

1 TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

2 The Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs to which  
3 was referred House Resolution No. 18 entitled “House resolution calling on  
4 Franklin County Sheriff John Grismore to resign from office” respectfully  
5 reports that it has considered the same and recommends that the resolution be  
6 amended by striking out all of the Whereas and Resolved clauses in their  
7 entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

8 Whereas, House Resolution 11 of 2023 created the Special Committee on  
9 Impeachment Inquiry to investigate whether sufficient grounds exist for the  
10 House of Representatives to exercise its constitutional power to impeach  
11 Franklin County Sheriff John Grismore, and

12 Whereas, the Special Committee met five times during the autumn of 2023  
13 and interviewed 26 witnesses in the matter of John Grismore, and

14 Whereas, on August 7, 2022, Mr. Grismore was involved in a widely  
15 publicized use-of-force incident during which he kicked a shackled man who  
16 was in the custody of the Franklin County Sheriff’s Office, and

17 Whereas, significant concerns have been raised over Mr. Grismore’s  
18 potential mishandling of financial matters in the Franklin County Sheriff’s  
19 Office and regarding the Franklin County Sheriff’s Office’s performance under  
20 its law enforcement contracts with municipalities, and

1        Whereas, while there is no specific standard in the Vermont Constitution or  
2        in U.S. history for what constitutes impeachable conduct, the recurring theme  
3        throughout most or all impeachments is conduct that undermines the position  
4        of trust to which the official has been elected, which may include improperly  
5        exceeding or abusing the powers of office, behaving in a manner that is  
6        incompatible with the function and purpose of the office, or misusing the office  
7        for an improper purpose or for personal gain, and

8        Whereas, Mr. Grismore paid himself \$16,550.14 for his retirement  
9        compensation between December 2021 and July 2022, requiring the Franklin  
10        County Sheriff’s Office to provide the Vermont State Employees’ Retirement  
11        System with \$20,232.02 in January 2023 to restore the employer and employee  
12        contributions owed to the State pension system, and

13        Whereas, on December 6, 2023, the Vermont Criminal Justice Council  
14        found, by a unanimous 16–0 vote, that Mr. Grismore had engaged in  
15        unprofessional conduct through his excessive use of force in violation of the  
16        Statewide Policy on Police Use of Force and, by a subsequent 15–1 vote,  
17        imposed its highest sanction by permanently revoking Mr. Grismore’s law  
18        enforcement officer certification, and

19        Whereas, Vermont law enforcement officer certification is essential for the  
20        performance of many of the duties of the office of Sheriff, including proper  
21        supervision of deputies, but the Vermont Constitution does not require such a

1 qualification for holding the office, and the legal precedents are quite clear that  
2 a state legislature cannot impose qualifications for election to a constitutional  
3 office that go beyond those expressed in the state’s own constitution, and

4 Whereas, the excessive use-of-force incident and the inappropriate  
5 retirement payments, which are the most concerning conduct identified by the  
6 Special Committee on Impeachment Inquiry, occurred prior to the election of  
7 Mr. Grismore to the office of Sheriff, and

8 Whereas, only in rare circumstances should an elected official be  
9 impeached for pre-incumbency conduct, and such circumstances do not exist in  
10 the matter of Mr. Grismore, now therefore be it

11 Resolved by the House of Representatives:

12 That while this legislative body does not find articles of impeachment to be  
13 appropriate at this time, this legislative body urges Mr. Grismore to resign  
14 from the Office of Franklin County Sheriff for the good of the people of  
15 Franklin County, and be it further

16 Resolved: That the Clerk of the House be directed to send a copy of this  
17 resolution to John Grismore.

18 (Committee vote: \_\_\_\_\_)

19 \_\_\_\_\_

20 Representative \_\_\_\_\_

21 FOR THE COMMITTEE