Jamaal Bowman Pulls Fire Alarm: Accident or Stunt to Delay Vote on Stopgap Spending Bill?

Representative Jamaal Bowman (D-N.Y.) could be facing some form of congressional censure after pulling a fire alarm in what some say was an attempt to delay a vote on the stopgap spending bill on Saturday. Photos posted by *The New York Post* clearly show Bowman triggering a fire alarm, which caused the Capitol building to be evacuated briefly.

The congressman from New York's 16th Congressional District took responsibility for the incident, but claimed he simply erred in his rush to make a vote. Photos of the area show that the exit Bowman triggered was clearly marked "Emergency Exit Only!" Bowman claimed that the door was "usually open" for voting purposes.

Bowman, a proud member of the far-left Democratic congressional group often referred to as "the Squad," explained his actions in a statement:

AP Images
Jamaal Bowman

> I want to personally clear up confusion surrounding today's events. Today, as I was rushing to make a vote, I came to a door that is usually open for votes but today would not open. I am embarrassed to admit that I activated the fire alarm, mistakenly thinking it would open the door. I regret this and sincerely apologize for any confusion this caused.

But Bowman couldn't simply take responsibility for a boneheaded move. He had to insist that his dangerous action was made for a noble cause.

"But I want to be very clear, this was not me, in any way, trying to delay any vote. It was the exact opposite — I was urgently trying to get to a vote, which I ultimately did and joined my colleagues in a bipartisan effort to keep our government open."

Bowman later met with Capitol Police and explained his version of events.

> Even Jake Tapper thinks the Jamaal Bowman stunt and apology are rubbish.

> AOC can't help but defend. This is what Democrats do best. They get in line, they never back down, and they defend their criminals and low IQ representatives to the bitter end. pic.twitter.com/t20p49oF4d

— Citizen Free Press (@CitizenFreePres) October 1, 2023

Bowman was defended by fellow "Squad" member Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) on CNN's *State of the Union* with Jake Tapper.

"I think if you actually do see some of the photos of the signs, I think there's something to be said about … the government's about to shut down, there's a vote clock that's going down, the exits that are normally open in that building were suddenly closed."

House Republicans were skeptical, with some calling for Bowman to resign. Today, fellow New York representative Nicole Malliotakis, a Republican, issued a resolution to expel Bowman for the childish antics.

> Today I'll be introducing my resolution to EXPEL @RepBowman for his pathetic antics to delay congressional proceedings 12 HOURS before a shutdown.
>
> Of all people, a high school principal knows what a FIRE alarm does. No one is buying the excuses & he must be held accountable! pic.twitter.com/9ksnaJxG1r
>
> — Office of Rep. Nicole Malliotakis (@RepMalliotakis) October 2, 2023

"This is the United States Congress, it's not a New York City public high school. And, of all people, Jamaal Bowman knows the old fire alarm trick because he was a high school principal. And, quite frankly, when he was the high school principal, there were serious ramifications if a student were to do that, including expulsion," Malliotakis said.

"I would say that it's an appropriate next step to make sure that he is held accountable, that there are consequences for his actions," Malliotakis concluded.

House Speaker Kevin McCarthy called a House Ethics Committee investigation into to the incident, and Republicans of the House Administration Committee, as well as the Capitol Police, have stated that an investigation into Bowman's action is already underway.

"This should not go without punishment. This is embarrassing," McCarthy ranted. "You're elected to be a member of Congress — you pull a fire alarm in the minutes and hours before the government being shut down, trying to dictate the government would shut down?"

Former President Trump suggested that Bowman be held to the same scrutiny that protesters from January 6, 2021 have been.

"Will Congressman Jamal Bowman be prosecuted and imprisoned for very dangerously pulling and setting off the main fire alarm system in order to stop a Congressional vote that was going on in D.C." the former president asked on Truth Social.

"His egregious act is covered on tape, a horrible display of nerve and criminality. It was a very dangerous 'Obstruction of an Official Proceeding,' the same as used against our J-6 prisoners. Actually, his act may have been worse. HE MUST SUFFER THEIR SAME FATE. WHEN WILL HIS TRIAL BEGIN???" Trump posted.

Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-Ga.) agreed, saying that Bowman should be prosecuted "using the same law they used to prosecute [January 6] defendants for interfering with an official proceeding."

"The Democrats literally will do anything to shut our government down," Taylor Greene added.

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