

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1431

Impeaching John Edwin Steele, Senior District Judge for the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida, for high crimes and misdemeanors.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 15, 2026

Mr. STEUBE submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Impeaching John Edwin Steele, Senior District Judge for the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida, for high crimes and misdemeanors.

1 *Resolved*, That John Edwin Steele, Senior District
2 Judge for the United States District Court for the Middle
3 District of Florida, is impeached for high crimes and mis-
4 demeanors, and the following article of impeachment be
5 exhibited to the Senate:

6 Article of impeachment exhibited by the House of
7 Representatives of the United States of America in the
8 name of itself and of the people of the United States of
9 America, against John Edwin Steele, Senior District

1 Judge for the United States District Court for the Middle
2 District of Florida, in maintenance and support of its im-
3 peachment against him for high crimes and mis-
4 demeanors.

5 ARTICLE I: ABUSE OF JUDICIAL DISCRETION, DERELIC-
6 TION OF DUTY, AND ENDANGERMENT OF PUBLIC
7 SAFETY

8 John Edwin Steele, Senior District Judge for the
9 United States District Court for the Middle District of
10 Florida, has engaged in conduct incompatible with the
11 trust and confidence placed in him as a judicial officer,
12 as follows:

13 On July 8, 2026, in Miakel Guerra Morales v. Field
14 Office Director, Miami, et al., Judge John E. Steele grant-
15 ed a petition for a writ of habeas corpus and ordered the
16 release of Miakel Guerra Morales from a U.S. Immigra-
17 tion and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention facility.
18 Guerra Morales is a Cuban national who took part in the
19 hijacking of a commuter aircraft in Cuba in 2003 and
20 forced the pilot to land in Key West, Florida. He was sen-
21 tenced to 264 months in prison for aircraft piracy and
22 conspiracy to interfere with a flight crew.

23 After spending 21 years in prison, ICE placed Guerra
24 Morales in removal proceedings, accompanied by an immi-
25 gration judge's order for him to be removed from the
26 United States. Notwithstanding the deferral of his re-

1 moval to Cuba due to a claim made in 2023 pursuant to
2 the Convention Against Torture, ICE detained Guerra
3 Morales on December 30, 2025, with the intention of re-
4 moving him to Mexico instead.

5 In Judge Steele’s subsequent order releasing Guerra
6 Morales from detention, he ignored the executive branch’s
7 suggestion that granting Guerra Morales’ habeas petition
8 would not respect the presumptively reasonable detention
9 period typically afforded to such petitions, which typically
10 requires habeas petitions to be filed after 180 days of de-
11 tention. In his reasoning for accepting the petition, Judge
12 Steele suggested that the executive branch’s request for
13 Guerra Morales to refile the same petition after 180 days
14 would “add to the crushing amount of case management”
15 associated with petitions filed during the previous 6-month
16 period. Judge Steele let an alleged backlog of casework
17 serve as a reason to release an alien convicted of aircraft
18 piracy into American communities.

19 In his order, Judge Steele disregarded a justification
20 for continued detention for illegal aliens posing a special
21 danger to the public. Specifically, Judge Steele failed to
22 adequately consider that continued detention was in com-
23 pliance with Federal regulations authorizing such deten-
24 tion for aliens determined to pose a special danger to the
25 public. Judge Steele’s order relied in part on an apparent

1 delay in removal proceedings as a justification necessi-
2 tating the release of Guerra Morales from detention.
3 Moreover, by ordering the release of Guerra Morales from
4 an ICE detention facility within 24 hours, Judge Steele
5 denied the executive branch an opportunity to pursue ap-
6 pellate review and allocate sufficient resources to ensure
7 the safety of the public from such a dangerous individual.

8 In taking this action, Judge Steele marginalized core
9 public safety, homeland security, and national security
10 considerations, and thereby contributed to an environment
11 of impunity for illegal aliens convicted of grave and violent
12 offenses against the United States. His ruling placed the
13 interests of criminal illegal aliens seeking residence in the
14 United States by any means necessary above the security
15 of the United States and the American people. By releas-
16 ing an illegal alien convicted of aircraft piracy from an
17 ICE detention facility, it is evident that Judge Steele com-
18 mitted an egregious dereliction of duty by abusing the dis-
19 cretion entrusted to him as a Federal judge, especially at
20 a time of elevated public concern about national security
21 and terrorism.

22 Accordingly, Judge Steele has engaged in conduct so
23 utterly lacking in judicious restraint and basic fidelity to
24 public safety and national security that he is guilty of high
25 crimes and misdemeanors, is unfit to hold the office of

- 1 United States District Judge, and should be removed from
- 2 office.

