

**SENATOR OMAR FATEH**

Minnesota Senate Building  
Saint Paul, MN 55155  
Suite 3219



Senate  
State of Minnesota

May 22, 2023

Senator Bobby Joe Champion  
Senate Ethical Conduct Subcommittee  
3401 Minnesota Senate Building  
95 University Avenue West  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Mister Chair,

Attached to this letter is a complaint regarding the conduct of the Senate Minority Leader, Senator Mark Johnson. This complaint was prepared pursuant to Senate Temporary Rule 55. With delivery of this letter and attached complaint, it is hereby filed pursuant to Rule 55. I ask that the Ethical Conduct Subcommittee investigate this matter and to take action in accordance with this Rule and look forward to the subcommittee taking action on this complaint.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "O. Fateh", written over a horizontal line.

Omar Fateh

COMPLAINT TO THE ETHICAL CONDUCT SUBCOMMITTEE REGARDING THE CONDUCT  
OF SENATOR Mark Johnson

Senator Omar Fateh each being first duly sworn, state and allege under oath the following based upon information and belief:

**Complaint: Senator Johnson used a derogatory term for people of Polish descent on the Senate floor at the conclusion of the floor session.**

1. In the early morning of Wednesday, February 22, 2023, Senator Mark Johnson used a derogatory term for people of Polish descent during the conclusion of the floor session. Senator Johnson stated “Doesn’t matter what your race, your color, your creed, Norwegian, Polack, Somalian, you name it.”
2. Senate Temporary Rule 56 states that “members shall adhere to the highest standard of ethical conduct...”.
3. Senate Temporary Rule 56.3 states that “improper conduct includes conduct that... violates accepted norms of Senate behavior, that betrays the public trust, or that tends to bring the Senate into dishonor or disrepute”.
4. When a Senator uses a derogatory term for a particular group of people, they are egregiously violating the accepted norms of Senate behavior.
5. The people of Minnesota expect that Members of the Minnesota Senate adhere to the highest ethical standards. Using a derogatory term on the floor of the Senate damages the reputation of the Senate.
6. It is your complainant’s belief that Senator Mark Johnson violated Senate Temporary Rule 56.3.
7. Your complainant asks that the Ethical Conduct Subcommittee immediately investigates the details of this matter, finds probable cause exists for the violation of Rule 56.3 and that the Committee, in open hearing, recommend appropriate disciplinary action and/or sanction for the violation of our rules.

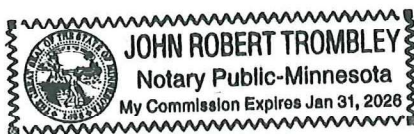
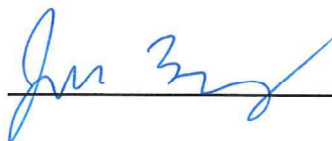


Senator Omar Fateh

May 22, 2023

Date

Subscribed to, and sworn before me, a notary public, on May 22, 2023





HUFFPOST

# GOP Politician Uses Polish Slur In Speech Claiming Party Isn't Bigoted



554

David Moyer

February 23, 2023 · 2 min read



A Minnesota state senator is getting criticized after a speech where he claimed the state's Republican Party isn't bigoted — and included a slur against Polish people in the process.

During a hearing about potential legislation that would allow undocumented immigrants to get ID cards and Class D driver's licenses, Sen. Mark Johnson (R), the Senate Minority Leader, argued that GOP lawmakers had good-faith objections to the bill, according to the Independent.

"There are holes in this bill," Johnson said, while insisting he wasn't attacking any particular demographic groups. "We're not calling groups any names. What we're saying is we need to protect Minnesotans."

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## GOP Politician Uses Polish Slur In Speech Claiming Party Isn't Bigoted

David Moyer

3-4 minutes

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A Minnesota state senator is getting criticized after a speech where he claimed the state's Republican Party isn't bigoted — and included a slur against Polish people in the process.

During a hearing about potential legislation that would allow undocumented immigrants to get ID cards and Class D driver's licenses, Sen. Mark Johnson (R), the Senate Minority Leader, argued that GOP lawmakers had good-faith objections to the bill, [according to the Independent](#).

"There are holes in this bill," Johnson said, while insisting he wasn't attacking any particular demographic groups. "We're not calling groups any names. What we're saying is we need to protect Minnesotans."

However, he may have hurt his cause with his next statement.

"Doesn't matter what your race, your color, your creed, Norwegian, Polack, Somalian, you name it. But folks, we have concerns about this — and yet when we bring those concerns up on this floor, tonight we were called white national racists," he said.

Minnesota House Minority Leader Mark Johnson (R), while arguing that Republicans aren't bigoted, uses a derogatory term for Polish people: "We are not calling groups any names ... It doesn't matter what your race, color, your creed. Norwegian, Polack, Somali, you name it." [pic.twitter.com/9dvlxXOcCn](https://pic.twitter.com/9dvlxXOcCn)

— Heartland Signal (@HeartlandSignal) [February 23, 2023](#)

For those who might be unaware, "[Polack](#)" has been considered a derogatory term for Polish people for decades, and was most famously spouted by Archie Bunker, a bigoted character in the 1970s sitcom "All in the Family."

In addition, some media have reported that Johnson [may have used the word "Somalian"](#) in his speech, though it's not conclusive. The term "Somalian," while not necessarily a slur, is incorrect, as the term "Somali" is preferred.

Of course, many Twitter users found it ironic that a GOP politician used a slur in a speech claiming his party isn't bigoted.

Fellow Minnesota state Sen. Andy Smith (D) said Johnson's

remarks were “telling.”

After using a derogatory term for Polish people, what's the next word association: Somali, one of the largest groups of color in our state.

Telling. <https://t.co/EDHj6fwG4E>

— Rep. Andy Smith (@AndySmithMN) [February 23, 2023](#)

Others chimed in.

He called polish people Polack's while saying he's not bigoted.

— Rex Chapman 🇺🇸 (@RexChapman) [February 23, 2023](#)

He doesn't even know Polack is a derogatory term. They're all Archie Bunkers, without the charm.

— Robert Lusetich (@RobertLusetich) [February 23, 2023](#)

HuffPost reached out to Johnson for comment, but no one immediately responded.

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