



## Tennessee Democrat expelled from state Senate over fraud conviction

### Description

USA: A Tennessee Democrat was expelled from the state Senate on Wednesday over her conviction on fraud charges.

State Sen. Katrina Robinson of Memphis was convicted of wire fraud last fall after being accused of stealing \$600,000 from a health care school she ran to pay for her wedding and other personal expenses before she was in office.

On Wednesday, state senators voted 27-5 for her expulsion after a recommendation from the Ethics Committee, [FOX 13 of Memphis reported](#).

Senate Speaker Randy McNally said in a statement Wednesday, “While the expulsion of a Senator for the first time in history was not something any of us wished to see, it was a necessary action. The integrity of the Senate is of paramount importance.”

Robinson called the expulsion a “procedural lynching” and claimed the process was “racist” and “misogynistic” and talked about scandals that have plagued other state senators who have not been expelled.

“They determined she violated a criminal statute,” Republican state Sen. John Stevens said of her conviction. “How can we demand that citizens respect the integrity and reputation of the Senate if we disrespect them by ignoring their determinations?”



Katrina Robinson speaks to members of the media at the State Capitol in Nashville, Tenn. after the Republican-led state Senate voted to remove her from office because of her recent wire fraud conviction.

AP

She and other Democrats argued the vote should be delayed until March when she is sentenced on two charges. Robinson was acquitted by a judge on 15 of 20 charges and a jury convicted her on four of the five charges of wire fraud.

Two of the four remaining charges were later dismissed by a judge and she was ultimately convicted on just two of the 20 counts, involving \$3,400 in wedding expenses in 2016, according to FOX 13.

“I feel beat up standing in front of you guys,” Robinson said. “And really I didn’t prepare any words because there are no words for what this is.”



Robinson criticized her expulsion, claiming other state senators had seen similar scandals but remained in office.

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The last time any Tennessee lawmaker was expelled was in 1866 after the Civil War when six House members were removed because they refused to attend a special legislative session, a legislative librarian told The Associated Press.

Robinson, 41, represented Tennessee's 33rd state Senate district, composed of portions of Memphis and nearby suburbs. She was in her first term after being elected to the Senate in 2018.

By Brie Stimson

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**Date Created**

02/04/2022