implication that I intentionally misled the public or collaborated with others for improper purposes. Throughout my term, I have worked with residents, elected officials, community organizations, and advocates who share an interest in improving public safety. Collaboration is a normal and necessary part of public service. Reasonable people may disagree about strategy, but disagreement should not be transformed into allegations of conspiracy or misconduct without compelling evidence.

With respect to the June 4 meeting, I regret that the situation became contentious. My actions occurred during an effort to restore order at a meeting that had become increasingly disruptive. While I understand that others may view the incident differently, my immediate attention was to ensure safety of all participants of the meeting – something I take very seriously. Public meetings can become difficult to manage, and decisions made in real time should be evaluated fairly and in context, not solely with the benefit of hindsight.

I am particularly troubled by language in the proposed censure suggesting that I committed criminal violations or should be removed from office. No court, investigative body, or enforcement agency has found that I committed any crime, nor does this Council possess the authority to remove an elected member from office through a vote of censure. Such statements risk misleading the public about both the facts and the law.

Most importantly, I remain committed to serving the residents who elected me. My focus has always been on improving public safety, increasing community involvement, and ensuring that residents have a voice in decisions affecting their neighborhoods. While I acknowledge that these meetings could use some smoothing out, I do not accept the narrative that I have acted with malice or contempt for the democratic process.

I hope that, regardless of the outcome of this proposed resolution, the Council can move beyond personal conflict and return its attention to the work that matters most: serving the people of the 14th District. Our constituents deserve thoughtful discussion, mutual respect, and a commitment to solving problems together. That remains my goal, and I cannot, in good conscience continue a dialogue that is inherently disrespectful or defamatory.

Given that there is nothing in the council bylaws regarding disciplinary measures and protocols, the mention of a censure is improper and warrantless. If there were such a provision, there would, of course, be a protocol to follow (i.e. proper notice, evidentiary hearing before an impartial panel, etc). As it appears, anytime any standard level of professionalism held to my colleagues is viewed as an affront to their rights. In short, the allegations are not only presented in bad faith, I view this as an attempt to besmirch my character due to the possibility of running for reelection in February

In response, I do maintain a library of previous meetings that can easily disprove the allegations I have purportedly violated. I have decided that I will not attend the August 6, 2026, meeting, as it is my belief, that my attendance would be counterproductive to the call of our official duties and not serve the community's interest. I believe that the timing and intention of this censure letter is to create conflict and discord at the upcoming meeting by painting a disagreement among board members as misconduct and unprofessionalism on my part.

I welcome all questions to be directed directly to my city email address, listed below in my signature.

Thank you.

Christopher Laurent

Councilor, 14th District Council

christopher.laurent@cityofchicago.org