



NAACP  
NEW ENGLAND AREA CONFERENCE  
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OPEN LETTER

February 6, 2014

The Honorable Members  
Massachusetts House of Representatives  
The State House  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Representatives:

The NAACP, New England Area Conference (NEAC), respectfully requests that the Massachusetts House of Representatives abstain from voting in the matter of the expulsion of Representative Carlos Henriquez, expected to come before the House today. In the alternative, Members of the House are asked to vote against the expulsion of their colleague.

There are two basis on which NEAC makes the request. Firstly, the matter of expulsion is premature since Representative Henriquez's case is under appeal. The House of Representatives must respect the Massachusetts judicial process and let Representative Henriquez's case before the Appeals Court proceed, without jumping to judgment before the appellate decision is rendered.

Secondly, while NEAC respects the jury's decision, there is currently no rule for expulsion that applies to misdemeanor convictions. Representative Henriquez was duly elected by the electorate and there is no legal basis upon which the House of Representatives can properly act.

Delaying any decision on the House Ethics Committee's recommendation at this time would allow for a fair process to take place, as required under the law. Reasonable citizens of the Commonwealth respect the decision of a just jury trial and they also expect a fair and reasoned decision by the Massachusetts House of Representatives.

Respectfully submitted,

*Juan M. Cofield*

Juan M. Cofield  
President

*The New England Area Conference is the governing and coordinating entity for NAACP Branches,  
College Chapters and Youth Councils in the states of Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire,  
Maine and Vermont.*