

IMPEACHMENT OF PRESIDENT
DONALD JOHN TRUMP

THE EVIDENTIARY RECORD
PURSUANT TO H. RES. 798

VOLUME XII

H. Res. 755, Impeaching Donald John Trump, President
of the United States, for High Crimes and Misdemeanors
(116th Congress)



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Articles of Impeachment Against Donald John Trump

{House Resolution 755, One Hundred Sixteenth Congress, First Session}



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

December 18, 2019.

RESOLUTION

Resolved, That Donald John Trump, President of the United States, is impeached for high crimes and misdemeanors and that the following articles of impeachment be exhibited to the United States Senate:

Articles of impeachment exhibited by the House of Representatives of the United States of America in the name of itself and of the people of the United States of America, against Donald John Trump, President of the United States of America, in maintenance and support of its impeachment against him for high crimes and misdemeanors.

ARTICLE I: ABUSE OF POWER

The Constitution provides that the House of Representatives “shall have the sole Power of Impeachment” and that the President “shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors”. In his conduct of the office of President of the United States—and in violation of his constitutional oath faithfully to execute the office of President of the United States and, to the best of his ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States, and in violation of his constitutional duty to take care that the laws be faithfully executed—Donald J. Trump has abused the powers of the Presidency, in that:

Using the powers of his high office, President Trump solicited the interference of a foreign government, Ukraine, in the 2020 United States Presidential election. He did so through a scheme or course of conduct that included soliciting the Government of Ukraine to publicly announce investigations that would benefit his reelection, harm the election prospects of a political opponent, and influence the 2020 United States Presidential election to his advantage. President Trump also sought to pressure the Government of Ukraine to take these steps by conditioning official United States Government acts of significant value to Ukraine on its public announcement of the investigations. President Trump engaged in this scheme or course of conduct for corrupt purposes in pursuit of personal political benefit. In so doing, President Trump used the powers of the Presidency in a manner that compromised the national security of the United States and undermined the integrity of the United States democratic process. He thus ignored and injured the interests of the Nation.

President Trump engaged in this scheme or course of conduct through the following means:

(1) President Trump—acting both directly and through his agents within and outside the United States Government—corruptly solicited the Government of Ukraine to publicly announce investigations into—

(A) a political opponent, former Vice President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.; and

(B) a discredited theory promoted by Russia alleging that Ukraine—rather than Russia—interfered in the 2016 United States Presidential election.

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(2) With the same corrupt motives, President Trump—acting both directly and through his agents within and outside the United States Government—conditioned two official acts on the public announcements that he had requested—

(A) the release of \$391 million of United States taxpayer funds that Congress had appropriated on a bipartisan basis for the purpose of providing vital military and security assistance to Ukraine to oppose Russian aggression and which President Trump had ordered suspended; and

(B) a head of state meeting at the White House, which the President of Ukraine sought to demonstrate continued United States support for the Government of Ukraine in the face of Russian aggression.

(3) Faced with the public revelation of his actions, President Trump ultimately released the military and security assistance to the Government of Ukraine, but has persisted in openly and corruptly urging and soliciting Ukraine to undertake investigations for his personal political benefit.

These actions were consistent with President Trump's previous invitations of foreign interference in United States elections.

In all of this, President Trump abused the powers of the Presidency by ignoring and injuring national security and other vital national interests to obtain an improper personal political benefit. He has also betrayed the Nation by abusing his high office to enlist a foreign power in corrupting democratic elections.

Wherefore President Trump, by such conduct, has demonstrated that he will remain a threat to national security and the Constitution if allowed to remain in office, and has acted in a manner grossly incompatible with self-governance and the rule of law. President Trump thus warrants impeachment and trial, removal from office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust, or profit under the United States.

ARTICLE II: OBSTRUCTION OF CONGRESS

The Constitution provides that the House of Representatives “shall have the sole Power of Impeachment” and that the President “shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors”. In his conduct of the office of President of the United States—and in violation of his constitutional oath faithfully to execute the office of President of the United States and, to the best of his ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States, and in violation of his constitutional duty to take care that the laws be faithfully executed—Donald J. Trump has directed the unprecedented, categorical, and indiscriminate defiance of subpoenas issued by the House of Representatives pursuant to its “sole Power of Impeachment”. President Trump has abused the powers of the Presidency in a manner offensive to, and subversive of, the Constitution, in that:

The House of Representatives has engaged in an impeachment inquiry focused on President Trump's corrupt solicitation of the Government of Ukraine to interfere in the 2020 United States Presidential election. As part of this impeachment inquiry, the Committees undertaking the investigation served subpoenas seeking documents and testimony deemed vital to the inquiry from various Executive Branch agencies and offices, and current and former officials.

In response, without lawful cause or excuse, President Trump directed Executive Branch agencies, offices, and officials not to comply with those subpoenas. President Trump thus interposed the powers of the Presidency against the lawful subpoenas of the House of Representatives, and assumed to himself functions and judgments necessary to the exercise of the “sole Power of Impeachment” vested by the Constitution in the House of Representatives.

President Trump abused the powers of his high office through the following means:

(1) Directing the White House to defy a lawful subpoena by withholding the production of documents sought therein by the Committees.

(2) Directing other Executive Branch agencies and offices to defy lawful subpoenas and withhold the production of documents and records from the Committees—in response to which the Department of State, Office of Management and Budget, Department of Energy, and Department of Defense refused to produce a single document or record.

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(3) Directing current and former Executive Branch officials not to cooperate with the Committees—in response to which nine Administration officials defied subpoenas for testimony, namely John Michael “Mick” Mulvaney, Robert B. Blair, John A. Eisenberg, Michael Ellis, Preston Wells Griffith, Russell T. Vought, Michael Duffey, Brian McCormack, and T. Ulrich Brechbuhl.

These actions were consistent with President Trump’s previous efforts to undermine United States Government investigations into foreign interference in United States elections.

Through these actions, President Trump sought to arrogate to himself the right to determine the propriety, scope, and nature of an impeachment inquiry into his own conduct, as well as the unilateral prerogative to deny any and all information to the House of Representatives in the exercise of its “sole Power of Impeachment”. In the history of the Republic, no President has ever ordered the complete defiance of an impeachment inquiry or sought to obstruct and impede so comprehensively the ability of the House of Representatives to investigate “high Crimes and Misdemeanors”. This abuse of office served to cover up the President’s own repeated misconduct and to seize and control the power of impeachment—and thus to nullify a vital constitutional safeguard vested solely in the House of Representatives.

In all of this, President Trump has acted in a manner contrary to his trust as President and subversive of constitutional government, to the great prejudice of the cause of law and justice, and to the manifest injury of the people of the United States.

Wherefore, President Trump, by such conduct, has demonstrated that he will remain a threat to the Constitution if allowed to remain in office, and has acted in a manner grossly incompatible with self-governance and the rule of law. President Trump thus warrants impeachment and trial, removal from office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust, or profit under the United States.

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Attest:

Clerk.



H12130

Turner Waltz Wittman
Upton Watkins Wornack
Van Drew Webster (TX) Woodall
Wagner Webster (FL) Wright
Walberg Wenstrup Yoho
Walden Westerman Young
Walker Wilkins Zeldin
Walterski Wilson (SC)

NOT VOTING—4

Gabbard
Hunter

Serrano
Shinkins

□ 1146

Ms. BASS changed her vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the previous question was ordered. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 226, noes 197, not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 694]

AYES—226

Adams Delgado Langevin
Aguiar Dennis Larson (WA)
Alford Deshaunter Larson (CT)
Amodeo Deutsch Lawrence
Axne Dingell Lawson (FL)
Barragrin Dismont Lee (CA)
Bass Doyle, Michael
Beatty F. Levin (CA)
Bera Engel Levin (MD)
Beyer Escobar Lewis
Bishop (GA) Espino Lieu, Ted
Blumenauer Espartero Lipinski
Blunt Evans Loebach
Bonomar Finkensauer Loftis
Boyle, Brendan
F. Fletcher
Foster
Bridges Frankel
Brown (MD) Fudge Lujan
Brownley (CA)
Garamendi
Bustos Garcia (IL)
Butterfield Garcia (TX)
Caulfield Golden
Cárdenas Gomez
Carrion (IN) Gonzalez (TX)
Cartwright Gottheimer
Case Green, Al (TX)
Caston (IL) Griffith
Castor (FL) Haaland
Castro (TX) Harder (CA)
Chu, Judy Hastings
Chilline Hayes
Cisneros Heck
Clark (MA) Higgins (NY)
Clarke (NY) Himes
Clay Horn, Kendra S.
Clever Horsford
Clyburn Houlahan
Cohen Hoyer
Connolly Huffman
Cooper Jackson Lee
Correa Jayapal
Costa Jeffries
Courtney Johnson (GA)
Cox (CA) Johnson (TX)
Craig Kaptur
Crist Keating
Crow Kelly (IL)
Cuellar Kennedy
Cunningham Kline
Davids (KS) Kildee
Davis (CA) Kilmer
Davis, Danny K.
Dean Kim
DeFazio Kind
DeGetto Kirkpatrick
DeLauro Krishnamoorthi
DeSena Kuster (NH)
 Lamb
 Pressley

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

Priole (NC)
Quigley
Rohrabacher
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rose (NY)
Rosen
Rowland
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ruiz
Ryan
Sanchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schroder
Schrier
Scott (VA)

Scott, David
Sewell (AL)
Speier
Serrano
Sherman
Sherrill
Sires
Siskind
Smith (WA)
Soto
Spanberger
Spencer
Stanton
Strom
Strom
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tlaib
Tonko

NOES—197

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amodeo
Armstrong
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Bartle
Bennett
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bligins (LA)
Bishop (UT)
Boat
Brady
Brodie
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Buckshorn
Budd
Burchett
Burges
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (CA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Cline
Cloud
Coke
Collins (GA)
Coner
Conaway
Cook
Crawford
Crenshaw
Curtis
Davidson (OH)
Davis, Rodney
DeJara
Diaz-Balart
Duncan
Dunn
Emmer
Estes
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Fox (NC)
Fulcher
Gast
Gallagher
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Gonzalez (OH)
Gooden
Gosar

NOT VOTING—5

Gabbard
Hunter

Serrano
Shinkins

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

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□ 1155

So the resolution was agreed to. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. GALLEGO. Madam Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted “YEA” on rollcall No. 694.

IMPEACHING DONALD JOHN TRUMP, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, FOR HIGH CRIMES AND MISDEMEANORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 767, the House will proceed to the immediate consideration of House Resolution 755.

The Clerk will report the resolution. The Clerk read the resolution as follows:

H. RES. 755

Resolved, That Donald John Trump, President of the United States, is impeached for high crimes and misdemeanors and that the following articles of impeachment be exhibited to the United States Senate:

Articles of impeachment exhibited by the House of Representatives of the United States of America in the name of itself and of the people of the United States of America, against Donald John Trump, President of the United States of America, in maintenance and support of its impeachment against him for high crimes and misdemeanors.

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(1) President Trump—acting both directly and through his agents within and outside the United States Government—corruptly solicited the Government of Ukraine to publicly announce investigations into—

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H12131

(A) a political opponent, former Vice President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., and

(B) a discredited theory promoted by Russia alleging that Ukraine—rather than Russia—interfered in the 2016 United States Presidential election.

(2) With the same corrupt motives, President Trump—acting both directly and through his agents within and outside the United States Government—conditioned two official acts on the public announcements that he had requested—

(A) the release of \$391 million of United States taxpayer funds that Congress had appropriated on a bipartisan basis for the purpose of providing vital military and security assistance to Ukraine to oppose Russian aggression and which President Trump had ordered suspended; and

(B) a head of state meeting at the White House, which the President of Ukraine sought to demonstrate continued United States support for the Government of Ukraine in the face of Russian aggression.

(3) Faced with the public revelation of his actions, President Trump ultimately released the military and security assistance to the Government of Ukraine, but has persisted in openly and corruptly urging and soliciting Ukraine to undertake investigations for his personal political benefit.

These actions were consistent with President Trump's previous invitations of foreign interference in United States elections.

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Wherefore President Trump, by such conduct, has demonstrated that he will remain a threat to national security and the Constitution if allowed to remain in office, and has acted in a manner grossly incompatible with self-governance and the rule of law. President Trump thus warrants impeachment and trial, removal from office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust, or profit under the United States.

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In response, without lawful cause or excuse, President Trump directed Executive Branch agencies, offices, and officials not to comply with those subpoenas. President Trump thus

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The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 767, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary is adopted. The resolution shall be debatable for 6 hours equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees.

The gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) each will control 3 hours.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to

revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on H. Res. 755.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the distinguished Speaker of the House.

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his tremendous leadership in helping us honor the Constitution of the United States.

I also extend my gratitude to Chairman SCHIFF, who will be presiding later in the day.

Madam Speaker, this morning and every morning when we come together, Members rise and pledge allegiance to the flag. Every day, all across America, children in school, members of the military, officials, and those civilly engaged, also pledge allegiance to the flag.

Let us recall what that pledge says: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

"The Republic for which it stands" is what we are here to talk about today: "a republic, if we can keep it."

We gather today, under the dome of this temple of democracy, to exercise one of the most solemn powers that this body can take: the impeachment of the President of the United States.

No Member, regardless of party or politics, comes to Congress to impeach a President; but every one of us, as our first act as a Member of Congress, stood on this historic House floor, before our beautiful American flag, and raised our hands in this sacred oath: "I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. . . . So help me God."

For 230 years, Members have taken that sacred oath, which makes us custodians of the Constitution.

When our Founders declared independence and established our new Nation, they crafted a system of government unlike any ever seen before: a republic, starting with the sacred words, "We the People."

For centuries, Americans have fought—and died—to defend democracy for the people. But, very sadly, now, our Founders' vision of a republic is under threat from actions from the White House. That is why, today, as Speaker of the House, I solemnly and sadly open the debate on the impeachment of the President of the United States.

If we do not act now, we would be derelict in our duty. It is tragic that the President's reckless actions make impeachment necessary.

He gave us no choice.

What we are discussing today is the established fact that the President violated the Constitution.

H12132

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It is a matter of fact that the President is an ongoing threat to our national security and the integrity of our elections: the basis of our democracy.

Hundreds of historians, legal scholars, and former prosecutors—regardless of party—have stated that the President committed impeachable offenses.

Since today is a national civics lesson, though a sad one, I submit these documents for the RECORD and commend them for students to study.

450+ FORMER FEDERAL PROSECUTORS
STATEMENT ON MUELLER REPORT

May 6

We are former federal prosecutors. We served under both Republican and Democratic administrations at different levels of the federal system: as line attorneys, supervisors, special prosecutors, United States Attorneys, and senior officials at the Department of Justice. The offices in which we served were small, medium, and large; urban, suburban, and rural; and located in all parts of our country.

Each of us believes that the conduct of President Trump described in Special Counsel Robert Mueller's report would, in the case of any other person not covered by the Office of Legal Counsel policy against indicting a sitting President, result in multiple felony charges for obstruction of justice.

The Mueller report describes several acts that satisfy all of the elements for an obstruction charge: conduct that obstructed or attempted to obstruct the truthfinding process, as to which the evidence of corrupt intent and connection to pending proceedings is overwhelming. These include:

The President's efforts to fire Mueller and to falsify evidence about that effort;

The President's efforts to limit the scope of Mueller's investigation to exclude his conduct; and

The President's efforts to prevent witnesses from cooperating with investigators probing him and his campaign.

ATTEMPTS TO FIRE MUELLER AND THEN CREATE
FALSE EVIDENCE

Despite being advised by then-White House Counsel Don McGahn that he could face legal jeopardy for doing so, Trump directed McGahn on multiple occasions to fire Mueller or to gin up false conflicts of interest as a pretext for getting rid of the Special Counsel. When these acts began to come into public view, Trump made "repeated efforts to have McGahn deny the story"—going so far as to tell McGahn to write a letter "for our files" falsely denying that Trump had directed Mueller's termination.

Firing Mueller would have seriously impeded the investigation of the President and his associates—obstruction in its most literal sense. Directing the creation of false government records in order to prevent or discredit truthful testimony is similarly unlawful. The Special Counsel's report states: "Substantial evidence indicates that in repeatedly urging McGahn to dispute that he was ordered to have the Special Counsel terminated, the President acted for the purpose of influencing McGahn's account in order to deflect or prevent scrutiny of the President's conduct toward the investigation."

ATTEMPTS TO LIMIT THE MUELLER
INVESTIGATION

The report describes multiple efforts by the president to curtail the scope of the Special Counsel's investigation.

First, the President repeatedly pressured then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions to reverse his legally-mandated decision to recuse himself from the investigation. The Presi-

dent's stated reason was that he wanted an attorney general who would "protect" him, including from the Special Counsel's investigation. He also directed then-White House Chief of Staff Reince Priebus to fire Sessions and Priebus refused.

Second, after McGahn told the President that he could not contact Sessions himself to discuss the investigation, Trump went outside the White House, instructing his former campaign manager, Corey Lewandowski, to carry a demand to Sessions to direct Mueller to confine his investigation to future elections. Lewandowski tried and failed to contact Sessions in private. After a second meeting with Trump, Lewandowski passed Trump's message to senior White House official Rick Dearborn, who Lewandowski thought would be a better messenger because of his prior relationship with Sessions. Dearborn did not pass along Trump's message. As the report explains, "[s]ubstantial evidence indicates that the President's effort to have Sessions limit the scope of the Special Counsel's investigation to future election interference was intended to prevent further investigative scrutiny of the President's and his campaign's conduct"—in other words, the President employed a private citizen to try to get the Attorney General to limit the scope of an ongoing investigation into the President and his associates.

All of this conduct—trying to control and impede the investigation against the President by leveraging his authority over others—is similar to conduct we have seen charged against other public officials and people in powerful positions.

WITNESS TAMPERING AND INTIMIDATION

The Special Counsel's report establishes that the President tried to influence the decisions of both Michael Cohen and Paul Manafort with regard to cooperating with investigators. Some of this tampering and intimidation, including the dangling of pardons, was done in plain sight via tweets and public statements; other such behavior was done via private messages through private attorneys, such as Trump counsel Rudy Giuliani's message to Cohen's lawyer that Cohen should "[s]leep well tonight], you have friends in high places."

Of course, these aren't the only acts of potential obstruction detailed by the Special Counsel. It would be well within the purview of normal prosecutorial judgment also to charge other acts detailed in the report.

We emphasize that these are not matters of close professional judgment. Of course, there are potential defenses or arguments that could be raised in response to an indictment of the nature we describe here. In our system, every accused person is presumed innocent and it is always the government's burden to prove its case beyond a reasonable doubt. But, to look at these facts and say that a prosecutor could not probably sustain a conviction for obstruction of justice—the standard set out in Principles of Federal Prosecution—runs counter to logic and our experience.

As former federal prosecutors, we recognize that prosecuting obstruction of justice cases is critical because unchecked obstruction—which allows intentional interference with criminal investigations to go unpunished—puts our whole system of justice at risk. We believe strongly that, but for the OLC memo, the overwhelming weight of professional judgment would come down in favor of prosecution for the conduct outlined in the Mueller Report.

If you are a former federal prosecutor and would like to add your name below, click here. Protect Democracy will update this list daily with new signatories.

LETTER TO CONGRESS FROM LEGAL SCHOLARS
Dec. 6

We, the undersigned legal scholars, have concluded that President Trump engaged in impeachable conduct.

We do not reach this conclusion lightly. The Founders did not make impeachment available for disagreements over policy, even profound ones, nor for extreme distaste for the manner in which the President executes his office. Only "Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors" warrant impeachment. But there is overwhelming evidence that President Trump betrayed his oath of office by seeking to use presidential power to pressure a foreign government to help him distort an American election, for his personal and political benefit, at the direct expense of national security interests as determined by Congress. His conduct is precisely the type of threat to our democracy that the Founders feared when they included the remedy of impeachment in the Constitution.

We take no position on whether the President committed a crime. But conduct need not be criminal to be impeachable. The standard here is constitutional; it does not depend on what Congress has chosen to criminalize.

Impeachment is a remedy for grave abuses of the public trust. The two specific bases for impeachment named in the Constitution—treason and bribery—involve such abuses because they include conduct undertaken not in the "faithful execution" of public office that the Constitution requires, but instead for personal gain (bribery) or to benefit a foreign enemy (treason).

Impeachment is an especially essential remedy for conduct that corrupts elections. The primary check on presidents is political: if a president behaves poorly, voters can punish him or his party at the polls. A president who corrupts the system of elections seeks to place himself beyond the reach of this political check. At the Constitutional Convention, George Mason described impeachable offenses as "attempts to subvert the constitution." Corrupting elections subverts the process by which the Constitution makes the president democratically accountable. Put simply, if a President cheats in his effort at re-election, trusting the democratic process to serve as a check through that election is no remedy at all. That is what impeachment is for.

Moreover, the Founders were keenly concerned with the possibility of corruption in the president's relationships with foreign governments. That is why they prohibited the president from accepting anything of value from foreign governments without Congress's consent. The same concern drove their thinking on impeachment. James Madison noted that Congress must be able to remove the president between elections lest there be no remedy if a president betrayed the public trust in dealings with foreign powers.

In light of these considerations, overwhelming evidence made public to date forces us to conclude that President Trump engaged in impeachable conduct. To mention only a few of those facts: William B. Taylor, who leads the U.S. embassy in Ukraine, testified that President Trump directed the withholding of hundreds of millions of dollars in military aid for Ukraine in its struggle against Russia—aid that Congress determined to be in the U.S. national security interest—until Ukraine announced investigations that would aid the President's re-election campaign. Ambassador Gordon

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Sondland testified that the President made a White House visit for the Ukrainian president conditional on public announcement of those investigations. In a phone call with the Ukrainian president, President Trump asked for a "favor" in the form of a foreign government investigation of a U.S. citizen who is his political rival. President Trump and his Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney made public statements confirming this use of governmental power to solicit investigations that would aid the President's personal political interests. The President made clear that his private attorney, Rudy Giuliani, was central to efforts to spur Ukrainian investigations, and Mr. Giuliani confirmed that his efforts were in service of President Trump's private interests.

Ultimately, whether to impeach the President and remove him from office depends on judgments that the Constitution leaves to Congress. But if the House of Representatives impeached the President for the conduct described here and the Senate voted to remove him, they would be acting well within their constitutional powers. Whether President Trump's conduct is classified as bribery, as a high crime or misdemeanor, or as both, it is clearly impeachable under our Constitution.

700+ HISTORIANS' STATEMENT ON THE
IMPEACHMENT OF PRESIDENT TRUMP

Dec. 16

We are American historians devoted to studying our nation's past who have concluded that Donald J. Trump has violated his oath to "faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States" and to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States." His "attempts to subvert the Constitution," as George Mason described impeachable offenses at the Constitutional Convention in 1787, urgently and justly require his impeachment.

President Trump's numerous and flagrant abuses of power are precisely what the Framers had in mind as grounds for impeaching and removing a president. Among those most harmful to the Constitution have been his attempts to coerce the country of Ukraine, under attack from Russia, an adversary power to the United States, by withholding essential military assistance in exchange for the fabrication and legitimization of false information in order to advance his own reelection.

President Trump's lawless obstruction of the House of Representatives, which is rightly seeking documents and witness testimony in pursuit of its constitutionally-mandated oversight role, has demonstrated brazen contempt for representative government. So have his attempts to justify that obstruction on the grounds that the executive enjoys absolute immunity, a fictitious doctrine that, if tolerated, would turn the president into an elected monarch above the law.

As Alexander Hamilton wrote in *The Federalist*, impeachment was designed to deal with "the misconduct of public men" which involves "the abuse or violation of some public trust." Collectively, the President's offenses, including his dereliction in protecting the integrity of the 2020 election from Russian disinformation and renewed interference, arouse once again the Framers' most profound fears that powerful members of government would become, in Hamilton's words, "the mercenary instruments of foreign corruption."

It is our considered judgment that if President Trump's misconduct does not rise to the level of impeachment, then virtually nothing does.

Hamilton understood, as he wrote in 1792, that the republic remained vulnerable to the

rise of an unscrupulous demagogue, "unprincipled in private life, desperate in his fortune, bold in his temper, possessed of considerable talents . . . despotic in his ordinary demeanour." That demagogue, Hamilton said, could easily enough manage "to mount the hobby horse of popularity—to join in the cry of danger to liberty—to take every opportunity of embarrassing the General Government & bringing it under suspicion—to flatter and fall in with all the non sense of the zealots of the day." Such a figure, Hamilton wrote, would "throw things into confusion that he may 'ride the storm and direct the whirlwind.'"

President Trump's actions committed both before and during the House investigations fit Hamilton's description and manifest utter and deliberate scorn for the rule of law and "repeated injuries" to constitutional democracy. That disregard continues and it constitutes a clear and present danger to the Constitution. We therefore strongly urge the House of Representatives to impeach the President.

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, what we are discussing today is the established fact that the President, again, violated the Constitution.

It is a matter of fact that the President is, again, an ongoing threat to our national security. And the testimony of decorated war heroes, distinguished diplomats, and patriotic, career public servants—some the President's own appointees—over the past weeks have told us this.

The President used the power of his public office to obtain an improper personal, political benefit at the expense of America's national security. When the President weakens a democratic ally that is advancing American security interests by fighting an American adversary, the President weakens America.

This abuse of power also jeopardizes the integrity of our elections. All Americans agree that American voters should choose our President, not some foreign government.

The Founders understood that it is profoundly corrosive for our democracy for the President to invite interference in our elections.

As George Washington, our Nation's patriarch, under whose gaze we stand today, warned: "History and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government"—George Washington.

Sadly, the American people have witnessed further wrongs of the President, which necessitate the second Article of Impeachment: obstruction of Congress. When the President's wrongdoing was revealed, he launched an unprecedented, indiscriminate, and categorical campaign of defiance and obstruction. Never before in the history of our Nation have we seen a President declare—and act as if—he is above the law.

The President even goes so far as to say and act on this absurdity when he says: "Article II says I can do whatever I want."

No, it doesn't.

That recklessness is a profound violation of the Constitution and our Republic, which endure because of our system of separation of powers: three

coequal branches, each a check and balance on the others—"a republic," again, "if we can keep it."

□ 1215

The Founders' great fear of a rogue or corrupt President is the very reason why they enshrined impeachment in the Constitution.

As one Founder, William Davie of North Carolina, warned, unless the Constitution contained an impeachment provision, a President might spare no efforts or means whatever to get himself reelected.

Another Founder, George Mason, insisted that the President who procured his appointment in the first instance through improper and corrupt acts might repeat his guilt and return to power.

We in Congress, Article I, the legislative branch, must stand up and make clear to the American people and to all people who this body still stands by the principles enshrined in the Constitution and defended by generations of Americans.

Last week, in observance of the 75th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, Members traveled to that hallowed ground to express our gratitude to the heroes who sacrificed everything to secure victory of freedom over tyranny, not just for America but for the world. The veterans of that battle, who are in their nineties, told us how, after the war was won, the Europeans whom they liberated would ask: Why did you risk—you don't know us—and give your lives to save us? We are not Americans.

Our men would say: We came here to fight for you not because you are Americans but because we are Americans.

As our beloved Elijah Cummings, our Oversight Committee chair, our North Star, said when he announced his support of this action: "When the history books are written about this tumultuous era, I want them to show that I was among those in the House of Representatives who stood up to lawlessness and tyranny."

He also said, almost prophetically:

When we are dancing with the angels, the question will be: What did we do to make sure we kept our democracy intact?

Elijah has since passed on. Now, he is dancing with the angels.

I know that he and all of us here are very proud of the moral courage of Members who want to honor the vision of our Founders for a republic, the sacrifice of our men and women in uniform to defend it, and the aspirations of our children to live freely within it.

Today, we are here to defend democracy for the people. May God bless America.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, we are here today to enter into a debate that should surprise no one. This has not been a surprise, and it is not even something that we would not have thought about.

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From the very moment that the majority party in this House won, the inevitability that we would be here today was only a matter of what date they would schedule it, nothing else.

In fact, how it even began to look even further was, on September 24, the Speaker announced an impeachment inquiry even before seeing the call transcript that we are going to hear so much about today.

You know, it is not about what this body can do and its constitutional oath, and there has been a lot of "constitutional" and "Founders" thrown around and will be all day today. But there is one thing that I will mention all along, and that is, also, the Founders were very concerned about a partisan impeachment in which politics or the majority, who have their strength, can do what they want to do, regardless of any facts.

In fact, I have said it before, and I will say it again, I do not believe, no matter what was said today and even what has been said—this is not a solemn occasion. When you go looking for something for 3 years, and especially this year since January, you ought to be excited when you find it, but they can't because I know what has now happened. It took me till last night, but I was thinking about it. Why do we keep calling this a solemn occasion when you have been wanting to do this ever since the gentleman was elected? The President came forward and did what he saw fit for the American people, but yet they wanted to impeach him. And it hit me. Now I know.

The reason they wanted to is now they are realizing what I told them and have been telling them for the last few weeks, that the clock and the calendar are terrible masters. The clock and the calendar are terrible masters. They do not care about anything except getting the time done and the calendar fixed. They do not care about facts. They do not care about time. And one day, the clock and the calendar will hang along this body in a very detrimental way.

How do I know this? Because one of our Members, Ms. TLAB, said on the night she was sworn in: We are going to impeach.

Well, you know the rest. In May 2019, Al. GREEN said: I am concerned if we don't impeach this President, he will get reelected.

That is probably the most prescient thing said by the majority in the last year is that they said: We can't beat him if we don't impeach him.

There is a reason behind the impeachment. Even Speaker PELOSI said it would be dangerous to leave it to voters to determine whether President Trump stays in office. Really? After we just said the Pledge of Allegiance, we go back to the Speaker's own words and she said it would be dangerous to leave it to the voters.

I will tell you right now, Madam Speaker, we on the Republican side have no problem taking our case to the majority and to the people of this

country because they elected Donald Trump, and it is a matter for the voters, not this House, not in this way, not in the way this is being done. It has trampled everything this House believes in.

I said it yesterday, and I believe this to be true today, I will fight this on process, which has been deplorable, to use a word of the majority. It has been awful.

The calendar and the clock make it impressive that we actually do it quickly. We don't care about rules. We don't care about minority hearing days. We don't care about giving the opportunity for witnesses to be called because the chairman gets to determine what is relevant. Wow, that is pretty good. Let the accuser determine what is relevant to the one being accused.

The people of America see through this. The people of America understand due process, and they understand when it is being trampled in the people's House.

You see, it is also not a matter of process, which will be discussed today. It is a matter of actual facts. I will fight the facts all day long because what we have found here today is a President who did not do as being charged. In fact, they had to go to abuse of power, this amorphous term that you are going to hear many arguments about that abuse of power, except for one thing, the call itself, the two parties say no pressure. Nothing was ever done to get the money. In fact, they didn't even know the money was held.

But there is something that very much bothers me about the facts. There were five meetings—we will hear about those today—in which there was never a linkage made. There was one witness who is depended on over 600 times in the majority's report that, in the end, after questioned, had to say: Well, that was my presumption of what was happening.

You see, this is an impeachment based on presumption, basically also a poll-tested impeachment on what actually sells to the American people.

Today is going to be a lot of things. What it is not is fair. What it is not is about the truth. What is true today, and I just heard it just a moment ago in the articles themselves where it said—the Speaker, I believe, actually talked about this, that the President weakened a foreign leader.

Do you know what the truth of the matter is, Madam Speaker? The most interesting and deplorable thing that I have heard over the last few weeks is the actual attack by the majority on President Zelensky because they realize the whole crux of their case is that if he was not pressured, their house of cards falls. By the way, it has already fallen.

But if we can't show pressure, then we either have to call him a liar, a world leader, or we have to make up names to call him. That is exactly

what happened in the Judiciary Committee when a Member of the majority actually compared him to a battered wife. That is below the dignity of this body, to take a world leader and, when he doesn't make your case for you, to belittle him, especially, as is going to be often said by the majority, that they are in the middle of a hot war with Russia.

You see, President Trump actually did give them offensive weapons. President Trump did nothing wrong. We are going to talk about that all day long today.

We went on process, and we went on facts. Why? Because the American people will see through this.

Before I close this first part, I will have to recognize that even the minority leader in the Senate recognizes that the House did not do their job because he can't make the case to his own Members so he is having to ask for witnesses, ask for more time. You see, and even yesterday, it was sort of funny, I thought it was hilarious that the minority leader in the Senate went out and did a press conference and said: They denied my witnesses. They denied my requests.

Well, welcome to the club, Mr. SCHUMER. That is exactly what has happened over here for the last 3 months.

Today, we are going to talk a lot about impeachment. We are going to talk a lot about our President. We are going to talk about two Articles of Impeachment, abuse of power because they can't actually pin anything of factual basis on him—the President did nothing wrong in this issue—and then they are going to talk about obstruction of Congress.

You know, obstruction of Congress, as I have said before, is like petulant children saying we didn't get our way when we didn't ask the right way, and we didn't actually go after it and try to make a case.

You know why, Madam Speaker? The clock and the calendar are terrible masters. The majority will own that problem today because to the clock and the calendar, facts don't matter. The promises to the base matter, and today is a promise kept for the majority—not a surprise, a fact.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

MR. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, the House of Representatives must now consider two Articles of Impeachment against President Trump. The first article charges that the President used his public office to coerce a foreign government into attacking his political rival. The second article charges that the President took extreme and unprecedented steps to obstruct our investigation into his conduct.

Taken together, the two articles charge that President Trump placed his private political interests above our national security, above our elections,

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and above our system of checks and balances.

After months of investigation, there can be no serious debate about the evidence at hand. On July 25, when he spoke to President Zelensky of Ukraine, President Trump had the upper hand. The President, through his agents, had already demanded that Ukraine announce an investigation of his political opponents. Ukraine needed our help, both military aid, which had been appropriated by Congress because of our security interests, and an Oval Office meeting to show the world that the United States continues to stand with Ukraine against Russian aggression.

President Trump should have been focused on the interests of the American people on that call. Instead, he prioritized his private political interests. President Trump asked President Zelensky for a favor. He wanted Ukraine to announce two bogus investigations, one into former Vice President Biden, then his leading opponent in the 2020 election, and another to advance a conspiracy theory that Ukraine, not Russia, attacked our elections in 2016.

Neither request was premised on any legitimate national security or foreign policy interests. One was intended to help President Trump conceal the truth about the 2016 election. The other was intended to help him gain an advantage in the 2020 election.

After the call, President Trump ratcheted up the pressure. He deployed his private attorney and other agents, some acting far outside the regular channels of diplomacy, to make his desires clear. There would be no aid and no meeting until Ukraine announced the sham investigations.

To our founding generation, abuse of power was a specific, well-defined offense. A President may not misuse the powers of the Presidency to obtain an improper personal benefit. The evidence shows that President Trump did exactly that.

For this alone, he should be impeached. But the first article also identifies two aggravating factors.

When President Trump conditioned military aid on a personal favor, he harmed America's national security. When he demanded that a foreign government target his domestic political rival, he took steps to corrupt our next election. To the Founders, these offenses clearly merited removal from office.

The President faces a second Article of Impeachment for his efforts to obstruct our investigation of his misconduct. The Constitution grants the sole power of impeachment to the House of Representatives. Within our system of checks and balances, the President may not decide for himself what constitutes a valid impeachment inquiry, nor may he ignore lawful subpoenas or direct others to do so.

Many Presidents, including President Trump, have asserted privileges and

other objections to specific subpoenas, but only President Trump has ordered the categorical defiance of a congressional investigation, the automatic rejection of all subpoenas. The President is not above the law, and he should be impeached for this, as well.

Congress cannot wait for the next election to address this misconduct. President Trump has demonstrated a clear pattern of wrongdoing. This is not the first time he has solicited foreign interference in an election, has been exposed, and has attempted to obstruct the resulting investigation.

We cannot rely on the next election as a remedy for Presidential misconduct when the President threatens the very integrity of that election. He has shown us he will continue to put his selfish interests above the good of the country. We must act without delay.

By his actions, President Trump has broken his oath of office. His conduct continues to undermine our Constitution and threaten our next election. His actions warrant his impeachment and demand his removal from office.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the following Judiciary Committee staff for their extraordinary efforts during the Committee's consideration of the Impeachment of President Donald Trump:

Amy Rutkin, Chief of Staff; Perry Apfelbaum, Staff Director and Chief Counsel; John Doty, Senior Advisor; Aaron Hiller, Deputy Chief Counsel and Chief Oversight Counsel; Shadawn Reddick-Smith, Communications Director; Daniel Schwarz, Director of Strategic Communications; Moh Sharma, Director of Member Services and Outreach and Policy Advisor; David Greengrass, Senior Counsel; John Williams, Parliamentarian and Senior Counsel; Barry Berke, Special Counsel; Norm Eisen, Special Counsel; Ted Kalo, Special Counsel; James Park, Chief Counsel of Constitution Subcommittee; Arya Hariharan, Deputy Chief Oversight Counsel; Charles Gayle, Oversight Counsel; Maggie Goodlander, Oversight Counsel.

Sarah Istele, Oversight Counsel; Joshua Matz, Oversight Counsel; Kerry Tirrell, Oversight Counsel; Sophia Brill, Counsel; Milagros Cisneros, Counsel; Benjamin Hernandez-Stern, Counsel; Matthew Morgan, Counsel; Matt Robinson, Counsel; Jessica Presley, Director of Digital Strategy; Kayla Hamed, Deputy Press Secretary; Kingsley Animesh, Director of Administration; Madeline Strasser, Chief Clerk; Tim Pearson, Publications Specialist; Janna Pinckney, IT Director; Faisal Siddiqui, Deputy IT Manager; Rachel Calanni, Professional Staff and Legislative Aide; Jordan Dashow, Professional Staff and Legislative Aide.

William S. Emmons, Professional Staff and Legislative Aide; Julian Gerson, Professional Staff and Legislative Aide; Rosalind Jackson, Professional Staff and Legislative Aide; Priyanka Mara, Professional Staff and Legislative Aide; Thomas Kaelin, Oversight Intern; Anthony Valdez, Oversight Intern; Alex Wang, Fellow.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support these Articles of Impeachment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1230

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER).

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to impeaching the President.

The Constitution says that any civil officer, including the President, may be impeached for treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors.

Unlike the Nixon and Clinton cases, there are no allegations that the President has committed a crime.

We have had almost 3 years of non-stop investigations. We have had the Mueller report, we have had the Schiff investigation, we have had the Nadler investigation, and at no time has there been any evidence that indicates that Donald J. Trump violated any criminal statute of the United States.

So why are we here?

We are here because the majority caucus, the Democratic Caucus, has been hijacked by the radical left. They have wanted to reverse the course of the 2016 election ever since Donald J. Trump won that election.

So let's look at these two phony Articles of Impeachment.

First of all, abuse of power. The phone call in question had the President say, "our country has been through a lot. I want you to do us a favor." Not "me" a favor; "us" a favor. And there he was referring to our country, the United States of America, not a personal political gain.

He was not afraid to let this transcript go public, and he released the transcript almost immediately after the call.

Now, the second Article of Impeachment, obstruction of Congress, basically says that, unless the President gives us everything we want, when we want it, then he has committed an impeachable offense.

That is a bunch of bunk.

Now, the President has certain individual and executive privileges by virtue of his office.

Whenever there has been a dispute between the executive and legislative branches heretofore, they have gone to court. The Supreme Court a couple weeks ago said they would take jurisdiction over deciding whether the President has to comply with one subpoena relating to his tax returns.

Now, here, the Democrats have been bent to impeach the President of the United States before the court decides this. This means that there is a rush job to do this.

Why is there a rush job? Because they want to influence the 2020 elections.

They have spent 3 years doing this; they have spent millions of taxpayer dollars, including the Mueller report, putting together this impeachment; and they also have had this Congress wrapped around impeachment and not doing their jobs until the dam broke this week.

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Stop this charade. Vote "no."

Mr. NADLER, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Wisconsin knows full well the President asserted no privileges here. He simply ordered complete defiance of the impeachment inquiry.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Ms. SCANLON).

Ms. SCANLON, Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman NADLER for his leadership as we navigate this challenging time, not just for our committee and Congress, but for our country.

It is with profound sadness that I stand here today in support of these Articles of Impeachment.

President Trump's behavior is exactly what our Founders feared most. They knew that with the awesome power of the Presidency came the risk of a President abusing that power for personal gain.

They were particularly concerned about an executive who became entangled with foreign governments, corrupted our elections, or sought to avoid consequences for his own misconduct in office.

That is why they included impeachment in the Constitution: to protect our Republic.

Our colleagues across the aisle have claimed that we are impeaching the President because we don't like him, but this moment is about more than disagreement with the President's policies or personality. Those issues belong in the voting booth.

Our task here is not to judge the President himself. Instead, we must judge his conduct and whether his actions have undermined our Constitution.

The President has committed the highest of high crimes under our Constitution. He used the highest office in our government and taxpayer dollars to pressure a foreign country to interfere in our elections. He undermined our national security.

When he got caught, he tried to cover it up, obstructing our investigation and refusing to produce subpoenaed documents and witnesses.

A government where the President abuses his power is not "of the people."

A government where the President pressures a foreign country to undermine our elections is not "by the people."

A government where the President puts his own interests before the country is not "for the people."

This isn't complicated. You know it. I know it. The American people know it.

President Trump's wrongdoing and the urgent threat that his actions present to our next election and our democracy leaves us no principled alternative but to support these Articles of Impeachment.

Our Constitution, our country, and our children depend upon it.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I wish, as the gentleman just said, that they would examine the fac-

tual conduct, but I guess that is not going to happen.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the Founders of this country warned us against a single-party impeachment because they feared it would bitterly and perhaps irreparably divide our Nation.

The truth is, in the 243 years of this Republic, there has never been a single-party, fraudulent impeachment process like the one being used today.

Our Democrat colleagues have weaponized the impeachment provision of the Constitution to nullify the votes of 63 million Americans who elected President Donald J. Trump.

This is not about a phone call or Ukraine or even his use of the executive privilege.

You have to remember that 95 of the Democrats on this floor today voted to impeach Donald Trump before the July 25 phone call ever happened between President Trump and President Zelensky.

Not only is this a single-party impeachment, it is also evidence-free.

After all their Herculean efforts, they could only come up with two short Articles of Impeachment.

On the first, the Democrats know there is zero direct evidence in the record of these proceedings to show that President Trump engaged in any abuse of power.

As you will hear today, their entire case is based on hearsay, speculation, and conjecture, and there is not a single fact witness that can provide testimony to support their baseless allegations.

The Democrats' second claim is that President Trump obstructed Congress by simply doing what virtually every other President in the modern era has also done, and that is to assert, Mr. Speaker, a legitimate executive privilege, which protects the separation of powers.

And you know what? If they disagreed with that, the Democrats could and should have just simply gone a few blocks away to a Federal court to get an expedited court order compelling the extra documents and information they requested. That is what has always been done in the past, but they didn't do that here, because these Democrats don't have time for it.

They are trying to meet their own arbitrary, completely reckless, and Machiavellian timeline to take down a President that they loathe.

The real abuse of power here is on the part of the House Democrats as they have feverishly produced and pursued this impeachment 20 times faster than the impeachment investigation of Bill Clinton.

They are trying to reach their predetermined political outcome, and along the way, they have steamrolled

over constitutionally-guaranteed due process, previously sacrosanct House rules, and the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

This must fail. This is a shameful day for the country.

Mr. NADLER, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman knows that impeachment was put into the Constitution as a defense of the Republic in between elections.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL).

Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. Speaker, this is a day of accountability and defending our democracy.

The facts in front of us are clear: this President, Donald J. Trump, coerced a fragile foreign ally to investigate his political opponent and interfere in our elections. He leveraged critically needed, congressionally-approved military aid to Ukraine.

The President's allies want to claim that he did this because he cared about corruption, but if President Trump truly cared about corruption, then he would have listened to the talking points that were prepared by the National Security Council on anticorruption. He did not. In fact, on those two calls with President Zelensky, he never mentioned the word "corruption."

He did not abide by the Department of Defense's own recommendation that Ukraine had passed all the anticorruption benchmarks, and he didn't listen to the unanimous conclusion of all of his top advisers that he must release that aid to Ukraine.

He did release the aid in 2017 and 2018, but not in 2019. Why? Because in 2019, Vice President Joe Biden was running for President.

This is not hearsay. We have a responsibility. The President told us himself on national television exactly what he wanted from the phone call with President Zelensky. He came onto the White House lawn and he said:

I wanted President Zelensky to open an investigation into the Bidens.

He solicited foreign interference before, he is doing it now, and he will do it again.

The President is the smoking gun.

Our Founders, Mr. Speaker, entrusted us with the awesome responsibility of protecting our democracy, which gets its power not from the bloodlines of monarchs, but from the votes of We the People.

Without that, we are no longer a democracy, we are a monarchy or a dictatorship.

So today, to uphold my oath to Constitution and country, I will vote to impeach Donald J. Trump.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I also remind my chairman that impeachment was never meant as a political weapon in between elections when you can't win the next one.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY).

Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. Speaker, other than authorizing an act of war, impeachment is the gravest item that we as a Congress can consider.

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The decision to move forward with impeachment of a United States President is so consequential that it has only been done three times previously in our Nation's history, all based on legitimate evidence of criminal behavior. Unfortunately, many of my colleagues have diminished what should be a solemn and grave proceeding into an absolute political circus simply because they don't like the man occupying the White House.

Many Democrats have been intent on impeaching the President since the day he took office. Their actions are clearly motivated by hatred for President Trump. This impeachment vote today is the next step in their long-held plan to remove him from office.

The partisan impeachment investigation run by the House Intelligence Committee was unnecessarily held behind closed doors in a room designed to share classified information.

Nothing classified was shared during these meetings, but the result of this decision was that most Members of Congress and all Americans were blocked from hearing the facts for themselves.

Chairman SCHIFF repeatedly withheld crucial information from the Republicans, including the ability for anyone but himself and his staff to speak with the whistleblower at the center of this investigation. He was even called out by liberal media for spreading misinformation and falsehoods throughout the impeachment process.

The public hearings were held with complete disregard for the House rules and decades of precedent. Republicans were not allowed to call witnesses or to make basic parliamentary motions. In fact, the only witnesses allowed to testify publicly were those who fit neatly within the Democrats' predetermined narrative.

Most importantly, we have not been presented with any real evidence that proves the President is guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors, as required by the Constitution to remove a duly-elected President. If there was criminal activity, as many of my Democrat colleagues claim, then why are there no crimes listed in the Articles of Impeachment?

We have forever weakened this body by turning impeachment into a political weapon. This impeachment scheme is nothing more than an attempt to conduct taxpayer-funded opposition research and damage the President's electability heading into 2020.

The American people see right through this charade and are fed up.

It is time for this madness to stop and for us to get back to the important work the American people sent us here to do.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TED LIEU).

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman NADLER for his leadership.

Let's start by making this very simple. No one in America could do what Donald Trump did and get away with it. No American elected official can call up a foreign government and ask for an investigation of a political opponent. No Member of Congress can call up a foreign official and ask for help in our reelection campaign. If we did that, we would likely get indicted.

No one is above the law, and the Constitution is the supreme law of the land.

I first swore an oath to the Constitution when I joined the United States Air Force on Active Duty. The oath I took was not to a political party or to a President or to a king; it was to a document that has made America the greatest nation on Earth, and that document contains a safeguard for when the President's abuse of power is so extreme that it warrants impeachment.

We are not here because of policy disputes. While I disagree with the President, I acknowledge he has the right to restrict the number of refugees entering our country, he has the right to eliminate environmental executive orders, and he has the right to sign a bill that has given tax breaks to the wealthy.

But the President does not have the right to cheat and to solicit foreign interference in our elections. That is illegal, it is not what the voters elected him to do, and we will not stand for it.

The President's actions in this case were particularly insidious, because he also urged our government for his private gain.

He conditioned taxpayer-funded military aid and a critical White House meeting with the Ukrainian president on the requirement that Ukraine publicly announce an investigation into his opponent. And by harming Ukrainian national security, the President also harmed U.S. national security.

□ 1245

Then, the President solicited foreign interference again on the south lawn of the White House when he again asked Ukraine to investigate his political opponent. Then, he asked China, our peer competitor, to do the same. That abuse of power is not acceptable.

Whether or not the Senate convicts, the House has an independent duty to do the right thing. That is why we have passed over 275 bipartisan bills that are stuck in the Senate. Whether impeaching or legislating, we will continue to be faithful to the Constitution, regardless of what the Senate may or may not do.

Moreover, impeachment is a form of deterrence. Our children are watching. No President ever wants to be impeached. Whether Donald Trump leaves in 1 month, 1 year, or 5 years, this impeachment is permanent. It will follow him around for the rest of his life. History books will record it, and the people will know why we impeached.

It is all very simple. No one is above the law, not our Commander in Chief, not our President.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY).

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, in 2016, 63 million Americans went to the polls and elected Donald Trump President of the United States. House Democrats have been trying to overturn the election ever since. In fact, they have tried five additional times to the one that is before us to impeach the President, including the vote in May 2017, just 5 months into his term.

In January of this year, House Democrats took control of this Chamber, and they were faced with a choice. They could use the tools of the majority to pursue legitimate priorities of the American people, policies that can impact their lives, or they could use the tools to undo the 2016 election. They made their choice.

Since then, House Democrats have issued more subpoenas than bills have been signed into law. That tells us all we need to know about this Congress and that party.

Rather than launch a legitimate investigation, Democrats turn to focus groups to workshop their language, to see if they could sell this to the American people, and the American people have rejected it.

Instead of negotiating with the executive branch, for instance, and allowing the courts to resolve any legitimate disputes, House Democrats rushed toward an impeachment vote.

So here we are, 12 weeks later, voting whether to impeach the President based off the thinnest record in modern history. It is no surprise that the Senate is already asking for additional witnesses, more documents, and real evidence. The body of evidence is weak and woefully insufficient for impeachment.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN).

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, American elections belong to the American people, not the American President and not foreign powers.

No President may cheat the people by working with foreign governments to steal from us a free and fair election. And no President who attempts it may cover up that cheating by systematically obstructing Congress in our work.

Article II of the Constitution does not authorize a President to do whatever he wants. The reason we have a Constitution is to keep government officials from doing whatever they want.

If we the people lose the certainty of free and fair elections to Presidential corruption and foreign manipulation, then we lose our democracy itself, the most precious inheritance we have received from prior generations who pledged their sacred honor and gave everything they had to defend it.

The struggle for democracy is the meaning of America. That is why we remain the last best hope of a world

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ravaged by authoritarianism, violence, and corruption.

We must act now to protect our elections and safeguard constitutional democracy for the enormous and unprecedented challenges that still lie ahead of us.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MILLER).

Mrs. MILLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H. Res. 755.

Today is a disappointing day. It is the day my colleagues from across the aisle cast the vote that they have spent the last 3 years obsessing over, the vote to impeach our duly-elected President.

There are two charges claimed by House Democrats, and there is zero cause for either.

While President Trump has led, our country has thrived, and Washington liberals have failed.

Despite the commitment of many of our colleagues to obstruct the Trump administration's agenda at every turn, our country continues to succeed.

In this body, however, we have not been able to deliver on what Americans want and need. We still have not finished securing our border. The opioid epidemic still rages in our communities. Our infrastructure is still in dire need of an overhaul. We still have not reached a bipartisan resolution on drug pricing.

If Congress hadn't spent the last year stuck in a divisive, ugly, partisan impeachment debacle, think of what we could have done, the lives that could have been saved, the communities that could have been improved, the crisis on our southern border ended, and the positive work that we should do for our country. But we didn't, all because of divisive political theories.

Congress can do better than this, and America deserves better.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE).

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Articles of Impeachment against Donald J. Trump, the 45th President of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, no one runs for Congress to impeach a President. But this President has left us no choice.

President Trump abused the enormous powers of his office when he solicited foreign interference for the purpose of helping him in his reelection campaign in 2020.

The President betrayed our national security and undermined the security of our elections when he put his own personal political interests ahead of the interests of our country. He tried to cheat to win reelection.

This wasn't an attack on Vice President Biden. This was an attack on our democracy.

If we do not hold the President accountable today, we will no longer live in a democracy. We will live in a dicta-

torship where any future President will be free to abuse their office in order to get reelected.

Today, every Member of this Chamber faces a choice: whether to do what the Constitution demands and the evidence requires or to turn a blind eye to the President's grave misconduct, a blind eye to the overwhelming evidence of high crimes and misdemeanors.

To my friends on the other side of the aisle, I say this: This is not about making history. This is about holding a lawless President accountable in the way our Framers intended. This is a time to put our country over your political party. Do not seek safety in the high grass of a vote against these articles. We are all Americans. Show the American people your devotion to your country is more powerful than your loyalty to your political party.

United, we can defend our democracy from all enemies, foreign and domestic. Divided, we risk losing our democracy.

All you have to do is look at the evidence because it will leave you with only one answer: The President of the United States must be impeached.

Remember these facts: He tried to cheat. He got caught. He confessed. Then, he obstructed the investigation into his misconduct.

For our democracy, for our Constitution, for the people you represent, and for all who will inherit our country from us, I pray you will do the right thing.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ROGERS).

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in complete and total support of President Trump.

The matter before the House today is based solely on a fundamental hatred of our President. It is a sham, a witch hunt, and it is tantamount to a coup against the duly-elected President of the United States.

This is a sad day for our Nation when one political party, along with their cohorts in the deep state and the mainstream media, try to hijack our Constitution.

The Democrat majority has irresponsibly turned the impeachment process into a political weapon, something that Republicans refused to do when our base was calling for the impeachment of President Obama.

It is well past time for the House to move beyond this hoax and put our Nation first. That is exactly what President Trump is doing. The United States has record-low unemployment and historic performance in the stock market. President Trump is rewriting failed trade deals of the past to put America first. He is rebuilding our military, helped create Space Force, and the list goes on.

I implore my colleagues to end this spectacle now.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I am hearing a lot from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, except a de-

fense of President Trump's conduct, which is indefensible.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH).

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, some say this impeachment is about eight lines in a call transcript, but there is so much more. This was about a scheme that lasted months and involved dozens of Trump administration officials.

Look at the evidence, look at the direct evidence: text messages, emails, calls, and meetings.

Way back in May, the President told his team: "Talk to Rudy" Giuliani. The President's message? No White House meeting unless Ukraine helped him in the 2020 election.

Ambassador Sondland said there was a "prerequisite of investigations" into the Bidens and announcement of investigations was a "deliverable."

Ambassador Volker said the most important thing for the Ukrainian President to do was commit to an investigation of the Bidens.

Just before the July 25 call, Volker told the Ukrainians: "Assuming President Z convinces Trump he will investigate . . . we will nail down date for visit to Washington."

The direct evidence kept coming after the call, more texts, more emails, and more calls, all with the same message: If Ukraine didn't announce an investigation into the President's political rival, then they wouldn't get the White House meeting that they had been promised, and they wouldn't get the aid that they needed in their war against Russia.

American Presidential power comes from the people through elections. The Constitution requires that we protect those elections. But when the President abused his power to solicit foreign interference, he was cheating American voters before they even had a chance to vote.

Mr. Speaker, President Trump's actions force us to protect our elections and the Constitution. I urge my colleagues to defend the Constitution, support these Articles of Impeachment, and remind the world that, in America, no one is above the law.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I would remind this whole body that it is more than eight lines. In fact, there are four facts: There is no pressure. There is no conditionality. They did nothing to get it. And they got the money.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SPANO).

Mr. SPANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this political effort to remove President Trump from office.

I am not surprised this day has come, but I am disappointed, disappointed because impeachment is one of the most consequential decisions that we can make in this body, and this impeachment is based purely on partisan motives.

Speaker PELOSI said we shouldn't go down this path unless there was something compelling, overwhelming, and

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bipartisan because of how divisive it would be. Unfortunately, it is clear the majority has had laser focus on one thing for 3 years: impeaching the President.

The majority has failed to deliver for the American people. They failed to pass a budget on time, failed to pass the spending bills on time, and failed to deliver bipartisan solutions that will actually help improve the lives of Americans.

But the American people see through this sad charade for what it is: an attempt to undo the 2016 election based on hearsay and opinion, not fact.

The transcript of the call showed no conditions were placed on the aid. President Trump and President Zelensky have said there was no pressure, and Ukraine received the aid without taking any actions.

The Constitution is clear. The President may only be impeached for committing treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors. Nowhere in the two Articles of Impeachment brought today does it argue that the President has committed treason, bribery, or any crime under the law.

This is not overwhelming. It is not compelling. It is not bipartisan. But the Speaker was right in one way. This is incredibly divisive and has lowered the bar for what future Presidents will face.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly oppose the articles before us today, and I hope that we will finally move past this nightmare and get to work to deliver results for the American people.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, the evidence is clear that President Trump took advantage of Ukraine's vulnerability and abused the powers of his office to pressure Ukraine to help his reelection campaign. This is the highest of high crimes, and President Trump must be held to account.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. CORREA).

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Homeland Security Committee, I know firsthand the dangers that foreign interference in our elections present to our democracy. As a Member of Congress, it is my sworn duty to ensure that our Nation is secure from all threats, foreign and domestic. And Congress has a constitutional job to investigate allegations of misconduct by the executive branch, including the United States President.

□ 1300

The Constitution is the highest law of the land, creating a system of checks and balances to prevent the creation of a king. Congress is a coequal branch of our Nation's government, equal with the Presidency, with duties that are given to us by the Framers.

This is a very sad day, and I do not take impeachment lightly; yet, I am here to do my job as a Member of Congress.

(English translation of the statement made in Spanish is as follows:)

My town sent me to Washington to work with everyone, Democrats and Republicans, to improve the lives of our communities.

Sadly, we are here, today, considering the actions of the President of the United States.

My vote will be to ensure that we remain a democracy, and not a dictatorship.

Many of our sons and daughters have paid the price of our freedom with their blood. Our liberty and democracy must be the inheritance that we leave to our sons and daughters.

A democracy exists when nobody is above the constitution, and we are all subject to the law.

I ask God to give us wisdom, and to help us unite our beloved homeland, the United States of America.

Mi pueblo me mando a Washington para trabajar con todos, Democratas y Republicanos, para mejorar las vidas de nuestra comunidad.

Tristemente estamos presentes, considerando las acciones del presidente de los Estados Unidos.

Mi voto, sera para asegurar que sigamos siendo una democracia, y no una dictadura.

Muchos de nuestros hijos y hijas, han pagado el precio de nuestra libertad con su sangre. Nuertra liberated y democracia, tienen que ser la herencia que les dejamos a nuertros hijos y hijas.

Una democracia existe cuando nadie esta sobre la constitucion, y todos somos sujetos a la ley.

Le pido a dios que nos de sabiduria, y que nos ayude unir nuestra querida patria, los Estados Unidos Americanos.

Mr. Speaker, today I pray to God for His guidance in uniting our great Nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BUTTERFIELD). The gentleman from California will provide a translation of his remarks to the Clerk.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I would have to disagree with my chairman. I am not sure what he has been watching, but the facts are not undisputed. They are very much disputed, not only by the minority, but by the witnesses who actually testified.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Democrats' sham process, which makes a mockery of the rules of the House and is, frankly, dangerous to this country.

Since day one, the Democrats have made it clear that they wanted to move toward impeachment well before any of the accusations took place. What Democrats, unfortunately, don't recognize is the damage that this will cause for our political institutions and America's trust for years to come.

Every American should be concerned that Speaker PELOSI doesn't trust our

citizens to let them decide who should lead our great country.

This impeachment process isn't focused on strengthening and protecting our political foundations but, rather, shaping public opinion.

I ask you: Is it worth that?

Not only is the process alarming, but it is wasting taxpayer dollars and valuable time that elected officials could be using to move our country forward. That includes: securing our borders, addressing student loan debt, and bringing down the cost of healthcare and prescription drugs.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues, while considering these articles, to ask themselves whether this is truly being done for the good of the country.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I would remind the gentleman that, after recovering millions of dollars in ill-gotten gains, the Mueller investigation was actually a net plus for the taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. NEGUSE).

Mr. NEGUSE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman NADLER and Speaker PELOSI for their leadership and their moral courage.

Today, the House of Representatives is debating whether to take the rare step of voting to impeach a President for only the third time in our country's history. Unfortunately, President Trump has left us no choice.

The fact of the matter is that the President abused the power of his office and invited a foreign country to interfere in our elections. In so doing, he undermined the sanctity of the free and fair elections upon which our Republic rests.

Making matters worse, over the past several months, President Trump and his administration have done everything they can to prevent Congress from uncovering the truth.

Let us be clear, in the history of our Republic, no President has ever obstructed Congress like this before.

During the Watergate investigation, as my colleagues well know:

President Nixon's chief of staff testified before Congress; President Trump's chief of staff refused.

President Nixon's counsel testified; President Trump's counsel refused.

White House aides close to President Nixon testified; President Trump refused to allow any aide who may have knowledge relevant to this investigation to testify.

Simply put, his administration has engaged in a wholesale obstruction of Congress, and that is exactly why we are considering not just one but two Articles of Impeachment before the House today.

Every Member of this body has a responsibility to uphold our Constitution, to defend our Republic, and, when necessary, to hold the executive branch accountable. We are exercising that responsibility today.

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Mr. Speaker, therefore, I will vote "yes" on both articles because it is what the Constitution requires and what my conscience demands.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I would never have thought that a Department of Justice investigation was used as a money revenue plot, but I guess one thing is true: It was a loser for the minority in a net profit situation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE).

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, the people's House should be better than this. We should be better than this.

During the Member's remarks in the Judiciary Committee, the committee's impeachment proceedings, he stated: "To my Republican colleagues: . . . How do you want to be remembered during this watershed moment in our Nation's history?"

Mr. Speaker, it won't be watching sports on a laptop during official Judiciary Committee proceedings to impeach a sitting President.

It won't be using explosives to refer to our President, calling for his impeachment just hours after being sworn into Congress.

It won't be using the chairmanship of the once-respected Intelligence Committee to distort the President's words in order to mislead the American people; and

It certainly won't be using the most serious and solemn powers of Congress to overturn a legitimate national election for political expediency.

No, Mr. Speaker, my fellow Republican colleagues and I won't be remembered in history for doing any of those things because we know this is far too grave a matter for subversions such as these of our democratic Republic.

We should all be better than this.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time remains on both sides.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York has 156½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Georgia has 157 minutes remaining.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Ms. ESCOBAR).

Ms. ESCOBAR. Mr. Speaker, our country faces a great tragedy and moment of truth. We have witnessed the President of the United States abuse his public office for personal political gain and invite foreign governments to interfere in our elections, putting the integrity of a government of, for, and by the people at great risk.

The evidence is overwhelming and clearly shows that President Trump will continue to abuse his office and obstruct Congress if left unchecked.

The Intelligence Committee conducted a robust investigation into the President's misconduct. Members interviewed 12 witnesses in public hearings, totaling over 30 hours; conducted 17 depositions, totaling over 100 hours; examined text messages and emails; re-

viewed the President's own words and actions; and published a 300-page report detailing their findings.

All of this, despite the fact that, under the President's direction, 12 current and former administration officials refused to testify, even ignoring subpoenas, and 71 document requests were denied.

The Judiciary Committee then reviewed the evidence and concluded that two Articles of Impeachment, which I support, were warranted.

The evidence shows that President Trump is a clear and present danger to our free and fair elections and our national security. The most powerful evidence of this pattern has come from the President himself.

In 2016, we heard him when he called on Russia to interfere in our elections. He said: "Russia, if you're listening."

He then repeated this call for election interference on the July 25 call with the Ukrainian President, and we heard him again, on the White House lawn, further adding China to that mix.

I stand ready to protect our sacred Republic, support these Articles of Impeachment, and pray that my colleagues have the courage to do the same. We must uphold our oath of office and defend the Constitution and our fragile democracy, because no one is above the law.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. RUTHERFORD).

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, in 2016, Vladimir Putin and his cronies waged a war on our elections with the goal of sowing discord and division in America.

Do you think he has been successful? Somewhere in Russia right now, Putin is laughing at us today. The majority is giving him exactly what he wants: a divided America with pure, partisan politics, with nasty political rhetoric at an all-time high. And some across the aisle are discrediting the results of future elections already.

It seems to many Americans that, for the past 3 years, the House majority has been carrying out the wishes of the Kremlin. The sad part is the Democrats have vowed to continue their sham investigations even after today's vote.

Impeaching a duly-elected President in a purely partisan manner with no crimes to show for it—not one element of a crime defined—disgraces the integrity of our democracy.

Now is the time to end the partisan politics, come together, and put America first.

Mr. Speaker, I urge this body to vote "no" to partisan impeachment.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES).

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, George Washington, in his farewell address to the Nation, counseled America that the Constitution is sacredly obligatory upon all. It is in that spirit that we proceed today.

Donald Trump pressured a foreign government to target an American citizen for political gain and, at the same time, withheld, without justification, \$391 million in military aid to a vulnerable Ukraine as part of a scheme to solicit foreign interference in an American election.

That is unacceptable. That is unconscionable. That is unconstitutional.

There are some who cynically argue that the impeachment of this President will further divide an already fractured Union, but there is a difference between division and clarification.

Slavery once divided the Nation, but emancipators rose up to clarify that all men are created equally.

Suffrage once divided the Nation, but women rose up to clarify that all voices must be heard in our democracy.

Jim Crow once divided the Nation, but civil rights champions rose up to clarify that all are entitled to equal protection under the law.

There is a difference between division and clarification.

We will hold this President accountable for his stunning abuse of power. We will hold this President accountable for undermining our national security. We will hold this President accountable for corrupting our democracy.

We will impeach Donald John Trump. We will clarify that, in America, no one is above the law.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

□ 1315

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, nullifying a national election requires an overwhelming case of high crimes supported by indisputable evidence that the vast majority of the Nation finds compelling.

Now, article I is a made-up crime called abuse of office. It does not charge that the President broke any law, but that Congress doesn't like the way he lawfully discharged his constitutional duties. This would reduce the Presidency to that of a minister serving at the pleasure of Congress, destroying the separation of powers at the heart of our Constitution.

Article II is another made-up crime called obstruction of Congress. It means the President sought to defend his constitutional rights and those of his Office. This removes the judiciary from our Constitution and places Congress alone in the position of defining the limits of its own powers relative to the President.

Our Bill of Rights guarantees every American the right to confront their accuser, to call witnesses in their defense, to be protected from hearsay, and to defend these rights in court. The Democrats have trampled them all in their stampede to impeach. Even in this kangaroo court, the Democrats' hand-picked witnesses provided no firsthand knowledge that the President linked aid to action—in fact, two witnesses provided firsthand knowledge

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that he specifically ordered no quid pro quo.

Any case that charged no actual crime and offered no legally admissible evidence would be laughed out of court in a heartbeat. That is the case before us today. It would redefine the grounds for impeachment in such a way that assures that it will become a constant presence in our national life. Now we know just how reckless is the Democrats' chant of "resist by any means necessary." This is a stunning abuse of power and a shameful travesty of justice that will stain the reputations of those responsible for generations to come.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, abuse of power was no vague or weak notion to the Framers. It had a very specific meaning: the use of official power to obtain an improper personal benefit while ignoring or injuring the national interest. President Trump has abused his office and must be removed.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN).

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, from our founding, the United States has been a special nation, a city upon a hill. Our values are enshrined in our Constitution: liberty, equality, and opportunity. We are a self-governing people where every person is equal before the law. In the United States, we don't have a king. We choose our leaders. We vote.

Generations of Americans have fought, and some have died to secure these inalienable rights. The Constitution begins: "We the People of the United States." That is us. It is not "we the leaders of Russia, Ukraine, or China" or "we the Democrats" or "we the Republicans." It is: "We the People of the United States." All Americans—and only Americans—get to have a say in our elections.

Donald Trump used the high power of the Presidency to pressure a foreign nation to besmirch his perceived primary political opponent. He corrupted our elections and compromised our national security so that he could keep power—not power for the people, power for himself. In 2016, Candidate Trump called for foreign interference when he said: "Russia, if you are listening."

In 2019, President Trump sought foreign interference when he needed a favor from Ukraine to intervene in the 2020 election. President Trump attacked and is a continuing threat to our system of free and fair elections.

Like all of you, Mr. Speaker, I took an oath to support and to defend the Constitution. I urge my colleagues to abide by that oath and stand up to President Trump's abuse of power and obstruction of Congress. To my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, I appeal to your patriotism and implore you to defend free and fair elections and preserve the Constitution.

God save the United States of America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman and all Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I do believe that our elections should be free and fair. I do believe that with all my heart. Except it seems like in this case impeachment is based on the fact that the Speaker said last month it would be dangerous to leave it to the voters to determine if Mr. Trump stays in office.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. HIGGINS).

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I have descended into the belly of the beast. I have witnessed the terror within, and I rise committed to oppose the insidious forces which threaten our Republic. America is being severely injured by this betrayal, by this unjust and weaponized impeachment brought upon us by the same Socialists who threaten unborn life in the womb, who threaten First Amendment rights of conservatives, who threaten Second Amendment protections of every American patriot, and who have long ago determined that they would organize and conspire to overthrow President Trump.

We don't face this horror because the Democrats have all of a sudden become constitutionalists. We are not being devoured from within because of some surreal assertion of the Socialists' newfound love of the very flag that they have trod upon.

We face this horror because of this map. This is what the Democrats fear. They fear the true will of the people. They are deep establishment D.C. They fear what they call on this Republican map, flyover country. They call us deplorables. They fear our faith, they fear our strength, they fear our unity, they fear our vote, and they fear our President.

We will never surrender our Nation to career establishment D.C. politicians and bureaucrats. Our Republic shall survive this threat from within. American patriots shall prevail.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I was not among those who supported impeachment before Ukraine, but I have called for impeachment today because our President is, as we speak, abusing his power and placing himself above the law.

President Trump's attempt to sabotage the 2020 election is a clear and present danger on our democracy.

We the people know this, and more Americans support impeachment today than at any time since Richard Nixon's final weeks in office. We know that it is wrong to enlist the help of foreigners in interfering in our elections. We know it is wrong to cheat, and we know what is at stake. It is not just that our elections were attacked; our elections are under attack right now.

The very day the Judiciary Committee voted out Articles of Impeach-

ment, President Trump welcomed Rudy Giuliani back to the White House.

President Trump is still at it. He is doubling down. He doesn't think he can win an election fair and square, so he is trying to cheat. To ignore these crimes is not just giving the President a pass; it is giving him a green light. Those who vote against impeachment are not just endorsing President Trump's past actions but his future ones as well.

If you think I exaggerate in warning that our elections can be undermined, I would urge my colleagues to come down to Georgia and find a Black man or woman of a certain age. They will tell you that the danger is real. And they will tell you of brave Americans—patriots—willing to risk far more than a political career who marched, struggled, and sometimes died so that we could have fair and free elections. We are not asked to possess even a fraction of their courage. We are simply called upon today to do what is right. I am proud to vote "yes" on impeachment.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I am glad that my colleague just mentioned Georgia, because since 2014 the actual voter participation among minorities—African American female and African American male, Hispanic male and Hispanic female—has risen double-digits. I am very proud of what Georgia is doing to get everybody to the poll. I am glad he chose to highlight it. Unfortunately, he just highlighted it in the wrong way.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEUSER).

Mr. MEUSER. Madam Speaker, back home people refer to Capitol Hill as a bubble. They are right. It is as if we are completely detached from what is going on in communities across America. Many here don't hear or listen to what people are saying, and many here, as well, think they know better than the people we serve.

Our communities are benefitting greatly from President Trump's agenda: a booming economy, a secure border, better trade deals, and a stronger military. Unfortunately, inside the Halls of Congress, Democrats' obsession with impeachment is all consuming.

Is this how Democrat leadership chooses to represent the people of America, by nullifying the results of the 2016 election, disregarding the will of the American people, and doing everything in their power to prevent the President and this Congress from doing the job we were elected to do?

After 3 years of trying and months of unfair, politically motivated impeachment proceedings, Democrats have delivered two weak Articles of Impeachment.

Abuse of power?

Not according to Ukraine. President Zelensky confirmed many times that there was no quid pro quo, no action taken, and significant military aid was delivered without anything in return. Of course, his words have been conveniently dismissed.

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Obstruction of Congress?
Is this the new standard?

If this is the new standard, then every President since Jimmy Carter and every President moving forward would and will be impeached.

Let me be clear: It is an honor to serve in the United States House of Representatives, but today I am distraught. Today Democrats will disregard the will of the American people and vote to impeach the duly elected President of the United States. What should be equally troubling is that this has eroded, if not wiped out, the trust the American people have in the 116th Congress.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, President Trump said no quid pro quo only after the White House learned of the whistleblower complaints and after the Washington Post had published an article about the President's pressure campaign on Ukraine.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. BASS).

Ms. BASS. Madam Speaker, this is a sad day in U.S. history when we have to vote on Articles of Impeachment because Donald Trump has abused the power of the Office of the Presidency in his attempt to cheat his way to reelection.

The facts are uncontested.

Fact one: The President abused the power of his office by attempting to shake down the president of a country that has been our ally. Trump wanted President Zelensky of Ukraine to dig up and to make up dirt on Vice President Biden because he sees him as the biggest threat to his reelection.

Fact two: Trump wanted Zelensky to go before the press and announce an investigation of Biden hoping the mere announcement would create doubt about Biden and strengthen Trump's hand in the 2020 election.

Fact three: Trump obstructed Congress by engaging in a coverup. Trump has refused to comply with congressional subpoenas and has blocked current and past employees from testifying before congressional committees.

Congress is a coequal branch of government, and one of our central responsibilities is to provide oversight and investigation of the administration—the very checks and balances the Framers built into the Constitution so no one branch would have unchecked power.

The House of Representatives has no choice but to vote and pass Articles of Impeachment because President Trump has abused his power and obstructed the ability of Congress from performing our constitutional duty. The urgency to move forward with Articles of Impeachment is because there is no reason to believe President Trump won't continue to abuse the power of his office, no reason to believe he won't continue to put his foot on the scale of his reelection, and, in fact, his attorney just returned from Ukraine, and in an article just released in *The New Yorker* magazine confesses to con-

tinuing the effort to interfere in the election.

In many of our congressional districts we worry about voter suppression and schemes that purge legitimate voters from participating in the election, or we worry about Russian interference in our election. It is a sad day in America when we have to worry about the Commander in Chief interfering in the election in order to be re-elected. Elections should be decided by the American people.

I will vote for both Articles of Impeachment. It is my constitutional duty to fulfill my oath of office. No one is above the law.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. STEWART).

Mr. STEWART. Madam Speaker, I discovered something recently. It is shocking, I know, but it turns out that some people don't like President Trump. They think he is loud, they think he can be arrogant, they think sometimes he says bad words, and sometimes he is rude to people; and their sensitive natures have been offended. I get that. I really do.

But let's be clear. This vote this day has nothing to do with Ukraine, it has nothing to do with abuse of power, and it has nothing to do with obstruction of Congress.

This vote this day is about one thing and one thing only: They hate this President, and they hate those of us who voted for him. They think we are stupid, and they think we made a mistake. They think Hillary Clinton should be the President, and they want to fix that. That is what this vote is about.

They want to take away my vote and throw it in the trash. They want to take away my President and delegitimize him so that he cannot be reelected. That is what this vote is about.

For those who think this started with this investigation, what nonsense. You have been trying to impeach this President since before he was sworn into office.

□ 1330

Some of you introduced Articles of Impeachment before he was sworn into office. This isn't something you are approaching prayerfully and mournfully and sadly: Oh, the chaos. Oh, the sadness.

This is something you are gleeful about, and you have been trying to do it for 3 years. And it is very clear: You don't have to go back and Google very much to find out that is the absolute truth. I could give you pages of examples of things you have said for 3 years about this President. That is what this is about.

If this impeachment is successful, the next President, I promise you, is going to be impeached, and the next President after that.

If you set this bar as being impeachable, every President in our future will

be impeached. It erodes our Republic in ways that our Founding Fathers recognized. They got it right, high crimes and misdemeanors. Other than that, settle it at the ballot box.

I look forward to that day. Let the American people decide.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. DEGETTE). Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I remind the gentleman that, if President Trump is impeached and removed, the new President will be MIKE PENCE, not Hillary Clinton.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. MUCARSEL-POWELL).

Ms. MUCARSEL-POWELL. Madam Speaker, I did not have the privilege of being born into this country. My mother brought me from Ecuador, looking for freedom and opportunity.

But that is not my story alone. This is a story that I share with so many people who live in Florida's 26th District and all over the country. We have experienced corruption in our countries of birth, where brutal dictatorships have choked their potential to benefit those in power.

This President elected by the American people has violated his oath of office and violated the rule of law. The evidence is overwhelming that he withheld military aid approved by Congress and leveraged a White House meeting to extract a political favor from a foreign government.

The President actively sought foreign election interference to benefit himself. It is undeniable that he has abused his power and obstructed Congress. He presents a clear and present danger to our democracy.

As an immigrant, I still get chills because I feel so fortunate to live in this extraordinary country. The genius of American democracy lies in our Constitution and the dedication to the rule of law. I want my children, and all of our children, to feel the same way when they grow up.

However, if we sit idly by as cracks begin to appear in our democratic institutions, our children will be in the same situation so many of us experienced when we left countries whose leaders destroyed democracy.

We in Congress must abide by our oath to defend our Constitution. That is my duty as a Member of this body. That is my duty as a mother.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING).

Mr. KING of New York. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the Articles of Impeachment against President Trump.

As Chairman NADLER must recall, exactly 21 years ago today, I spoke on this floor in opposition to the impeachment of President Clinton. And 21 years ago tomorrow, I voted against all four Articles of Impeachment against President Clinton.

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Today's Articles of Impeachment against President Trump are an assault on our Constitution and the American people. To impeach a President for a phone call for which no crime is charged, never mind a high crime, and asserting his constitutional prerogative as a President is a clear abuse of power by the Congress. It sets a dangerous precedent of weaponizing impeachment to undo the solemn decision of the American people.

Madam Speaker, President Trump and I grew up in the same borough of New York City, and today, I am proud to stand with President Trump and urge a "no" vote on these horrible Articles of Impeachment. I strongly urge a "no" vote.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN).

Ms. LOFGREN. Madam Speaker, the President and Members of Congress each take an oath to uphold the Constitution. When the President abuses his Presidential power to upend the constitutional order, we have an obligation to live up to our oath of office.

We have been presented with direct evidence about the President's actions. They threaten our national security and undermine the integrity of the next election. We now vote on Articles of Impeachment for abuse of power and contempt of Congress as a result of that evidence.

I have worked on Presidential impeachments as part of the Committee on the Judiciary twice before. This third time brings me no joy.

President Nixon attempted to corrupt elections. His agents broke into the Democratic Party headquarters to get a leg up on the election, and then, just like President Trump, he tried to cover it up. Then, he resigned. This is even worse.

President Trump not only abused his power to help his reelection, he used a foreign government to do it. He used military aid provided to fight the Russians as leverage solely to benefit his own political campaign.

George Washington would be astonished since he warned "against the insidious wiles of foreign influence."

The direct evidence is damning. The President hasn't offered any evidence to the contrary. These actions constitute grounds for Presidential impeachment.

What is before us is a serious abuse of power and obstruction of Congress. These abuses strike at the heart of our Constitution.

The President's unconstitutional abuse of power, a high crime and misdemeanor, is ongoing. He totally refused to provide any information to Congress related to the impeachment inquiry.

It is our responsibility to use the tool our Founders gave us in the Constitution to preserve the constitutional order. We must impeach.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gen-

tleman from North Carolina (Mr. ROUZER).

Mr. ROUZER. Madam Speaker, The Washington Post headlined the story immediately following President Trump taking the oath of office stating: "The campaign to impeach President Trump has begun." How accurate they were.

Here we are, almost 3 years later, and what we are witnessing today is unprecedented in American history. A very partisan-based impeachment with no facts that warrant it. This is an impeachment based on hearsay and speculation rooted in a deep-seated hatred for a man whom many of my colleagues on the other side detest—not all, but many. Nowhere in the Constitution does it say that personal disdain is grounds for impeachment.

At every turn, the claims made by my Democratic colleagues have turned out to be false.

Early on, it was claimed there was evidence of Russian collusion. There was none.

We were told the FBI didn't abuse the FISA process in its investigation of the Trump campaign. That, too, has now been proven completely false.

Then, when the Russian collusion hoax collapsed, we were told that we would hear from a whistleblower that had details of a nefarious call between the President and the President of Ukraine. Then, we found out they weren't even on the call, and we still don't even know who the whistleblower is.

We were told there was clear evidence of a quid pro quo for personal gain. After reading the transcript, it is obvious that you have to make assumptions that wouldn't even stand up in traffic court to come to that conclusion.

Instead, the indisputable facts of record destroy their case:

The call transcript shows no conditionality between aid and an investigation.

President Zelensky said there was no pressure.

The Ukrainian government had no knowledge that any aid was being held up at the time of the call.

Ukraine never opened an investigation, but still received aid and a meeting with President Trump.

Though they allege treason and bribery by the President, the articles we consider today only make vague accusations of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress because they found no evidence of treason or bribery, or anything else, for that matter.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. ROUZER. Madam Speaker, today is a very sad day for our Republic. The country is now more divided than it ever has been in my lifetime. The truth has been trampled by this House of Representatives. Because of the abuses

of the FBI and the Department of Justice, more Americans have an even dimmer view of very important American institutions. Thankfully, the lens of history will ensure that the truth is told and will endure.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, one specific concern of the Framers was a President who would corrupt our elections and who would abuse the great powers of his office to ensure his own reelection.

The impeachment inquiry is not an effort to overturn an election. It is a reaffirmation of the simple truth that, in the United States of America, no person—not even the President—is above the law, and our democracy cannot allow a duly-elected President to abuse the power of his office for personal and political gain.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I hate no woman or man.

Today, the American people should receive clarity and truth. The Constitution is the highest law of the land. The President breached and violated the Constitution of the United States of America. The President committed constitutional crimes. The President's crimes are impeachable.

John F. Kennedy said: "If this country should ever reach the point where any man or group of men by force or threat of force could long defy the commands of our court and our Constitution, then no law would stand free from doubt . . . and no citizen would be safe from his neighbors."

The facts are undisputed.

First, President Trump violated his oath of office by placing his personal political interests above the national interest by scheming to coerce Ukraine into investigating a potential election opponent.

Second, President Trump betrayed the Nation's interests by withholding the congressionally agreed \$391 million to a fragile ally against a very strong foe, Russia.

Third, the essential purpose of the scheme concocted by the President was to enlist a foreign country to help in the 2020 election.

These acts are constitutional crimes and abuse of power. The truth is, the President did ask for a favor. Those were his own words in the July 25 call—no mention of corruption, only the mention of the Bidens.

The President was engaged in wrongdoing and is a clear and present danger. He has a pattern, and his behavior remains a continuing threat to America's national security.

The truth is that abuse of power does violate the Constitution while both corrupting and cheating our American democracy. His acts betrayed the Nation. He must take care to execute laws faithfully.

This is the truth. Why does the truth matter? Because it matters to the farmer at his or her plow. It matters to

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the waitress on an early-morning shift. It matters to the steelworker building America. It matters to the teacher in a fifth grade class. It matters to a mother kissing her military recruit going off to war.

The Constitution must be preserved. Our laws must be honored and respected. The bloodshed and sacrifice of fellow Americans cannot be ignored, trampled on, or rejected.

Our actions on the vote taken today must be for no personal gain or grandeur.

The bright light of this constitutional democracy has been dimmed because of his acts. The truth is no longer for all. It is for one man, Donald J. Trump, his truth, his way.

We must reject that abuse of power because that is not America. No one is above the law. Alexander Hamilton said impeachment was designed to deal with "the misconduct of public men" and violations of public trust.

The SPEAKER *pro tempore*. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. The President has violated the trust. We must impeach Donald J. Trump.

Madam Speaker, I hate no woman or man. Today the American people should receive clarity and truth. The Constitution is the highest law of the land. The President breached and violated the Constitution of the United States of America. The President committed Constitutional Crimes. The President's crimes are impeachable.

President John F. Kennedy said that, "If this country should ever reach the point where any man or group of men by force or threat of force could long defy the commands of our court and constitution, then no law would stand free from doubt, and no citizen would be safe from his neighbors."

The facts are undisputed. First, President Trump violated his oath of office by placing his personal and political interest above the national interest by scheming to coerce Ukraine into investigating a potential election opponent.

Second, President Trump betrayed the national interest by withholding vital, congressionally appropriated security assistance, \$391 Million to a beleaguered and besieged ally facing armed aggression from Russia, America's implacable foe.

Third, the essential purpose of the scheme concocted by President Trump was to enlist a foreign country to help him fix the 2020 presidential election in his favor, the very type of interference most feared by the Framers.

These acts are Constitutional crimes and an abuse of power.

The truth is this President did ask for a favor—those were his own words.

The truth is \$391 million dollars was withheld. He jeopardized not only Americans' national security by putting Ukraine at the mercy of Russia. He also threatened honest and fair elections in 2020. In the July 25 call—no mention of corruption/only the mention of the Bidens.

The President was engaged in wrongdoing and is a clear and present danger. His pattern

of behavior remains a continuing threat to America's national security. The truth is that abuse of power does violate the Constitution, while both corrupting act and cheating our American democracy. His acts betrayed our nation.

The Framers were concerned about abuse of power as the Judiciary Committee impeachment report said. The abuse of power was the use of official power in a way that on its face grossly exceeds the President's constitutional authority and violates the take care clause which commands the President to faithfully execute the law—not to demand a foreign country to investigate his 2020 opponent and deprives Americans a fair and unfettered right to vote. This is the truth.

Why does the truth matter? Because it is the American way. It matters to the farmer at his or her plough.

It matters to the waitress on an early morning bus for the breakfast shift.

It matters to the steelworker helping to build America.

It matters to the teacher in her fifth-grade social studies class.

It matters to a Mother kissing her young military recruit before he or she goes off to war.

The Constitution must be preserved, our laws must be honored and respected, the bloodshed and sacrifice of our fellow Americans cannot be ignored, trampled on or rejected and today our actions on the vote taken today must be for no personal gain or grandeur.

The bright light of this constitutional Democracy has been dimmed because of his acts—the truth is no longer for all—it is for one man—Donald J. Trump—his truth, his way—we must reject that abuse of power—because this is not America. No one is above the law.

As Alexander Hamilton wrote in *The Federalist*, impeachment was Designed to deal with "the misconduct of public men" which involves "the abuse or violation of some public trust." The President has violated that public trust and the House of Representatives must now protect and defend the Constitution and impeach Donald J. Trump.

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD several supporting documents.

The President: I would like you to do us a favor though because our country has been through a lot and Ukraine knows a lot about it. I would like you to find out what happened with this whole situation with Ukraine, they say Crowdstrike . . . I guess you have one of your wealthy people. . . The server, they say Ukraine has it. There are a lot of things that went on, the whole situation. I think you're surrounding yourself with some of the same people. I would like to have the Attorney General call you or your people and I would like you to get to the bottom of it. As you saw yesterday, that whole nonsense ended with a very poor performance by a man named Robert Mueller, an incompetent performance, but they say a lot of it started with Ukraine. Whatever you can do, it's very important that you do it if that's possible.

President: Zelenskyy: Yes it is very important for me and everything that you just mentioned earlier. For me as a President, it is very important and we are open for any future cooperation. We are ready to open a new page on cooperation in relations between the United States and Ukraine. For that purpose, I just recalled our ambassador from United States and he will be replaced by a

very competent and very experienced ambassador who will work hard on making sure that our two nations are getting closer. I would also like and hope to see him having your trust and your confidence and have personal relations with you so we can cooperate even more so. I will personally tell you that one of my assistants spoke with Mr. Giuliani just recently and we are hoping very much that Mr. Giuliani will be able to travel to Ukraine and we will meet once he comes to Ukraine. I just wanted to assure you once again that you have nobody but friends around us. I will make sure that I surround myself with the best and most experienced people. I also wanted to tell you that we are friends. We are great friends and you Mr. President have friends in our country so we can continue our strategic partnership I also plan to surround myself with great people and in addition to that investigation, I guarantee as the President of Ukraine that all the investigations will be done openly and candidly. That I can assure you.

The President: Good because I heard you had a prosecutor who was very good and he was shut down and that's really unfair. A lot of people are talking about that, the way they shut your very good prosecutor down and you had some very bad people involved. Mr. Giuliani is a highly respected man. He was the mayor of New York City, a great mayor, and I would like him to call you. I will ask him to call you along with the Attorney General. Rudy very much knows what's happening and he is a very capable guy. If you could speak to him that would be great. The former ambassador from the United States, the woman, was bad news and the people she was dealing with in the Ukraine were bad news so I just want to let you know that. The other thing, There's a lot of talk about Biden's son, that Biden stopped the prosecution and a lot of people want to find out about that so whatever you can do with the Attorney General would be great. Biden went around bragging that he stopped the prosecution so if you can look into it. . . It sounds horrible to me.

President: Zelenskyy: I wanted to tell you about the prosecutor. First of all I understand and I'm knowledgeable about the situation. Since we have won the absolute majority in our Parliament, the next prosecutor general will be 100% my person, my candidate, who will be approved by the parliament and will start as a new prosecutor in September. He or she will look into the situation, specifically to the company that you mentioned in this issue. The issue of the investigation of the case is actually the issue of making sure to restore the honesty so we will take care of that and will work on the investigation of the case. On top of that, I would kindly ask you if you have any additional information that you can provide to us, it would be very helpful for the investigation to make sure that we administer justice in our country with regard to the Ambassador to the United States from Ukraine as far as I recall her name was Ivanovich. It was great that you were the first one who told me that she was a bad ambassador because I agree with you 100%. Her attitude towards me was far from the best as she admired the previous President and she was on his side. She would not accept me as a new President well enough.

The President: Well, she's going to go through some things. I will have Mr. Giuliani give you a call and I am also going to have Attorney General Barr call and we will get to the bottom of it. I'm sure you will figure it out. I heard the prosecutor was treated very badly and he was a very fair prosecutor so good luck with everything. Your economy is going to get better and better I think. You have a lot of assets. It's a

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great country. I have many Ukrainian friends, their incredible people.

President Zelenskyy: I would like to tell you that I also have quite a few Ukrainian friends that live in the United States. Actually last time I traveled to the United States, stayed in New York near Central Park and I stayed at the Trump.

PUTIN RECLAIMS CRIMEA FOR RUSSIA AND BITTERLY DENOUNCES THE WEST
(By Steven Lee Myers and Ellen Barry,—
Mar. 18, 2014)

MOSCOW.—President Vladimir V. Putin reclaimed Crimea as a part of Russia on Tuesday, reversing what he described as a historic injustice inflicted by the Soviet Union 60 years ago and brushing aside international condemnation that could leave Russia isolated for years to come.

In an emotional address steeped in years of resentment and bitterness at perceived slights from the West, Mr. Putin made it clear that Russia's patience for post-Cold War accommodation, much diminished of late, had finally been exhausted. Speaking to the country's political elite in the Grand Kremlin Palace, he said he did not seek to divide Ukraine any further, but he vowed to protect Russia's interests there from what he described as Western actions that had left Russia feeling cornered.

"Crimea has always been an integral part of Russia in the hearts and minds of people," Mr. Putin declared in his address, delivered in the chandelied St. George's Hall before hundreds of members of Parliament, governors and others. His remarks, which lasted 47 minutes, were interrupted repeatedly by thunderous applause, standing ovations and at the end chants of "Russia, Russia." Some in the audience wiped tears from their eyes.

A theme coursing throughout his remarks was the restoration of Russia after a period of humiliation following the Soviet collapse, which he has famously called "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century."

He denounced what he called the global domination of one superpower and its allies that emerged. "They cheated us again and again, made decisions behind our back, presenting us with completed facts," he said. "That's the way it was with the expansion of NATO in the East, with the deployment of military infrastructure at our borders. They always told us the same thing: 'Well, this doesn't involve you.'"

The speed of Mr. Putin's annexation of Crimea, redrawing an international border that has been recognized as part of an independent Ukraine for 23 years, has been breathtaking and so far apparently unstoppable.

While his actions, which the United States, Europe and Ukraine do not recognize, provoked renewed denunciations and threats of tougher sanctions and diplomatic isolation, it remained unclear how far the West was willing to go to punish Mr. Putin. The leaders of what had been the Group of 8 nations announced they would meet next week as the Group of 7, excluding Russia from a club Russia once desperately craved to join.

Certainly the sanctions imposed on Russia ahead of Tuesday's steps did nothing to dissuade Mr. Putin, as he rushed to make a claim to Crimea that he argued conformed to international law and precedent. In his remarks he made clear that Russia was prepared to withstand worse punishment in the name of restoring a lost part of the country's historic empire, effectively daring world leaders to sever political or economic ties and risk the consequences to their own economies.

Mr. Putin, the country's paramount leader for more than 14 years, appeared to be gam-

bling that the outrage would eventually pass, as it did after Russia's war with Georgia in 2008, because a newly assertive Russia would be simply too important to ignore on the world stage. As with any gamble, though, the annexation of Crimea carries potentially grave risks.

Only hours after Mr. Putin declared that "not a single shot" had been fired in the military intervention in Crimea, a fire of soldiers opened fire as they stormed a Ukrainian military mapping office near Simferopol, killing a Ukrainian soldier and wounding another, according to a Ukrainian officer inside the base and a statement by Ukraine's Defense Ministry.

The base appeared to be under the control of the attacking soldiers, who like most of the Russians in Crimea wore no insignia, and the ministry said that Ukrainian forces in Crimea were now authorized to use force to defend themselves.

The episode underscored the fact that the fate of hundreds of Ukrainian soldiers, as well military bases and ships, remains dangerously unresolved.

In the capital, Kiev, Ukraine's new prime minister, Arseniy P. Yatsenyuk, declared that the conflict had moved from "a political to a military phase" and laid the blame squarely on Russia.

Mr. Putin's determined response to the ouster of Ukraine's president, Viktor F. Yanukovich, last month has left American and European leaders scrambling to find an adequate response after initially clinging to the hope that Mr. Putin was prepared to find a political solution—or "off ramp"—to an escalating crisis that began with the collapse of Mr. Yanukovich's government on the night of Feb. 21.

Within a week, Russian special operations troops had seized control of strategic locations across Crimea, while the regional authorities moved to declare independence and schedule a referendum on joining Russia that was held on Sunday.

Even as others criticized the vote as a fraud, Mr. Putin moved quickly on Monday to recognize its result, which he called "more than convincing" with nearly 97 percent of voters in favor of seceding from Ukraine. By Tuesday he signed a treaty of accession with the region's new leaders to make Crimea and the city of Sevastopol the 84th and 85th regions of the Russian Federation.

The treaty requires legislative approval, but that is a mere formality given Mr. Putin's unchallenged political authority and the wild popularity of his actions, which have raised his approval ratings and unleashed a nationalistic fervor that has drowned out the few voices of opposition or even caution about the potential costs to Russia.

Mr. Putin appeared Tuesday evening at a rally and concert on Red Square to celebrate an event charged with emotional and historical significance for many Russians. Among the music played was a sentimental Soviet song called "Sevastopol Waltz."

"After a long, hard and exhaustive journey at sea, Crimea and Sevastopol are returning to their home harbor, to the native shores, to the home port, to Russia!" Mr. Putin told the crowd. When he finished speaking, he joined a military chorus in singing the national anthem.

He recited a list of grievances—from the Soviet Union's transfer of Crimea to the Ukrainian republic in 1954, to NATO's expansion to Russia's borders, to its war in Kosovo in 1999, when he was a little-known aide to President Boris N. Yeltsin, to the conflict in Libya that toppled Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi in 2011 on what he called the false pretense of a humanitarian intervention.

Since Russia's stealthy takeover of Crimea began, Mr. Putin has said very little in public about his ultimate goals. His only extensive remarks came in a news conference with a pool of Kremlin journalists in which he appeared uncomfortable, uncertain and angry at times. In the grandeur of the Kremlin's walls on Tuesday, Mr. Putin sounded utterly confident and defiant.

Reaching deep into Russian and Soviet history, he cast himself as the guardian of the Russian people, even those beyond its post-Soviet borders, restoring a part of an empire that the collapse of the Soviet Union had left abandoned to the cruel fates of what he described as a procession of hapless democratic leaders in Ukraine.

"Millions of Russians went to bed in one country and woke up abroad," he said. "Overnight, they were minorities in the former Soviet republics, and the Russian people became one of the biggest—if not the biggest—divided nations in the world."

He cited the 10th-century baptism of Prince Vladimir, whose conversion to Orthodox Christianity transformed the kingdom then known as Rus into the foundation of the empire that became Russia. He called Kiev "the mother of Russian cities," making clear that he considered Ukraine, along with Belarus, to be countries where Russia's own interests would remain at stake regardless of the fallout from Crimea's annexation.

He listed the cities and battlefields of Crimea—from the 19th-century war with Britain, France and the Turks to the Nazi sieges of World War II—as places "dear to our hearts, symbolizing Russian military glory and outstanding valor."

He said that the United States and Europe had crossed "a red line" on Ukraine by throwing support to the new government that quickly emerged after Mr. Yanukovich fled the capital following months of protests and two violent days of clashes that left scores dead.

Mr. Putin, as he has before, denounced the uprising as a coup carried out by "Russophobes and neo-Nazis" and abetted by foreigners, saying it justified Russia's efforts to protect Crimea's population.

"If you press a spring too hard," he said, "it will recoil."

He justified the annexation using the same arguments that the United States and Europe cited to justify the independence of Kosovo from Serbia and even quoted from the American submission to the United Nations International Court when it reviewed the matter in 2009.

Mr. Putin did not declare a new Cold War, but he bluntly challenged the post-Soviet order that had more or less held for nearly a quarter-century, and made it clear that Russia was prepared to defend itself from any further encroachment or interference in areas it considers part of its core security, including Russia itself.

He linked the uprisings in Ukraine and the Arab world and ominously warned that there were efforts to agitate inside Russia. He suggested that dissenters at home would be considered traitors, a theme that has reverberated through society with propagandistic documentaries on state television and moves to mute or close opposition news organizations and websites.

"Some Western politicians already threaten us not only with sanctions, but also with the potential for domestic problems," he said. "I would like to know what they are implying—the actions of a certain fifth column, of various national traitors? Or should we expect that they will worsen the social and economic situation, and therefore provoke people's discontent?"

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JETLINER EXPLODES OVER UKRAINE; STRUCK BY MISSILE, OFFICIALS SAY

(By Sabrina Tavernise, Eric Schmitt and Rick Gladstone, July 17, 2014)

GRABOVO, UKRAINE.—A Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777 with 298 people aboard exploded, crashed and burned on a flowered wheat field Thursday in a part of eastern Ukraine controlled by pro-Russia separatists, blown out of the sky at 33,000 feet by what Ukrainian and American officials described as a Russian-made anti-aircraft missile.

Ukraine accused the separatists of carrying out what it called a terrorist attack. American intelligence and military officials said the plane had been destroyed by a Russian SA-series missile, based on surveillance satellite data that showed the final trajectory and impact of the missile but not its point of origin.

There were strong indications that those responsible may have errantly downed what they had thought was a military aircraft only to discover, to their shock, that they had struck a civilian airliner. Everyone aboard was killed, their corpses littered among wreckage that smoldered late into the summer night.

Russia's president, Vladimir V. Putin, blamed Ukraine's government for creating what he called conditions for insurgency in eastern Ukraine, where separatists have bragged about shooting down at least three Ukrainian military aircraft. But Mr. Putin did not specifically deny that a Russian-made weapon had felled the Malaysian jetliner.

Whatever the cause, the news of the crashed plane, with a passenger manifest that spanned at least nine countries, elevated the insurgency into a new international crisis. The day before, the United States had slapped new sanctions on Russia for its support of the pro-Kremlin insurgency, which has brought East-West relations to their lowest point in many years.

Making the crash even more of a shock, it was the second time within months that Malaysia Airlines had suffered a mass-casualty flight disaster with international intrigue—and with the same model plane, a Boeing 777-200ER.

The government of Malaysia's prime minister, Najib Razak, is still reeling from the unexplained disappearance of Flight 370 over the Indian Ocean in March. Mr. Najib said he was stupefied at the news of Flight 17, which had been bound for Kuala Lumpur, the Malaysian capital, from Amsterdam with 293 passengers, including three infants, and 15 crew members. Aviation officials said the plane had been traveling an approved and heavily trafficked route over eastern Ukraine, about 20 miles from the Russia border, when it vanished from radar screens with no distress signal.

"This is a tragic day in what has already been a tragic year for Malaysia," Mr. Najib told reporters in a televised statement from Kuala Lumpur. "If it transpires that the plane was indeed shot down, we insist that the perpetrators must swiftly be brought to justice."

Mr. Najib said he had spoken with the leaders of Ukraine and the Netherlands, who promised their cooperation. He also said that he had spoken with President Obama, and that "he and I both agreed that the investigation must not be hindered in any way." The remark seemed to point to concerns about evidence tampering at the crash site, which is in an area controlled by pro-Russia insurgents.

Mr. Obama and Mr. Putin also spoke about the disaster and the broader Ukraine crisis. White House officials said, and Mr. Putin expressed his condolences. But in a statement

quoted by Russia's RIA Novosti news agency, Mr. Putin said, "This tragedy would not have happened if there was peace in the country, if military operations had not resumed in the southeast of Ukraine."

The United Nations Security Council scheduled a meeting on the Ukraine crisis for Friday morning.

Adding to Ukrainian and Western suspicions that pro-Russia separatists were culpable, Ukraine's intelligence agency, the State Security Service, known as the S.B.U., released audio from what it said were intercepted phone calls between separatist rebels and Russian military intelligence officers on Thursday. In the audio, the separatists appeared to acknowledge shooting down a civilian plane.

The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry sent reporters a link to the edited audio of the calls, with English subtitles, posted on YouTube by the S.B.U.

According to a translation of the Russian audio by the English-language Kyiv Post, the recording begins with a separatist commander, identified as Igor Bezler, telling a Russian military intelligence official, "We have just shot down a plane."

In another call, a man who seems to be at the scene of the crash says that a group of Cossack militiamen shot down the plane. He adds that it was a passenger jet and that the debris contains no sign of military equipment. Asked if there are any weapons, he says, "Absolutely nothing. Civilian items, medical equipment, towels, toilet paper."

Asked if there are any documents among the debris, the man says, "Yes, of one Indonesian student."

Myroslava Pettsa, a Ukrainian journalist in Kiev, said that the people in the audio sounded shocked by what they had found in the wreckage.

By Thursday night, American intelligence analysts were increasingly focused on a theory that rebels had used a Russian-made SA-11 surface-to-air missile system to shoot down the aircraft and operated on their own fire-control radar, outside the checks and balances of the national Ukrainian air-defense network.

"Everything we have, and it is not much, says separatists," a senior Pentagon official said. "That said, there's still a lot of conjecture."

Russian troops, who have been deployed along the border with eastern Ukraine, have similar SA-11 systems, as well as larger weapons known as SA-20s, Pentagon officials said.

Petro O. Poroshenko, Ukraine's president, said he had called the Dutch prime minister, Mark Rutte, to express his condolences and to invite Dutch experts to assist in the investigation. "I would like to note that we are calling this not an incident, not a catastrophe, but a terrorist act," Mr. Poroshenko said.

Reporters arriving at the scene near the town of Grabovo described dozens of lifeless bodies strewn about, many intact, in a field dotted with purple flowers, and remnants of the plane scattered across a road lined with fire engines and emergency vehicles. "It fell down in pieces," one rescue worker said as tents were set up to gather the dead. The carcass of the plane was still smoldering, and rescue workers moved through the dark field with flashlights.

For months, eastern Ukraine has been the scene of a violent pro-Russia separatist uprising. Rebels have claimed responsibility for attacking a Ukrainian military jet as it landed in the city of Luhansk on June 14, and for felling an AN-26 transport plane on Monday and an SU-25 fighter jet on Wednesday. But this would be the first commercial airline disaster to result from the hostilities.

Despite the turmoil, the commercial airspace over eastern Ukraine is heavily trafficked and has remained open. Questions are likely to be raised in the coming days about why the traffic line, which is controlled by Ukraine and Russia, was not closed earlier.

With the news of the crash on Thursday, Ukraine declared the eastern part of the country a no-fly zone. American and European carriers renounced their flights, and Aeroflot, Russia's national carrier, announced that it had suspended all flights to Ukraine for at least three days. The conspicuous exception was Aeroflot flights to Crimea, the southern peninsula that Russia annexed in March, a pivotal point in the Ukraine crisis.

It was unclear late Thursday whether any Americans had been aboard the flight. Russia's Interfax news agency said there had been no Russians aboard.

In Amsterdam, a Malaysia Airlines official, Huib Gorter, said the plane had carried 154 Dutch passengers: 46 Malaysians, including the crew; and 27 Australians, 12 Indonesians, nine Britons, four Belgians, four Germans, three Filipinos and one Canadian. The rest of the passengers had not been identified.

Prof. David Cooper, director of the Kirby Institute at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia, said that a prominent AIDS researcher traveling to the 20th International AIDS conference in Melbourne was among those on the flight.

Professor Cooper, who was heading to the conference from Sydney, said he was unaware how many other passengers were also on their way to the conference, which is scheduled to start on Sunday.

Andreï Purgin, deputy prime minister of the Donetsk People's Republic, an insurgent group in eastern Ukraine, denied in a telephone interview that the rebels had anything to do with the crash. He said that they had shot down Ukrainian planes before but that their anti-aircraft weapons could reach only to around 4,000 meters, far below the cruising level of passenger jets.

"We don't have the technical ability to hit a plane at that height," Mr. Purgin said.

Mr. Purgin did not rule out the possibility that Ukrainian forces themselves had shot down the plane. "Remember the Black Sea plane disaster," he said, referring to the 2001 crash of a Siberia Airlines passenger jet, bound for Novosibirsk from Tel Aviv, that the Ukrainians shot down by accident during a military training exercise.

In comments broadcast on Ukrainian television, Vitali Klitschko, the mayor of Kiev, said the crash illustrated the threat to peace in Europe posed by the fighting in eastern Ukraine. "This is not just a local conflict in Donetsk and Luhansk, but a full-scale war in the center of Europe," he said. "I'm certain the international community this time will pay attention and understand."

[From Defense One]

IN UKRAINE, THE U.S. TRAINS AN ARMY IN THE WEST TO FIGHT IN THE EAST

(By Ben Watson, News Editor)

For more than two years, the U.S. military's contingent of 300 or so soldiers have been quietly helping train an enormous allied military in western Ukraine. Meanwhile, Russian-backed separatists appear to be keeping pace some 800 miles to the east, showcasing entire parking lots full of new tanks and artillery just a 15-minute drive from the front lines.

"Every 55 days we have a new battalion come in and we train them," said U.S. Army National Guard Capt. Kayla Christopher, spokesperson for the Joint Multinational Training Group-Ukraine, at Yavoriv Combat

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Training Center in western Ukraine. "And at the end of that 55-day period, we'll do a field training exercise with that battalion." The U.S. and partnered armies have trained seven battalions in the past roughly two years or so.

That's what she calls the "main line of effort that you tend to see most of the time in the news."

Building a host-nation's military, the U.S. has learned painfully in the 21st century, has rarely been a good news story. And Ukraine's conflict has largely taken a backseat to the sequel to one of those stories: the war on ISIS, in which eight Americans have lost their lives fighting since 2014. In the same period, Ukraine is believed to have lost nearly 4,000 soldiers to Russian-backed separatists.

Since Crimea was annexed in 2014, the U.S. and partner militaries have helped grow Ukraine's forces from just over 100,000 troops to nearly 250,000 today. Just since January, Capt. Christopher's unit of 250 soldiers has added another 3,000 or so Ukrainian soldiers to Kiev's ranks.

"But that's not the real end state," she said. "Essentially, what we're trying to do is get them to the point where they are running their own combat training center," like the U.S. Army's National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., or the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, Louisiana.

In other words, their task is to build an army's entire training infrastructure almost from the ground up—a tall order following decades of not-so-casual corruption that has plagued Ukraine's and many post-Soviet countries' militaries across eastern Europe.

"Our overall goal is essentially to help the Ukrainian military become NATO-interoperable," Christopher said. "So the more they have an opportunity to work with different countries—not just the U.S., but all their Slavic neighbors, and all the other Western European countries that come" and train or exercise with Ukraine's military.

That includes Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, Canada, and the U.K. The U.S. has also sent a variety of non-lethal military help to Ukraine—equipment like Humvees, medical supplies, bulletproof vests, and radars to track the hundreds of artillery shells that have fallen on the eastern Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Maybe Javelin anti-tank missiles, Defense Secretary Mattis said in August. But Christopher's unit is far from the fighting. Their mission is "training the trainers" and in particular, adding to Ukraine's NCO corps—the stern disciplinarians who help ensure that units are fit and ready for combat.

TERRORISM IN THE EAST

For Ukraine's new soldiers, combat means fighting terrorists—at least according to the U.S. military's way of looking at things.

"They're called anti-terrorism operations rather than something else because of the issue with the Russian-backed separatists," said Capt. Christopher. "So they're not really Russians, you know. They're essentially terrorists."

So the U.S. calls eastern Ukraine's most troubled regions an Anti Terrorism Operation zone, or ATO, where those Russian-backed forces have attacked and counterattacked Ukraine's soldiers and civilians. (See, for example, this interactive day-by-day map of alleged shelling by Ukrainian government and separatist forces.)

In just the first two days of this month, UN monitors recorded dozens of violations to the Minsk II ceasefire, an agreement reached in February 2015 between Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany. The deal never really stuck. It called for all heavy weapons—tanks, rocket launchers and artillery—to be

pulled away from the front lines and kept in monitored storage. By that time, more than 5,400 civilians had already been killed in the fighting. In the months after Minsk II was signed, the death toll barely slowed.

The UN calls these statistics "a conservative estimate based on available data," and inevitably incomplete "due to gaps in coverage of certain geographic areas and time periods." Military casualties, especially injuries, have been particularly underreported, the UN says.

Most of the civilians killed in the fighting were killed by tanks and artillery, 55 percent; followed by IEDs, 36 percent; and small arms fire, 9 percent. For months it puzzled observers how allegedly local separatists could have obtained so much heavy weaponry, even factoring in Ukraine's legacy as a sort of junkyard of old Soviet weapons factories. The appearance of more advanced equipment—drones and armored vehicles, for example—revealed Russia's hand in Ukraine as early as January 2015, although President Vladimir Putin didn't admit Russia's role until that December. Since then, their advanced equipment has only grown more sophisticated and deadly for Ukraine's frontline soldiers.

International ceasefire monitors aren't having an easy go of their job in 2017, either. During the first six months, they were restricted from or intimidated through armed confrontation (see photo below) inside regions mandated by the Minsk agreement no fewer than 480 times. More than 75 percent of those occurred in separatist-held areas.

A WORLD AWAY

U.S. troops are largely kept away from the conflict. That is by design; the U.S. and the international community have struggled with the appropriate response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine and annexation of Crimea.

Speaking alongside Ukrainian Prime Minister Petro Poroshenko in August, U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis said, "We do not, and we will not, accept Russia's seizure of Crimea and despite Russia's denials, we know they are seeking to redraw international borders by force, undermining the sovereign and free nations of Europe."

So far, sanctions have been the U.S. and its European allies' preferred response, hitting Russia's major banks and energy companies. But President Trump has indicated that he feels sanctions may not be in the best interest of the U.S. In August, he complained about a new round of sanctions passed by Congress, calling it "seriously flawed." But the measure reached the Oval Office with a veto-proof majority, and so he grudgingly signed it into law.

But that is a world away from the U.S. Army in Yavoriv, and even the fighting on the other side of Ukraine feels remote, Christopher said. "It's actually pretty remarkable how little you feel the effect of the conflict on the western side of Ukraine. It's almost as if nothing is happening," she said. "And if I didn't work directly with soldiers every day, I don't think you would really know. I mean, we see it on the news every day, and I work with soldiers every day. So we know about it. But you go out into Lviv, or any of the other big cities around this area and you really don't feel the effects of there being war here."

Except, perhaps, for the U.S. and NATO soldiers who for months have had their phones and social media accounts breached by what appear to have been Russian hackers. On top of that, Moscow has spent the past few months ferrying troops around its border with Ukraine and into Belarus for extended exercises that run from the Barents Sea to the Mediterranean.

So Russia is hardly backing down from a tense Russia. And apparently, neither is the

U.S. Despite the Trump administration's hesitancy, its approach in Ukraine is not terribly different from the Obama administration's.

"The U.S. will continue to press Russia to honor its Minsk commitments and our sanctions will remain in place until Moscow reverses the actions that triggered them," said Mattis in August during the visit with Ukraine's Poroshenko.

For its part, Moscow's latest move has been not to reverse its annexation of Crimea, but rather to fence off some 30 miles of land on the seized peninsula. One Russian lawmaker even said in May that Moscow would use nuclear weapons if the U.S. or NATO tried to enter Crimea.

Which would suggest that the U.S. Army's quiet mission in Ukraine may go quietly on for many, many months to come.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL).

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, today, the House of Representatives votes on two Articles of Impeachment for President Trump.

Members, and all Americans, must recognize that impeachment was intended to be a safety valve, rarely used, only when a President acts in such an immoral and blatantly unlawful manner as to threaten the very basis of our Republic.

As we cast votes on these articles, the future tone of this House and politics in this Nation must be carefully considered. The issue is not whether we agree with or like the President's rhetoric, political tactics, use of Twitter, policy choices, or his political rallies. One of our Founders, Alexander Hamilton, warned of the risks of impeachment becoming a solely partisan act in the Federalist Papers.

This impeachment inquiry and these articles clearly do not heed that warning. These proceedings are weaponizing impeachment, making it another election tool.

I have carefully examined the evidence presented throughout the inquiry and, contrary to some, considered our history, our founding documents, and our future. It is clear, President Trump's actions, as described in these articles, do not constitute treason, bribery, or high crimes and misdemeanors. You simply don't like him.

I will be voting "no" on these articles and will hope, someday, we return to serving the needs of the American people.

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Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND).

Mr. RICHMOND. Madam Speaker, President Trump, on January 20, 2017, raised his hand and swore to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution. Now we must preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution from him.

Madam Speaker, I rise today, not to disparage and embarrass the President of the United States, but to defend our precious democracy.

I speak today, not because I hate this President, but because I love this body, the people's House.

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I have heard Republicans say: Why are we rushing to judgment? This is not a rush to judgment; it is a rush to justice, and we must not delay.

Corruption is corrosive; it eats away like acid. The longer we wait, the more time we allow for this President to do irreparable harm to our country and our democracy.

Just last week, Rudy Giuliani was back at it in Ukraine. So please don't tell us to wait, because the corruption continues.

There is a famous quote that says: Politicians worry about the next election; statesmen worry about the next generation. Today calls upon us to be statesmen and stateswomen—Democrat, Republican, and Independent. Our election is under attack from within.

So, to my Republican colleagues, many of whom spent a lifetime trying to build a reputation of honesty and courage, I beg you: Don't throw that away for President Trump. He doesn't deserve it, nor will he appreciate it past the next tweet or next week.

My fear and my prediction is that his actions will continue.

Madam Speaker, Donald Trump recently said: I can do anything I want. He also bragged that he could shoot someone on Fifth Avenue and get away with it. Well, he is shooting holes in our Constitution on Pennsylvania Avenue, and our House, the people's House, must defend the Constitution from a domestic enemy to the rule of law: Donald Trump.

Because I don't want generations to come to blame me for letting our democracy die, I therefore, rise in favor of impeaching Donald Trump.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LUETKEMEYER).

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to this political charade that has tormented our country for nearly 3 years.

If there was ever any doubt that this entire illegitimate investigation is 100 percent politically motivated, earlier this month, Speaker Pelosi actually admitted the impeachment process began 2½ years ago.

Let me say that again. The Speaker of the House said publicly that the Democrats have been trying to remove our President from office since the day he got elected, simply because it was not the outcome they wanted.

Another of my Democrat colleagues publicly admitted, in May, that the driving force behind their actions was: "If we don't impeach the President, he will get reelected."

This wasn't an investigation, Madam Speaker; this was a political crusade. In order to arrive at their Stalinistic, predetermined conclusion, House Democrats spent the last several months staging well-rehearsed hearings where the charges were drawn up by their own focus groups; Democrat donors served as witnesses; and Democrat staff served as judge and jury.

Even with the odds so blatantly stacked against the President, Democrats still came up with absolutely nothing.

A while ago, the Speaker spoke of the Pledge of Allegiance. The last phrase of the pledge is "justice for all."

Justice was not something afforded the President during the investigation. He was denied due process, something the Supreme Court said should be afforded in all congressional investigations. That makes this process illegal and illegitimate.

What a shame. What a sham.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Ms. GARCIA).

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Madam Speaker, I didn't come to Congress to impeach the President—even when he separated babies from their parents at the border, even when he took money from our troops to build his wall.

No, I didn't call for impeachment because I am here to make a difference in the lives of my constituents. Yet, here we are in the middle of a constitutional crisis.

As a former judge, I took my responsibility seriously to weigh the evidence and determine if the President's actions were impeachable. Unfortunately, the evidence in the Intelligence and Judiciary reports leaves us with no choice but to impeach the President.

So I stand on my oath that I have sworn to the Constitution and to the American people, and, today, I urge my colleagues to stand by their oaths, too.

The Framers of the Constitution included impeachment as a safeguard against a corrupt President whose misconduct could destroy the very foundations of our country.

Donald J. Trump abused his power when he obstructed Congress and ordered government officials not to appear before us.

Donald J. Trump corrupted our election when he asked a foreign government to interfere for his personal and political gain.

Today, sadly, I ask my colleagues: Will you put your party over our country, or will you help save our democracy and vote "yes" on the Articles of Impeachment before you? I urge you to vote "yes."

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I do have an inquiry as to the time remaining for both sides.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia has 2 hours and 22½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from New York has 2 hours and 27½ minutes remaining.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING).

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I start out, first, that this is the largest, most massive coverup of such a list of crimes against our country, and to go so far as to bring impeachment hearings to try to cover all of this up.

I would take you back to October of 2015, when Barack Obama said Hillary

Clinton would never intend to jeopardize our national security. Again, the following April, the next month, Peter Strzok wrote the statement that was delivered by James Comey: They have spent Democrat money and Hillary Clinton money in Russia to pick up dirt on Donald Trump.

And then Joe Biden goes to Ukraine and makes the statement: Here is a billion dollars, but you must do what I told you to do.

You are accusing Donald Trump of doing that which Joe Biden has confessed to doing.

And, by the way, Joe Biden was not the opponent of Donald Trump. He is in a 21-way primary, and he is running third in that race. His opponents are the other 20 Democrats. How would anybody dig into that mess of 21 people and decide he is going to go overseas and pull some maneuver like this?

You have to assign him a motive. You assign him a motive, then you create the dots, then you go dot to dot.

But the reality is that it was Biden who was doing the extortion of the power play in order to protect his own son. And it was Donald Trump that was following the law that said you have to ensure that there is not corruption here before this money is handed over.

By the way, there was a violent war going on in Ukraine, and that is when we sent blankets and MREs over there, under Barack Obama.

But when I hear this from the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON): He doesn't think he can win the election fair and square, so he would cheat—and I have heard that here on this floor.

No, it is the other way around. Democrats' number one proponent of impeachment is Al GREEN of Texas, and he said those very same things; and they brought this case November 9, the day after Trump was elected.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Ms. DEAN).

Ms. DEAN. Madam Speaker, words matter. We have heard many words over the course of these last weeks. Still, what strikes me are the words that are missing from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, a gaping hole in this conversation, the words they cannot or will not mouth, defending a President's conduct, conduct that threatens our constitutional order.

So, Madam Speaker, I ask: When is it ever right for a President to coerce a foreign power to interfere in our elections?

When is it ever right for a President to intimidate a foreign leader into announcing false investigations into a political rival?

When is it ever right for that President to withhold congressionally appropriated aid to that country at the expense of its national security and our very own?

And when is it ever right for a President to block a coequal branch of government from investigating this scheme to cheat an election?

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The answer, of course, is never. But that word does not come trippingly from the tongues of those who are making the choice to stand behind a man whose behavior is not worthy of your tortured words.

By our vote today, we are speaking to future Presidents and to future generations. We are declaring that we will not tolerate foreign interference in our Presidential elections. Americans alone will determine the outcome.

And we will not permit a President to order the complete defilement of a coequal branch of government.

In the end, regardless of the outcome of this impeachment, the President's tenure will end, and this body and our grandchildren will be left with what we did here today.

Ours is a somber generational duty about love of country and lifting our Constitution to its gravest protections but its highest aspirations.

Our democracy is a matter of conscience and, by voting to safeguard our Constitution, mine is clear.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As I have reminded many times, we have followed a sham process that we have had to deal with, and we have followed the facts and won both.

I will remind that, if you want to talk about elections, remember, it was the Speaker of the House who said we can't trust the voters; it is too dangerous to leave it with the voters for President Trump next year.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Arizona (Mrs. LESKO).

Mrs. LESKO. Madam Speaker, as you all know, I serve on both the Judiciary Committee and Rules Committee, and I have literally spent hours—hours—poring over testimony, looking at documents, sitting in hearings.

And do you know the conclusion I got from all of that? This impeachment is a total joke and a total sham. And let me tell you one of the reasons why I think that.

All of those witnesses, the 17 witnesses that the Democrats brought forward, not one single one of them was able to establish that President Trump committed bribery, treason, high crimes, or misdemeanors, which is required in the U.S. Constitution.

And, again, 17 out of 24 Democrat Members on the Judiciary Committee voted on this floor to move forward Articles of Impeachment before the phone call, and five out of nine Rules Committee Democrat Members did the same thing.

So, if the main part of your impeachment is the call, why did you vote for impeachment prior to the call?

I also want to remind the American public and others that, for 2 years, ADAM SCHIFF claimed he had proof—that President Trump had colluded with Russia. That turned out to be false.

And then, overnight, it was obstruction of justice, then quid pro quo, then

bribery, then extortion, and the list goes on; yet, not one of those is listed in the Articles of Impeachment.

To my Democrat colleagues, Madam Speaker, I say: Please stop tearing the country apart. Stop this sham.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The gentlewoman is correct. President Trump's behavior is not new. He has a pattern of engaging in misconduct and then obstructing any investigation into his misconduct to cover up his actions and hide the truth from the American people.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

(Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of today's impeachment proceedings. I include my statement in the RECORD.

Madam Speaker, today, the House of Representatives will vote to impeach the President of the United States. In America's 243-year history, he is only the third president to be impeached. The rarity of this process reminds us impeachment is an extraordinary remedy and should be taken only against a president if their actions are simply beyond the pale.

When Congress learns a president may have committed an impeachable act, it is Congress's constitutional duty to investigate whether the president's actions are impeachable. Our House did just that when we learned the president may have undermined the Constitution in his dealings with the Ukrainian government.

I disagree with President Trump on almost every issue. I do not agree with the way he runs his government. I do not agree with his spending priorities. I do not agree with his treatment of migrants seeking asylum in this country. I believe he is temperamentally ill-suited to his office, to put it mildly. But I have had disagreements, of one kind or another, with every president with whom I have served. However, disagreements over policy, tone, and style are simply not enough to justify impeaching a president.

The voters of our country placed incredible trust in this president when they elected him. He now holds the most powerful office in the most powerful country in the world, the United States of America. As president, he has a duty to use that power to uphold the Constitution and the rule of law. Sadly, this president has violated that trust by soliciting and pressuring a foreign nation to interfere in the 2020 U.S. presidential election and by obstructing Congress's impeachment investigation. His actions undermine our Constitution, our system of government, and the rule of law.

Today, the House is considering two separate articles of impeachment. The first is that the president abused his power and second, that he obstructed Congress. Both of these charges need substantial evidence in order to be proven, and the investigations of the House Intelligence and Judiciary Committees have given us that evidence.

Having reviewed that evidence, I will vote to impeach the president. I take no partisan joy

in doing so. No American should take joy in the impeachment of a president. But as Members of Congress, we took an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. Today we are living up to that responsibility. My impeachment vote is also a signal to future presidents that they are not above the law and will be held accountable if they violate our Constitution. When our children and grandchildren look back on this historic time, I hope they will know we did not shy away from our oath of office and that we fought to protect our democracy and to preserve our Constitution for them and for future generations.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN).

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, our Nation was founded on certain principles: that government should be of, by, and for the people; that a system of three coequal branches of government would provide the checks and balances necessary to ensure the people's voices are heard; and that no one is above the law.

Today, sadly, we are voting to impeach President Donald John Trump because he has fundamentally broken his covenant with the American people. In doing so, we are using the powers the Founding Fathers enshrined in the Constitution to address a President who has violated his oath of office.

The evidence is clear and the facts are not in question:

President Trump has consistently engaged in a pattern of behavior inconsistent with the rule of law.

He has refused to take responsibility for his actions:

He has undermined the checks and balances we rely on by obstructing Congress at every turn:

And, most importantly, he has abused his power by using his office to solicit foreign interference in our elections, undermining the will of the people.

So, on this sad day for our Nation, I will do what the President has so often failed to do: I will fulfill my oath to support and defend the Constitution, and I will vote in favor of impeachment.

□ 1400

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT).

Mr. CHABOT. Madam Speaker, today is a sad day in our Nation's history as House Democrats are poised to approve, on a strictly party-line vote, Articles of Impeachment based on what constitutional scholar Jonathan Turley called wafer-thin evidence. This will set a dangerous precedent where impeachment becomes the norm rather than the exception.

That is not what our Founding Fathers intended. They wanted impeachment to be rare. They set a high bar for impeachment: treason, bribery, high crimes and misdemeanors.

Alleged abuse of power, the first article, is not a high crime and misdemeanor. In fact, that is not even a

crime. And since there is no concise legal definition of abuse of power, the majority party in the House can designate nearly any disagreement with the President from now on an impeachable offense.

The second article, alleged obstruction of Congress, would produce a similarly dangerous precedent. Asserting executive privilege, a practice that began with George Washington, is not obstruction of Congress; rather, it is a function of the essential checks and balances contemplated under the Constitution.

Here is what nearly every grade school student in America knows but, apparently, House Democrats do not: If Congress disagrees with the President, if they don't agree with the President, take it to court. Let the third branch of government decide. They are the refs.

The House has never—I repeat, never—approved either abuse of power or obstruction of Congress as an Article of Impeachment, but that is going to change today.

Today, House Democrats are pursuing a wacky constitutional theory under which all four Presidents on Mount Rushmore could have been impeached. If all of this sounds absurd, Madam Speaker, it is because it is absurd. In fact, this whole process is absurd and has been from the outset.

But here is what is not absurd but, rather, frightening: House Democrats, today, are setting a dangerous precedent under which no future President will be immune from impeachment, and that will forever negatively tarnish the history of this House.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, the President's conduct constituted the highest of high crimes against our country. An offense does not have to violate a criminal statute to be impeachable. That was confirmed in President Nixon's case and again in President Clinton's. There is no higher crime than for the President to use the power of his office to corrupt our elections.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. POCAN).

Mr. POCAN. Madam Speaker, this July, President Trump blocked \$400 million in congressionally approved aid that Ukraine desperately needed to defend itself against Russia because he needed Ukraine to do him a favor first. He asked the President of Ukraine to launch a public investigation into a political rival. Military aid and other benefits would only come after.

But this is not about a single call or a single transcript; this is about a perfect storm, months of activity directly ordered by the President to his senior Cabinet and political appointees, an orchestrated plan demanding a foreign power interfere in our democracy.

President Trump betrayed his oath of office. He abused the power of his office for personal and political gain and has refused to cooperate with a coequal branch of government.

This is a vote for our Constitution, setting the precedent for all future Presidents, Democrat or Republican.

Donald Trump must be held accountable for his actions. Today, we send a clear signal to this President and all future Presidents: No one is above the law.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL).

Mr. MARSHALL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the impeachment of the legitimately elected President of the United States.

Enough, Madam Speaker, for the love of this country, enough. Enough of this impeachment circus. Enough of these sham witch hunts.

I am voting "no" because the President has done nothing wrong. The only thing that President Trump is guilty of is doing the things he said he would do; and if my Democrat colleagues were honest, they would tell us the only thing President Trump is guilty of is not being Hillary Clinton.

The only party guilty of obstruction, abuse of power, or whatever focus group terms they are using today is the party on the other side of this aisle. They are obstructing the will of the American people. They are obstructing the very foundations of our country.

By politically weaponizing impeachment, they have dangerously shattered precedent and abused our Constitution. They, alone, will bear this responsibility.

Madam Speaker, they will fail, and it is no wonder the American people don't trust this body. It is past time to be done with this circus and get to the work that matters, like securing our borders and passing trade deals.

I will vote "no" and encourage this body to move on from this heart-breaking, disgraceful day to things that actually matter.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE).

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, the moment our Founders anticipated in establishing the power of impeachment has arrived.

The evidence is clear: President Trump abused his power by asking a vulnerable foreign leader to investigate both his political rival and a baseless Russian conspiracy theory, while withholding congressionally appropriated defense aid and a coveted White House visit. He then blocked congressional investigation into these abuses.

These abuses threaten the integrity of our elections, they corrupt our diplomacy, and they undermine national security.

We sometimes regard constitutional checks and balances as the indestructible underpinnings of our democracy. In fact, they're not fixed. They're not indestructible. The President has demonstrated this beyond all doubt.

It's up to the Congress, the first branch of government, to apply the remedy that the Constitution pre-

scribes, because the threats to our democracy are real and present.

With this vote, we affirm that no one, including the President, is above the law.

Madam Speaker, impeachment was designed by our framers as the ultimate constitutional protection against presidential misconduct, reserved, as North Carolina's James Iredell put it, for "acts of great injury to the community." The impeachable acts the framers envisioned were not disputed policy positions, as disastrous as they might be, nor flaws in character, as deep as those might be, but acts that threaten the very foundation of the country and Constitution we vowed to protect.

In this moment, the future of our democracy hangs in the balance.

The evidence is abundantly clear: President Donald Trump abused his power by asking a vulnerable foreign leader both to investigate his political rival and to validate a baseless conspiracy theory propagated by Russia, while congressionally appropriated defense aid and a coveted White House visit hung in the balance. He then blocked Congressional investigations into his abuses.

These abuses threaten the integrity of our elections, corrupt our diplomacy, and undermine our national security. Underlying it all is the President's often-expressed conviction that his powers are constitutionally unlimited.

We often regard constitutional "checks and balances" as indestructible underpinnings of our democracy. In fact, they are neither fixed nor unbreakable. President Trump has demonstrated this beyond all doubt.

When constitutional boundaries are broken, it's we—living, breathing people within our institutions who must rise to defend our democracy. It is this accountability that prevents creeping authoritarianism and protects our representative democracy, where no one, including the President, is above the law.

It's up to the Congress, the first branch of government, to apply the remedy that the Constitution prescribes, because the threats to our democracy are real and present. The eyes of history are upon us.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER).

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, since the beginning of this impeachment inquiry, it has been extremely troubling to see the partisan, divisive way in which Democrats have carried out this entire process.

I guess we shouldn't be surprised, though. They promised they would unseat this President since the day he took his oath of office. From the start, this has been a baseless attempt to undo the will of 63 million Americans who voted for President Trump.

I can tell you the people I represent in Kentucky, the very people who voted for this President to enact change and fight for this country, are appalled at the charade they have seen in the House in recent months. They are appalled at the actions from House Democrats who have failed to even come close to proving their case.

I hope all of my congressional colleagues carefully consider the precedent they are setting by voting in favor

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of this sham process and these illegitimate Articles of Impeachment. These articles were written and built on a report that was drafted with biased presumptions, cherry-picked witnesses, and vastly disputed facts.

The President did not commit any impeachable offense, and it is clear for all of us to see through the now very well-known transcript. This rigged process sets a concerning precedent for impeachable offenses moving forward, and I wholeheartedly oppose these baseless Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS).

Mr. PETERS. Madam Speaker, many have lamented that this effort is not bipartisan, but that is on my Republican colleagues.

Republicans have not sought the truth. They have sought to avoid the truth. They have demeaned and insulted witnesses, patriots, warriors, and career diplomats who have provided evidence against the President.

No House Republican has joined us to demand the documents and witnesses that President Trump has refused to produce.

And Senate Republican leaders, this week, have announced that President Trump, himself, can set the rules of his trial and there will be no fact witnesses.

Republicans refuse to seek the truth and condemn the abuse of power or to work with us to prevent this ongoing behavior in the future, and that is the tragedy of today's events.

In our Nation's history, thousands of Americans have gone into battle without reservation to fight for our Republic as they still do today. Many have been gravely injured, and some have made the ultimate sacrifice. But today, in contrast, for fear of losing an election, my colleagues will not speak up for the rule of law or against Presidential abuse of power. Voters may give them a pass, but history will judge them harshly.

I will vote for the Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK).

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague and friend from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition not only to these Articles of Impeachment, but in strong opposition to the process that has brought us to this point.

Our Constitution and Bill of Rights are all about process. Our Founders knew that a government without constraints could accuse anyone of any crime at any time, even without compelling evidence. That is why the Fifth and the Fourteenth Amendment have established a bedrock principle of innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

But on November 14, Speaker PELOSI informed the press that the President

should prove his innocence when she stated: Mr. President, if you have anything that shows your innocence, then you should make that known.

The Constitution also guarantees that the accused can call witnesses to testify on their behalf, but the Republicans and the President were continually denied that right throughout this process.

The Sixth Amendment guarantees the right of the defendant to face their accuser, but not only have the Democrats prohibited Republicans and the President from questioning the so-called whistleblower, his identity has been kept secret.

Before Members take this historic vote today, one week before Christmas, I want Members to keep this in mind: When Jesus was falsely accused of treason, Pontius Pilate gave Jesus the opportunity to face his accusers. During that sham trial, Pontius Pilate afforded more rights to Jesus than the Democrats have afforded this President in this process.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, the President was given the opportunity to come and testify before the Judiciary Committee, to send his counsel, to question witnesses. He declined to do so.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE).

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, this is a sad day for our country and for our democracy. The President has abused the powers of his office, betrayed the public trust, and undermined America's national security by pressuring a foreign government to interfere in our elections for his own political gain.

In this moment in our history, the Constitution is clear: The remedy for such misconduct by a President is impeachment.

I didn't come here to Congress to impeach a President of the United States, but, sadly, the President's misconduct leaves us no choice but to follow the Constitution.

I have two grandchildren. My granddaughter, Caitlin, is 8, and my grandson, Colin, is 4. Some day a long time from now, they will ask me about this day. They will ask about the time a President put himself above the law, and they will want to know what I did to stop him. And I will have an answer for them.

Today, I vote to uphold the Constitution. I will vote to impeach Donald Trump.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, it is interesting that the President was supposedly given rights in the Judiciary Committee, but maybe who would he have asked questions of, three law school professors and a staff member? Not a lot of due process there. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN).

Mr. BABIN. Madam Speaker, we are here today because House Democrats have spent upwards of \$30 million in 3

years trying to overturn the 2016 election of President Trump and come up with nothing.

Because of their radical leftwing, Democrats are willing to make all future Presidential elections invalid until judged worthy by the majority in the House of Representatives.

The President of the United States does not serve at the pleasure of the House of Representatives.

Perhaps the greatest denial of reality regarding President Trump is acknowledging that, under his policies, things are actually going much better than they have in decades for working Americans.

We are a democratic constitutional Republic in which power flows from the people to our President and elected officials.

The Democrat majority thinks otherwise. They believe that they are entitled to rule us even if they have to change the rules to invalidate the will and the votes of the people of America. That is why the absence of a case does not matter in this charade of impeachment.

I believe that the American people recognize and share my urgency about what is at stake here.

Madam Speaker, you and your majority may decide today, but I have faith that the American people will decide otherwise next November.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE).

□ 1415

Ms. DELBENE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution.

After carefully reviewing all of the evidence and the Articles of Impeachment before us, it is clear that President Trump abused the power of the Presidency and obstructed Congress.

I did not come to this conclusion lightly.

Impeachment is an extremely serious matter, but no President can be allowed to pressure a foreign country for personal and political gain. No President is above the law.

His behavior has jeopardized the integrity of our elections, put our national security at risk, and placed his personal interests above those of the American people.

His obstruction has prevented the House from conducting its constitutional duty of oversight of the executive branch.

By failing to uphold his oath of office, President Trump forces each of us as Members of the House of Representatives to uphold ours.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to do just that, and defend our democracy.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. RIGGLEMAN).

Mr. RIGGLEMAN. Madam Speaker, I oppose this impeachment effort and will vote "no" on the Articles of Impeachment.

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I represent the Fifth District of Virginia, which was home to so many Founding Fathers whose vision shaped the great country we are living in today.

Thomas Jefferson and James Madison are not around to see what their creation has become, but I don't think they would be pleased to see Congress subverting the will of democracy by holding an impeachment vote because the majority party simply cannot accept the 2016 election.

Instead of wasting the taxpayers' time and money on specious investigations, we could have passed legislation to address surprise medical billing, secure the border, address the opioid epidemic, reduce student debt, and solve a litany of other issues that Americans actually care about.

Tomorrow, we might have a vote on the USMCA, which we should have passed months ago had it not been for the obstruction and delays from Democrats, delays that have made farmers in my district and other districts suffer.

Votes like the one we will take today, the decisions that have led up to today's vote, the nature and entire process of this proceeding reeks of careerist bureaucrats and politicians that put politics over people.

I was not elected to take political votes that attempt to overturn the will of the American people. I ran for office to serve my constituents. Let's remember: that is why we are here.

Weaponizing emotion is not the way to serve the United States of America.

And, Madam Speaker, to my colleagues who do just that, I offer a quote Thomas Paine wrote in "The Crisis": "To argue with a person who has renounced the use of reason is like administering medicine to the dead."

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I would remind the gentleman that the House has passed over 400 bills, 275 bipartisan bills: driving down costs of healthcare and prescription drugs, raising wages, rebuilding infrastructure, taking on corruption and self-dealing in Washington. Eighty percent of these bills are languishing on Senator McConnell's desk.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding.

I wish to place on the record that Members of Congress swear a solemn oath to protect and defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic. Today we fulfill our oath by defending liberty.

The central figure testing America's resolve is not here in Washington today. Rather, the closeted villain sits in Moscow at the Kremlin.

Vladimir Putin has coordinated murders, election hacking, propaganda, the entrapment of willing fools and greedy underlings who put their own selfish interests over liberty.

Putin seeks to sow disarray and destabilize democracies and the NATO al-

liance. At Putin's direction, Russia illegally invaded Ukraine in 2014. As Ukrainians defend Europe's eastern flank, 14,000 people have been killed at Putin's hand, with over 2 million displaced.

Rather than stand up to Putin, President Trump and his minions aided Putin, first in hastening Russian interference in our 2016 elections, and then more recently withholding vital military aid from Ukraine to coerce its interference in our 2020 elections for Mr. Trump's personal gain.

Might I end by saying: Onward to liberty. Vote for the Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MURPHY).

Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to these baseless Articles of Impeachment and the unprecedented process that has been used in this effort to impeach the duly elected President of the United States.

It is a mockery of American justice. In 1788, one of our Founding Fathers, Alexander Hamilton, wrote in the *Federalist Papers*:

In many cases, impeachment will connect itself with the preexisting factions . . . and in such cases, there will always be the greatest danger that the decision will be regulated more by the comparable strength of parties, majority and minority, than by real demonstrations of innocence or guilt.

What does this mean? It means that the majority can exert its influence regardless of justice.

In this statement, Hamilton warned us about the danger of mob rule.

Democrats have a criminal and have been searching for a crime for 3 years, but this President has not committed a crime.

As the leader of American foreign policy, the President has a constitutional obligation to root out corruption in countries to which we provide aid. This is not an abuse of power. It is his job.

One of the articles is obstruction of Congress. The only thing that has been obstructed is this President's right to due process.

I don't blame the President for refusing to fully participate in this guilty-until-proven-circus. This is not how our Founding Fathers framed American justice.

This is a tragic day in our Nation's history. We have individuals that hate this President more than they love this country.

Our country needs prayer, and not this disruptive partisanship.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, the President's obstruction is unprecedented and categorical. President Trump claims that the House cannot investigate his misconduct outside of an impeachment inquiry. He defies lawful congressional

subpoenas and then he sues to block third parties from complying with such subpoenas.

Even as he pursues his own interests in court, his administration simultaneously argues that Congress is barred from obtaining judicial enforcement when executive branch officials disregard its subpoenas.

So when can the President be held accountable for his wrongdoing? In his mind, never.

The Constitution, however, disagrees. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, my words are my only remedy today, in spite of the upcoming D.C. statehood vote we expect to be successful.

The people of the District of Columbia have no vote on impeachment or on any other matter on this floor now.

I spoke on this floor on the impeachment of President Clinton 20 years ago. Unlike the Clinton impeachment on perjury concerning an affair with an intern, Trump's impeachment turns on sabotage of national security to get himself reelected.

Clinton repented. Trump insists that he did nothing wrong. That is a promise to continue his long pattern of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress.

Impeachment is our only recourse. Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. BUCK. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) for yielding.

Today, Democrats lower the bar for impeachment.

Under this standard, a President can be impeached in the absence of a crime, without due process, and for asserting a legally, constitutionally recognized privilege.

History shows Democrat Presidents have abused power and undermined democracy to win elections, and yet they have not been impeached.

President Franklin Roosevelt used the IRS to target his political opponents. His son later admitted FDR used "the IRS as a weapon of political retribution."

President John F. Kennedy used the FBI to wiretap and monitor political opponents, including congressional staff. He deported one of his mistresses to avoid scandal.

President Lyndon Johnson spied on Goldwater's campaign, signing off on wiretapping his opponent and Goldwater's airplane, and using a CIA spy to obtain advance copies of Goldwater's strategies and speeches.

President Barack Obama refused to provide documents to Congress related to Fast and Furious. His unconstitutional recess appointments were unanimously struck down by the Supreme Court. He used national security agencies to lie to the American people about Benghazi to win the 2012 election. He spied on reporters. Finally, it

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was the Obama administration that committed 17 serious violations before the FISA Court to spy on Trump campaign associates.

Despite these clear abuses of power by FDR, JFK, LBJ, and Obama, Republicans did not impeach.

Why? Because the Framers did not want a low bar for impeachment. They wanted Congress and the President to work out their differences.

When I asked Professor Turley in a Judiciary Committee hearing if any President could avoid impeachment with those low standards, he said, "No."

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I remind the gentleman that President Obama provided thousands of pages of information to congressional requests, and that Attorney General Holder and others testified, unlike now.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY).

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Madam Speaker, today is a solemn day in America, a day that none of us hoped for when we came to Congress, but the events of today are something that each of us swore that we were prepared to execute in defense of the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

This is the oath that binds the men and women of the 116th Congress, as our democracy implores we defend her.

A clear and present threat to American democracy is what brings us here. The architect, a President who asked that a foreign nation interfere in our election: this was our Founding Fathers' greatest fear.

I cast this solemn vote for the many individuals in my district who entrusted me to be their voice in Congress. They entrusted me to uphold our Constitution for them.

I vote "yes" for Sarah in Chicago, Doug in Kankakee, Diane in Flossmoor; "yes" for Kathy in Momence, Kathryn in Crete, and Jimmy in Park Forest.

The facts are simple. The path forward is clear. Impeachment is not an option, it is an obligation, because no one is above the law.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. RESCHENTHALER), another member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. RESCHENTHALER. Madam Speaker, I thank Ranking Member COLLINS for yielding.

You know, in the Navy, we had a saying: BLUF, bottom line up front.

Well, I will give you the bottom line. Democrats are terrified that President Trump is going to win reelection.

They can't beat him on the merits, so Democrats are caving to their far left radical base and they are using the thoughts and feelings and the assumptions of some unnamed bureaucrats rather than relying on facts and law to impeach a duly elected President.

Let me be clear: This is nothing more than a political hit job.

You know, I have been on all sides of the courtroom. I was a prosecutor in the Navy, I was a defense attorney in the Navy, I was a district judge in my hometown.

And let me tell you, as a lawyer, I would defend this case every day of the week. As a judge, I would dismiss this on day one for lack of merit. There is no prima facie case here.

I will tell you who I would prosecute, though. I would prosecute ADAM SCHIFF for abuse of power. Why? How about the fact that he used his position as chairman to leak phone records of Ranking Member DEVIN NUNES? How about the fact that he dumped over 8,000 pages of documents on Republicans less than 48 hours before a hearing? That is the abuse of power.

And obstruction? I would prosecute the Democrats for obstruction. How about the fact that the Judiciary Committee Democrats voted down my request to subpoena the whistleblower? How about the fact that Chairman NADLER refused every single Republican request for a fact witness? That is obstruction of Congress.

So, again, let me be clear: Today is nothing more than a political hit job.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, once again, I hear a lot of attacks on Democratic Members of Congress, but not one single word of substantive defense of the President's conduct.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY).

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Speaker, each of us here took an oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States, not the President, and not our political party.

Today, history will judge. Did we abide that oath?

To extort a foreign country to investigate your political opponent is an unconstitutional abuse of power. To solicit foreign interference in an American election is an unconstitutional abuse of power.

The need to protect against just such abuses prompted our Founders to grant the sole power of impeachment to this House.

The delicate balance of power that underpins our democracy is threatened when a President disregards the Constitution by obstructing Congress' power in order to cover up illegal behavior. In doing that, President Trump violated his oath.

□ 1430

Today, we must put country over party, conscience over complicity. Today, we must assert no one is above the law. Today, we are summoned by history to do the right thing.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I know this is probably not true, but I think the speakers are not working on the majority side because I have talked about it, and many of our Members have talked about the facts.

Let's just go over them real quickly: no pressure, no conditionality, nothing

was ever denied them, and when they got through, they actually got the money, and they never did anything for it.

We have talked about the facts. That is a distraction that doesn't need to happen.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. DAVIDSON).

Mr. DAVIDSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I have heard numerous colleagues say they didn't run for Congress to impeach the President. Well, maybe not originally, but, unfortunately, from the moment proceedings began, after the fourth vote to launch an impeachment inquiry, today's vote was inevitable. Many of them campaigned on it.

I love this country with a soldier's passion. I came here to defend freedom, not to deny due process to anyone. I came here to solve problems, and change the broken status quo, not to distract or disrupt those, like President Donald Trump, who deliver on promises to put America back on the path of peace and prosperity that has made and kept our country free.

For months now, Americans have heard speculation about the President's motives in Ukraine. Despite months of effort, dozens of hearings, and countless documents, Americans have not seen proof that the President committed a high crime or a misdemeanor.

We have a republic, if we can keep it. This is a disgraceful and dishonest process. It is a discredit to this body and to our Nation.

Madam Speaker, I urge the House to drop these divisive Articles of Impeachment and get to work for the American people.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, how much time do both sides have remaining, please?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York has 1 hour and 2 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Georgia has 2 hours and 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ).

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, the facts are clear. The President of the United States withheld \$400 million in military aid to an ally of the United States and also held back a White House meeting to compel a foreign nation to investigate his political opponent.

At the exact time the President was doing this, Ukraine was engaged in a battle for its very existence with one of America's adversaries, Russia.

The President abused his power to persuade a foreign nation to dig up dirt on a political opponent, and that is the truth. This was, quite simply, a geopolitical shakedown.

The President then tried to block Congress from exercising its constitutionally mandated duty to uncover the truth.

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Every single one of us, today, faces a stark choice. If we choose to turn a blind eye, to put political expediency before the Constitution, then we are complicit in this subversion of democracy. If we do not hold this President accountable, we have failed the people who sent us here, and we have abdicated our own oath to defend the Constitution.

In the United States of America, no one is above the law, not even the President.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE).

Mr. BYRNE. Madam Speaker, in 3 months, we have gone from receiving an unsubstantiated, hearsay, and discredited whistleblower complaint to the production of Articles of Impeachment against a President of the United States. Not since Andrew Johnson has the House engaged in such a partisan political stunt.

From the beginning, this has been a sham, and this House has been nothing but a star chamber. The Democratic majority literally locked themselves in the basement of this building, hiding from the American people. When my colleagues and I refused to stand for it, Democrats moved to public hearings but denied us questions, denied us witnesses, and denied the President any meaningful opportunity to defend himself.

With this complete abuse of process, the Democratic majority has produced the flimsiest and most legally unsound Articles of Impeachment in the history of this Nation. Never before has the House reported an Article of Impeachment that does not allege an underlying crime, yet this majority will do so today.

Read the transcripts. There was no quid pro quo, no bribery, no extortion, no crime, and no abuse of power. They don't even allege a crime in their Articles of Impeachment. The President raising Ukrainian corruption is not an impeachable offense.

If the dealings of Hunter Biden were so aboveboard, you would think the majority would be just fine looking into this matter. Yet, they haven't moved my resolution asking for an investigation, and our subpoenas for Hunter Biden have all been denied. Hunter Biden doesn't get a pass because his dad was Vice President.

I am proud to have fought against this charade every step of the way, and I will proudly vote "no" today.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

Ms. MOORE. Madam Speaker, the facts are uncontestable. The evidence is overwhelming. The President grossly misused the Office of President and obstructed Congress, and justice requires this impeachment.

I feel compelled to respond to the false narrative that Democrats are using this process to overturn an election.

I agree that elections are the appropriate venue for public policy disputes. However, we are not talking about a public policy dispute. We are talking about a President who subverted national security by soliciting foreign interference in our elections, the exact thing our Founding Fathers feared and the exact circumstance for which they drafted the impeachment clause.

Our democracy, our Constitution, deserves standing up for, not Donald John Trump.

I will leave my colleagues with this last thought as they decide how to cast this historic vote: For what shall it profit a man to gain the whole world only to lose his own soul.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOODEN).

Mr. GOODEN. Madam Speaker, this is the day the Founding Fathers feared when they granted Congress the power of impeachment, where we have a political party so dead set against the President that they will do anything to impeach him. And they are about to get away with it, simply because they have the votes. But that is not how this process is supposed to work.

It is not meant to be dictated by a thin partisan majority, nor is it meant to be used when an election is just around the corner.

No one understands that better than our Speaker, for whom I have great respect. And I agree with the comments she made on March 6 of just this year: "Impeachment is so divisive to the country that unless there is something so compelling and overwhelming and bipartisan, I don't think we should go down that path because it divides" the Nation.

That is exactly what has happened. When we walk out of here tonight, we all know how this result is going to go. The Democrats are voting for this. Not one Republican is breaking. This is not bipartisan.

The American people are disgusted with the United States House of Representatives, and we bring shame upon this body today by moving forward with this impeachment.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL).

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Madam Speaker, the facts in this case are as simple as they are tragic. Witness after witness attested to these facts. No one has credibly refuted them.

President Trump tried to coerce Ukraine to interfere in the 2020 elections. He used the power of his office for personal political gain.

By withholding aid to Ukraine, the President has endangered our ally Ukraine and undermined our own national security. When he got caught, the President attempted to cover up the crime and shut down any investigation by obstructing Congress.

We have overwhelming evidence that this President poses an urgent threat to our elections, to our national secu-

rity, and to the rule of law. Congress must vote to impeach him to protect our constitutional Republic. There is no alternative.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, the only urgent threat to this body is the clock and the calendar and the desire to impeach the President before we go home for Christmas.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVID P. ROE).

Mr. DAVID P. ROE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today is a sad day in the people's House. Since Donald Trump was elected in 2016, Democrats have been on a crusade to stop him by any means.

I believe the American people are the fairest people on this Earth. They believe that everyone should be treated equally under the law, no matter what station you occupy in life: rich or poor, President or factory worker—fair. This process has been anything but fair.

For 2 years, we have been told that then-candidate Donald Trump colluded with Russians to interfere with our elections. Two years and millions of dollars spent on the Mueller investigation: no collusion.

You would think, after being that wrong, Democrats would finally decide to work on the problems that the American people sent us here to do. You would be wrong again.

Then, we were told that the President withheld money to the Ukrainians in a quid pro quo. No, no, a bribery. No, abuse of power. I guess whatever polls best—to gather information on a potential political rival.

Well, here are some facts about what happened:

Fact number one: The transcript of the July 25 phone conversation that the President released shows no pressure.

Fact number two: President Zelensky did not know the money was withheld.

Fact number three: No investigation occurred or was announced.

Fact number four: The money was released September 11, 2019.

Facts are stubborn things. One Member on the other side of the aisle said: "I'm concerned that if we don't impeach this President, he will get re-elected." That, Madam Speaker, says it all.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI).

Ms. BONAMICI. Madam Speaker, I take seriously my oath to uphold and defend the Constitution, and I do not take today's proceedings lightly.

The Founding Fathers included the impeachment process in the Constitution to uphold our values and to maintain the checks and balances that are essential to separation of powers and to democracy. They knew way back in 1787 that a President could abuse the power of the office. In fact, they adopted the phrase "high crimes and misdemeanors" from a phrase that had been used in the English Parliament

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since 1386 intended to cover situations where an official abused his power and included disobeying an order from the Parliament.

Donald Trump has abused the power of his office by inviting a foreign government to interfere in the U.S. election. He did this not to help the United States but to benefit himself. That is wrong, and it is an impeachable offense.

Then, when Congress exercised our constitutional duty to investigate these wrongdoings, he obstructed the investigation every step of the way. That is also wrong, and it is also an impeachable offense.

In our country, no one is above the law. That includes the President of the United States.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, December is such a great month, and there are so many great dates in December. We talk about the wonderful things that have happened in December of the past.

In addition to Christmas being something we celebrate, the Boston Tea Party took place in December. Also, on December 7, 1941, a horrific act happened in the United States, one that President Roosevelt said: This is a date that "will live in infamy."

Today, December 18, 2019, is another date that will live in infamy. Just because you hate the President of the United States, and you can find no other reason other than the fact that you can't see straight, you have decided the only way we can make sure this President doesn't get elected again is to impeach him.

On the floor of the people's House, the bastion of democracy and liberty in the whole world, we have decided that political power is far more important than principle.

Madam Speaker, I urge all Members of the House to vote "no" on impeachment and to look their voters in the eye.

Listen, let me tell you, the voters will remember next November what you are doing this December. This is a terrible time. This is a date that will live in infamy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL).

Ms. FRANKEL. Madam Speaker, in 1787, at the conclusion of the Constitutional Convention, Benjamin Franklin was asked: Do we have a republic or a monarchy?

He responded: "A republic, if you can keep it."

Madam Speaker, a republic is a form of government in which the country is considered a public matter, not the private concern or property of the rulers.

□ 1445

In a republic, no person is above the law. In a republic, the President may not abuse his power by withholding critical foreign assistance for his own personal political gain nor may he stop witnesses from talking.

I did not come to Congress to impeach a President, but I did take an oath to keep the Republic. For our children and our grandchildren, we should do nothing less. One day, I will tell my grandson that I stood up for our democracy.

I will vote "yes" to impeach the President.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1-23 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I would like to address why we are here.

We are certainly not here because of a misquoted phone call in July of 2019. The Washington Post ran an article, headlined, "The Campaign to Impeach President Trump Has Begun," the day he was sworn in.

The gentleman from Maryland who spoke earlier today called for impeachment 2 days before President Trump was sworn in.

The gentleman from Texas was introducing impeachment resolutions 2 years ago and said: President Trump should be impeached so he can't get re-elected.

This impeachment is not about anything that happened on a phone call. This impeachment is about what President Trump has done.

The people in this country who are let in who are inadmissible or apprehended and don't have legal authority fell from 100,000 people in May to under 5,000 people in November, and you hate him for it.

Ben Carson thinks that low-income housing should be used by American citizens and not people who are here illegally, and you hate him for it.

President Trump doesn't want people coming here and going on welfare, and you hate him for it.

President Trump wants able-bodied people on food stamps to try to work, and he is hated for it.

President Trump renegotiated that rip-off trade agreement with Mexico and Canada and that was put in place by President Bush and President Obama, and you hate him for it.

President Trump sides with law enforcement instead of criminals and murders dropped 1,000 people last year, and you hate him for siding with the police.

President Trump lets Christian adoption agencies choose whom they want to be parents, and you don't like him for that.

President Trump won't let foreign aid go to agencies that perform abortions, and you hate him for that.

President Trump's judges stick to the Constitution, and he is disliked for that.

President Trump is keeping his campaign promises, and you hate him for that.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are again reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We do not hate President Trump, but we do know that President Trump will continue to threaten the Nation's security, democracy, and constitutional system if he is allowed to remain in office. That threat is not hypothetical.

President Trump has persisted, during this impeachment inquiry, in soliciting foreign powers to investigate his political opponent.

The President steadfastly insists that he did nothing wrong and is free to do it all again. That threatens our next election as well as our constitutional democracy.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCNERNEY).

Mr. MCNERNEY. Madam Speaker, the House of Representatives, the people's House, is vested by the Constitution with the power of impeachment to balance the power of the Presidency. Without this essential duty, the President could exploit his sacred office without any regard for the law.

On January 3, 2019, every Member of the House swore an oath to defend the Constitution, and this week, we are being asked to do just that.

When allegations arose that the President tried to coerce a foreign government to help undermine the 2020 election, the House carried out its duty to investigate a potential abuse of power; but the President refused to cooperate and forbade his administration from doing so, obstructing Congress from carrying out our sworn responsibility.

If these actions bear no consequence, future Presidents may act without constraint and American democracy will be at an end. Therefore, compelled by my sworn duty to defend the Constitution, I will vote to impeach this President.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOH), my friend.

Mr. YOH. Madam Speaker, I would like to address my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and reiterate President Washington's warning to the Republic 223 years ago.

The Constitution rightly sets a high bar for impeachment, but the integrity of the process also depends on the ability of the legislators to vote their minds, independent of party politics.

Removing a President is too important and lawmakers are given too much latitude to define "high crimes and misdemeanors" for it to be any other way. Otherwise, excessively partisan politicians could overturn an election simply because the President is a member of the opposite and opposing party.

It is in regard to this impeachment process that George Washington forewarned us as a nation at this moment in history. When political parties "may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men" and women "will be enabled to subvert the power of the people to usurp for themselves the reins of government. . . ."

How wise he was.

Vote "no" on this assault to our Republic, the Constitution, and against President Trump.

Mr. NADLER, Madam Speaker, John Adams warned in a letter to Thomas Jefferson that these risks are unavoidable and might sometimes overlap: "You are apprehensive of foreign interference, intrigue, influence. So am I—but, as often as elections happen, the danger of foreign influence recurs."

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE).

Mrs. LAWRENCE, Madam Speaker, today, history is being written. The facts are conclusive: The President attempted to use the power of the powerful Office of President to force Ukraine to influence our 2020 election.

In the process, President Trump jeopardized our national security and withheld vital military assistance intended to prevent further Russian aggression in the region.

However, as our committees—including the Committee on Oversight and Reform, of which I am a member—sought to interview additional witnesses and obtain documents, the President ordered, from the power of his office, that the executive branch not participate and obstructed the congressional oversight.

Article I provides the House of Representatives with the sole power of impeachment, as well as the authority to conduct oversight of the executive branch.

What did he have to hide?

When the Framers met over 200 years ago, they went to great lengths to ensure future Presidents will be forced to answer to their constitutional responsibility. I stand today in support of the two Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CLINE).

Mr. CLINE, Madam Speaker, today is a sad day for this body, for the voters who sent me here last November, and for our Nation.

Benjamin Franklin cautioned, when asked what he had given us: "A republic, if you can keep it."

Today, we take a step further toward losing the Republic that our Founding Fathers envisioned by engaging in activity that they specifically warned against: the misuse of the constitutional power of impeachment for one party's political gain.

Our Constitution is the very foundation of our Republic. Its assurance of

self-determination has been the shining beacon by which our Nation has charted its course over the last two centuries.

From a new democratic experiment struggling to survive to the greatest Nation on Earth, America has been powered, over the years, not by government, but by the ingenuity, the bravery, and the faith of its people, confident in their place as one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

So it is we the people who determine our President, not we the Judiciary Committee nor we the Congress. The Constitution is clear. It is only when we see clear proof of the impeachable offenses outlined in Article II, Section 4, treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors, that we are to challenge the decision of the voters, break the figurative glass, and pull the emergency rip cord that is impeachment.

We do not have that proof today. Thomas Jefferson said: "I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education."

But rather than educate, this majority has chosen today to obfuscate with hearsay, innuendo, and speculation. And when history looks back on this shameful period for this House, it will judge it for what it truly is: the ugly hijacking, by the majority, of our Constitution and the powers it so solemnly entrusts to us to engage in a blatantly political process designed to finally achieve what they could not achieve at the ballot box: the removal of a duly elected President.

Compelled by my sworn duty to uphold this Constitution and for the people, I vote "no" on impeachment today.

Mr. NADLER, Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN).

Mr. HUFFMAN, Madam Speaker, as we take this solemn, necessary step of impeaching President Trump, my Republican colleagues have made up their minds. We can't persuade them to do the right thing, so I will address my remarks to the future.

Today's vote will be judged by future generations, including my precious children, Abby and Nathan—maybe grandkids.

Historians will study what Members of this Congress did when our democracy was tested like never before by a President who put personal interests above country, who compromised national security to cheat his way to reelection and, when caught, not only lied and refused to admit wrongdoing, but flouted Congress' authority. He even called the constitutional impeachment mechanism unconstitutional.

Historians will marvel how some Members of Congress continued to

stand by this man; how they put blind, partisan loyalty or fear of Donald Trump above their duty to defend the Constitution; how they made absurd partisan arguments and tried to obstruct these proceedings; and how, instead of pushing back when their party fell under the dark spell of authoritarianism, they embraced it as if the Constitution, the rule of law, and our oath of office mean nothing.

Madam Speaker, for our future generations, our children, the judgment of history, let me be clear: I stand with our Constitution, with the rule of law and our democracy. I will be voting "yes" to impeach Donald J. Trump.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS).

Mr. WILLIAMS, Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Today's vote to impeach the duly elected President of the United States is truly historical. However, its unique place in history is not for the reasons the Democratic Party and their mainstream media overlords are so desperately trying to convey.

Today, will be remembered as the day that the Democrats, claiming a false moral supremacy over the desire of the American people, executed a deliberate and orchestrated plan to overturn a Presidential election.

It will be the first time in history that a party paraded out their Ivy League academics to explain to 31 States and almost 63 million people that their voice should not be heard and why their votes should not be counted.

I pray for our Nation every day, but today, I am praying for my colleagues across the aisle who arrived at this partisan and self-directed fork in the road and chose the road never before traveled and one that has a dead end.

Donald J. Trump is our President, chosen by the American people, fair and square. As we say in Texas: "It's a done deal." Democrats' attempt to change history will never undo that.

May God bless the greatest country in the world, the United States of America.

Mr. NADLER, Madam Speaker, I would remind the gentleman that the impeachment clause is placed in the Constitution to protect the American people and our form of government against a President who would subvert our constitutional liberties in between elections.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN).

Mr. GREEN of Texas, Madam Speaker, and still I rise.

Madam Speaker, I rise because I love my country, and, Madam Speaker, "Shall any man be above justice?" That is the question posed in 1787 by George Mason at the Constitutional Convention.

Shall any man be beyond justice? Madam Speaker, if this President is allowed to thwart the efforts of Congress

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with a legitimate impeachment inquiry, the President will not only be above the law, he will be beyond justice. We cannot allow any person to be beyond justice in this country.

In the name of democracy, on behalf of the Republic, and for the sake of the many who are suffering, I will vote to impeach, and I encourage my colleagues to do so as well.

No one is beyond justice in this country.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I also remind my chairman that the impeachment was not to be used between election cycles to defeat a sitting President who you think will be reelected.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BUCHANAN).

□ 1500

Mr. BUCHANAN. Madam Speaker, I will vote today against both Articles of Impeachment because they are without merit and setting a dangerous precedent for our country. This political vendetta is an abuse of the impeachment process and would subvert the votes of 63 million Americans.

Just because the President's opponents are afraid that he will win reelection is no excuse for weaponizing impeachment. No President in history has been impeached 10 months before an election.

Elections are the heart of our democracy. Our Founding Fathers devised a simple way to remove a President if you disagree with him. It is called an election, and we have one coming up in less than a year.

Madam Speaker, let's let the people decide this next November.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. TLAI).

Ms. TLAI. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of impeachment. I learn so much every single day from my residents at home. Their common sense and understanding of what is right and wrong is centered on why they oppose any person using the most powerful position in the world for personal gain.

We honor our veterans in this Chamber almost on a daily basis. Do we ever follow their lead, where we serve the people of the United States and uphold the Constitution, not as Republicans or Democrats, but as Americans?

We should learn from their sense of duty and responsibility to country and democracy, not political party. Doing nothing here, Madam Speaker, is not an option. Looking away from these crimes against our country is not an option.

This is about protecting the future of our Nation and our democracy from corruption, abuse of power, criminal coverups, and bribery.

Madam Speaker, this vote is also for my sons and the future of so many generations. I urge my colleagues to please vote "yes" on these Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. JOYCE).

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today on this dark day in the United States House of Representatives to voice my opposition to the shameful impeachment process that has occurred in the people's House.

Some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle do not like President Trump. We know this because they proudly boasted about their intention to impeach our President before he was even sworn into office.

Out of disdain for the President and for those of us who elected him, the House of Representatives is considering two Articles of Impeachment that are so very weak that they even fail to include specific crimes.

The people that I represent in southern and southwestern Pennsylvania know the truth. The American people know the truth. This impeachment circus has never been about the facts. This process has always been about seeking revenge for the President's election in 2016 and attempting to prevent him from winning again in 2020.

Madam Speaker, I wholeheartedly oppose this partisan and shameful effort to impeach our democratically and duly elected President.

Madam Speaker, for the sake of our Nation, I urge my colleagues to join with me and vote "no" on the Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, all we keep hearing from the other side are attacks on the process and questions of our motives. We do not hear, because we cannot hear, because they cannot articulate a real defense of the President's actions.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. PRESSLEY).

Ms. PRESSLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to protect our democracy. Today, we take a stand against corruption and abuses of power.

What we are doing here today is not only patriotic, it is uniquely American. America is a story of ordinary people confronting abuses of power with a steadfast pursuit of justice.

Throughout our history, the oppressed have been relegated to the margins by the powerful, and each time we have fought back, deliberate in our approach, clear-eyed.

Each generation has fought for the preservation of our democracy, and that is what brings us to the House floor today. Efficient and effective in the pursuit of our truth.

Congress has done its due diligence. Today we send a clear message. We will not tolerate abuses of power from the President of the United States of America. The future of this Nation rests in our hands.

Madam Speaker, it is with a heavy heart, but a resolved one, and because I believe our democracy is worth fighting for, I will vote to impeach Donald

J. Trump, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The chairman hears us. He doesn't want to acknowledge it. When you have nothing but a process that was completely amuck, you talk about process. I have already debunked the facts many times. Let's do it one more time.

No pressure by either Mr. Trump or Mr. Zelensky. In fact, what really just horrifies me is they continue to say that Mr. Zelensky, who is the supposed victim here, said many times there was no pressure. The Democrats are calling him a liar and weakening him in his own country. That is deplorable.

There is no conditionality in the transcript or conditionality after that. Five meetings prove that. They were all high-level meetings. No conditionality. Two of those meetings were after the Ukrainians actually knew of the possibility that aid was being held.

They have not ever addressed the truths and the facts. After there was nothing done to get the money, guess what? They got the money. That is the fact. That is what they don't want to deal with. That is where we are today. So let's continue to see how the sham was perpetrated. That is what many of our Members are talking about.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BERGMAN).

Mr. BERGMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Articles of Impeachment against President Trump. I believe all American people need to be looked in the eye by all their Representatives.

Today is the culmination of the Democrats' 3-year-long quest to delegitimize the President. This has been in the works since November 2016 and was all but promised when the Democrats took the majority.

This sham process began without a formal vote in the House and was continued over these past several months, willfully trampling on decades of bipartisan precedent—no due process; closed-door depositions, even though nothing in this investigation was classified; and leaking only details that fit their narrative.

If this isn't partisan politics, I don't know what is. Holding our elected officials accountable is a job I take extremely seriously, but the impeachment votes today represent the worst of Washington, D.C., yet another reason my constituents are so disillusioned with the process and disappointed by the 118th Congress.

Michigan's First District sent me to Washington to get things done, to get the government off their backs, and to help rural Michiganders and other people around the country keep more of their hard-earned currency, not to impeach our duly elected President.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote against the Articles of Impeachment. I

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BARRAGAN).

Ms. BARRAGAN. Madam Speaker, it is with a solemn sense of duty that I rise today in support of impeachment. As this Chamber debates two Articles of Impeachment against the President for his abuse of power and obstruction of Congress, I want history to know that I stood up to say that I stand for the Constitution and our democracy.

When my immigrant mom became a United States citizen, she took an oath of allegiance to our country and Constitution. When I stood on this floor as a new Member of Congress, I took an oath to uphold and defend our Constitution.

The President abused his power when he used his official office and power to ask a foreign government to interfere in our elections. When he asked a foreign government for a personal favor to dig up dirt on his political opponent so he could cheat, the President got caught, and then he tried to cover it up.

Today we say no more. Today we say we will not allow this President to abuse his power and endanger our national security. I stand to say that no one is above the law, not even this President.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY).

Mr. PERRY. Madam Speaker, since before inauguration, the press and Members of this Congress have been for impeachment. Members refused to attend the inauguration. They called for impeachment, and they voted for impeachment without any evidence. They voted for impeachment creating and manufacturing evidence.

Recall and votes of no confidence are not included in our Constitution for a reason. Our system demands evidence of high crimes and misdemeanors. If such evidence existed, there would be an agreement in this Chamber, but there is not. There is not an agreement because there is no evidence.

Madison and Hamilton warned us that this might happen and that impeachment would veer toward political factions, and that is exactly what this is. This is bitterly and nakedly partisan.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle have made a mockery of this process and this government. They despise the President and are themselves abusing the power of their office all to settle the political score they were unable to resolve at the ballot box.

Madam Speaker, they hope that if they repeat them, over and over and stay on message that you will believe their charges. Repeating things that are not true does not make them true.

The call record between the two Presidents was clear: President Trump was interested in getting to the bottom of what happened in the 2016 election. He asked the Ukrainians to work with

our Attorney General. The Ukrainians were already getting the military hardware, and they got the assistance money and the meeting they desired.

These are not crimes. These are disagreements over foreign policy and the fact that this President is conducting it.

If it weren't so sad, it would be laughable. Madam Speaker. My colleagues are not driven by a quest for facts or truth; they are driven by their partisan animus and a timetable. These are the reckless and irresponsible acts of elitists in the swamp, and they undermine the fabric of our Republic.

Madam Speaker, I urge a "no" vote. Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to remind the gentleman that there is, in fact, extensive direct evidence—including the President's own words and actions—which is corroborated and supported by indirect and circumstantial evidence.

The record leaves the following key facts indisputable: President Trump's personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, pushed Ukraine to investigate Vice President Biden and a debunked conspiracy theory about the 2016 elections.

President Trump directed U.S. officials and President Zelensky himself to work with Mr. Giuliani to fulfill his demands.

President Trump withheld critical military aid for Ukraine.

And President Trump stonewalled Congress' investigation to cover up his misconduct.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. CASTEN).

Mr. CASTEN of Illinois. Madam Speaker, this should not be a partisan vote. This is a vote about America. It is a vote about our democracy and our oath to the Constitution.

We all took an oath to protect the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic. We all know that what President Trump did was wrong. We all know it is wrong to withhold foreign aid for a political favor. We know it is wrong to ignore congressional subpoenas. We know it is wrong to default to silly partisan and process arguments rather than to rise and defend this beautiful, but all too fragile, democracy.

When those in elected power abuse their position for personal advantage, it is on us to somberly uphold and defend the responsibility that the Founders bestowed on us.

So, when my colleague talks about partisanship, I would remind him of those great words of Lincoln. I am paraphrasing him slightly:

When one party would inflame partisanship rather than let the Nation survive, I am proud to be the party that would accept partisanship rather than let the Nation perish.

So in this moment the answer is clear, not because we want to impeach but because we must.

So, Madam Speaker, when you vote in a few hours, don't vote your party;

vote your character. That is how you are going to be judged, and that is how we are all going to be judged.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I inquire how much time is remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia has 1 hour and 44½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from New York has 1 hour and 47½ minutes remaining.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON).

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this partisan impeachment process.

Make no mistake, this process did not begin with the whistleblower report. In fact, impeachment efforts began shortly after the President was elected. The theatrics and political posturing that have ensued are not part of an effort that this body is actually pursuing to preserve checks and balances, rather, this process echoes the calls by some who refuse to accept the 2016 election results.

Neither of the articles receiving a vote justify the removal of the President from office. The first article suggests that the President pressured a foreign government to be able to assist in an upcoming election. Ukraine received its aid without a prearranged agreement, proving this article to be an unsubstantiated allegation.

The second article is premised that obstruction occurred when the White House ignored subpoenas issued by the House. Our Federal courts are the ultimate arbiters of these decisions. In fact, previous administrations, Republican and Democrat both, have dealt with these issues and claimed executive privilege.

Madam Speaker, the articles that are before this House are unsubstantiated. I intend to vote "no" on these articles, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GALLEG0).

Mr. GALLEG0. Madam Speaker, today I will vote to impeach President Donald Trump for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress.

Those still defending the President's actions are desperately grasping at straws while living in an alternate universe where facts do not exist.

□ 1515

To those still unwilling to search their souls, ask yourselves: Would you support a Democratic President using taxpayer dollars to pressure a foreign government to investigate a Republican political opponent based on false Russian conspiracy theories?

Of course not. That is absurd.

Any President who does that has abused the power of the Presidency for personal gain and undermined our most sacred tradition: our elections.

In a few hours, every Member will make a choice. Will you fall into the

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age-old political trap of thinking blind partisanship is all that matters? Will you vote to defend the Constitution and our democracy so that President Trump and every future President will know that they are not above the law and will be held accountable for their actions?

I have made my choice. I hope every Member puts the defense of our Nation first and joins me.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak out against this attempt to remove the duly elected President of the United States.

Impeachment is importantly established in our Constitution. The impeachment of a President has only happened twice in our country's 243-year history. Yet, today, for highly political purposes, the House majority is trying to remove President Trump from office based on secondhand, indirect accounts.

The Articles of Impeachment we are voting on today offer no evidence of a crime but, instead, are purposely broad to fit the majority's narrative.

Less than 1 year until the next Presidential election, we are being asked to override the choice of the American people. This lopsided, hyperpartisan, biased impeachment process has been predetermined as an outcome from the very beginning.

This is an unfortunate day in the history of our great country. We must hope this political game does not set a precedent of which to follow in the future.

Surely, there will be disagreements between the President and Congress for many years to come. Instead of unnecessarily dividing our country, as we are seeing today, we should be looking at ways to bring our country together.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, President Trump's actions are both impeachable and criminal. Although the violation of the Federal criminal statute is neither necessary nor sufficient to justify impeachment, President Trump's conduct violated the Federal antibribery statute very clearly.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER).

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, today, I vote to impeach President Donald Trump for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress. I don't hate the President, but I love my country, and I have no other choice.

Voting for these Articles of Impeachment is the only moral course of action, the only way to honor our oath of office.

I have no doubt that the votes I cast today will stand the test of time. This has nothing to do with the 2016 elections.

I am so disappointed that my Republican friends approve of the President's abuses of power and solicitation of foreign interference in our elections. This is the very definition of the willful suspension of disbelief. They know in their hearts that what the President has done is deeply wrong. They know that they would vote without hesitation to impeach a Democratic President who had done these things.

I remind all Americans, the President did not rebut the facts—the many, many facts—which have led to these Articles of Impeachment today.

For the sake of our democracy, our Constitution, and our country, we must do the right thing and vote to impeach President Trump.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I am just amazed by what the chairman just said. If it was obvious that he violated the bribery statute clearly, then why didn't we add it as an Article of Impeachment?

The reason why? It didn't.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. GUEST).

Mr. GUEST. Madam Speaker, Article II, Section 4 of the United States Constitution states that the President of the United States may be removed from office for treason, bribery, or high crimes and misdemeanors.

As a former prosecutor, I am confident that no court would accept these Articles of Impeachment as having met the standards set forth by our Founding Fathers. The impeachment articles rely almost exclusively on hearsay and opinion testimony, and they present no direct evidence of wrongdoing.

As a former district attorney, I am dismayed that the Democrats have submitted Articles of Impeachment against a sitting President using circumstantial evidence that fails to offer proof of an impeachable offense.

Additionally, the charges levied against the President in the Articles of Impeachment lack historical precedent and are motivated by pure political reason. If the House of Representatives passes the Articles of Impeachment, the Democrats will have set a dangerous precedent by undoing America's vote for President because a single party disagreed with the 2016 Presidential election results.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON).

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I find no pleasure coming to the floor today to consider impeachment. I ran for Congress to represent my community and to serve the country I love.

As a combat veteran and having served 8 years on the Intelligence Committee, I understand the threat that foreign actors can play in our elections. Every elected official must dedicate themselves to protecting our democracy. No one should invite a foreign country to interfere with our most sacred act of voting.

It was abuse of power by the President to ask a foreign nation to interfere in our election to benefit his personal and political interests and to condition bipartisan, congressionally approved aid on that interference.

Unchecked, these actions could lead us down a path that will unravel the fabric of our Nation.

Madam Speaker, I am saddened we are here today, but in the interest of defending our Nation, I will vote for the Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY).

Mr. ROY. Madam Speaker, our Founders intentionally did not embrace recalls or votes of no confidence. Rather, we demand from Congress evidence of high crimes and misdemeanors.

While my colleagues are free to dislike the President, and while they may reasonably view the infamous phone call and negotiations with Ukrainians as something less than perfect, they are not free to impeach for something less than a high crime and misdemeanor.

In just over 10 months, though, the people are free to decide, and we should let them.

Madam Speaker, the eyes of the world are upon us. The press galleries are full. Our floor is filled with Members. When will we give the world something better than this?

My colleagues wax eloquent about the Constitutions they found under mothballs. Where is the respect for the Constitution when the people's House daily refuses to do its actual job while shredding federalism and limited government?

Today, in Mexico, a young girl will be abused while being trafficked toward our open borders, while some yell "kids in cages" and play race politics in the false name of compassion.

Today, in New York, a young mother will be coerced into abortion by taxpayer-funded Planned Parenthood, while we allow the genocide of the unborn in the false name of choice.

Today, across America, diabetics will struggle to afford insulin due to a healthcare system ravished by government and insurance bureaucrats empowered in the false name of coverage.

Today, our children inherit \$100 million of debt an hour, borrowed in the false name of what government can provide.

It is this conduct by Congress failing to do its jobs that should be impeached. One might ask if America would be better off taking the first 435 names out of the phonebook to represent us in the United States House than what is on display here today.

Today is not a dark day because the American people know this: America is great. Washington is broken. And we are taking our country back.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from California (Ms. MATSUI).

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Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart. I came to Congress to serve the great people of Sacramento and to build a better future for our children and grandchildren, including my grandkids, Anna and Robby.

The facts before us are crystal clear. We heard testimony from 17 brave patriots who value our democracy and the Constitution. They testified that President Trump threatened to withhold congressionally approved money in exchange for dirt on a political rival and, worse, that he continues to invite foreign powers to violate our sovereignty even today.

On its face, these are impeachable offenses that represent a clear and present danger to our country. That is why the only answer is to act now. We need to stand together and stop President Trump immediately so that he cannot violate the next election.

Madam Speaker, for the sake of our country and our democracy, I will vote "yes" to impeach the President.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SMUCKER).

Mr. SMUCKER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues on the other side of the aisle: How much is the trust of the American people worth?

When the American people are dissatisfied with their government, the primary tool that the Constitution gives them to make a change is their vote. On November 8, 2016, Americans from every part of this Nation packed the polls to elect Donald J. Trump to be the President of the United States. The country wanted a disruptor, a fighter, a dealmaker, a President who would put America first.

Sadly, on that very same day, Democrats had no plan or interest in honoring the vote of the American people. They were going to attempt, from day one, to delegitimize this President and, ultimately, remove him from office.

Right after the President was sworn in, *The Washington Post* wrote: "The campaign to impeach President Trump has begun." Even before he took office, a Politico article headline read: "Could Trump Be Impeached Shortly After He Takes Office?"

House Democrats have been planning for this day since January 2017. It is clear that facts have never mattered to the House Democrats. They never planned to work with the President. Instead, they intended only to fulfill their divisive partisan agenda.

Again, I ask, how much is the trust of the American people worth? Because after the vote today, for what you think is a short-term partisan gain, you can be sure that the American people will have lost their trust in our institution; they will have lost their trust in Congress; and most importantly, they will have lost trust that their vote counts.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI).

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, impeaching a President is one of the most solemn and consequential decisions the United States Congress can make. It is not an action that I or my fellow House colleagues take lightly.

Investigations and hearings conducted by the House provide overwhelming evidence that President Trump abused his power and endangered our national security.

President Trump also issued a blanket order prohibiting all executive office personnel from testifying, responding to subpoenas, or turning over documents. Therefore, he has obstructed the legitimate and constitutional obligation of Congress.

The President's actions leave me no choice. President Trump violated his oath of office. Now, I will uphold my oath of office to preserve and protect our Constitution and my promise to my constituents to carefully analyze all issues before me. I will vote in favor of both Articles of Impeachment against President Donald John Trump.

Madam Speaker, impeaching a President is one of the most solemn and consequential decisions the United States Congress can make. It is not an action I or my fellow House colleagues take lightly. Impeachment exists to protect our democracy. As Alexander Hamilton wrote in the *Federalist Papers*, the impeachment clause in the Constitution exists to address "the misconduct of public men," which involves "the abuse or violation of some public trust."

The investigations and hearings conducted by the House Intelligence and Judiciary Committees provide overwhelming evidence that President Trump abused his power and endangered our national security when he coerced Ukraine into investigating his likely rival in the 2020 election by withholding \$391 million in critical military aid and a White House meeting from the Ukrainian government. Withholding this military assistance to Ukraine as it enters the fifth year of its deadly war against Russia endangers Ukraine's sovereignty and safety as well as the United States' national security interests.

President Trump has also issued a blanket order prohibiting all executive office personnel from testifying in Congressional impeachment hearings, responding to subpoenas and turning over documents. Therefore, he has obstructed the legitimate and Constitutional obligation Congress has to conduct an impeachment inquiry when there is evidence of wrongdoing by the President.

No one is above the law. The President's actions leave me no choice. President Trump has violated his oath to "faithfully execute the Office of the President of the United States," and to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies foreign and domestic." Now I will uphold my Oath of Office to preserve and protect our Constitution and my promise to my constituents to carefully analyze all issues before me. I will vote in favor of both articles of impeachment against President Donald John Trump.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DUNN).

Mr. DUNN. Madam Speaker, I stand before you today a disappointed man. I

am disappointed in a broken and partisan process that has consumed House Democrats.

We were told this investigation was going to be bipartisan and transparent. Instead, the proceedings were held in secret behind closed doors with no attempt at a fair hearing.

All this was done deliberately in an effort to undo the results of the 2016 election.

Madam Speaker, my constituents in Florida want to see us get to work. They are counting on us to actually fix the surprise medical billing, to lower the cost of prescription drugs. Instead, we are here a week before Christmas, voting to impeach the legitimate President, Donald J. Trump, on the strength of nothing but rumors.

We have wasted almost a year on this process while House Democrats chose political theater over serving the American people. This shameful vote to impeach our President will be a lasting stain on our House.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to vote "no."

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, it is clear-cut. The President of the United States has violated his oath of office and betrayed the Constitution and the American people.

He admitted to soliciting assistance from a foreign leader to interfere in the U.S. election and aid his political reelection campaign. That is a violation of law, a violation of the Constitution, a betrayal of the American people, and an impeachable offense.

Overwhelming evidence also demonstrates the President withheld congressionally approved taxpayer dollars to blackmail the young, new President of Ukraine under attack from Russia.

The gentleman from Georgia says Ukraine didn't feel any pressure. They are being invaded by Russia, Vladimir Putin, you know, Trump's friend. He withheld that aid until the whistleblower report came out, then the aid was released. It wasn't released for any good purpose.

Congress voted for that aid; the President signed the bill. That is another impeachable offense.

The Committee on the Judiciary has put together an extensive document which shows that there is evidence of numerous other Federal crimes, including bribery and wire fraud.

Madam Speaker, the President's actions threaten the continuation of our representative democracy. I am proudly voting for impeachment today.

□ 1530

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am glad to know that Mr. Trump was giving them lethal aid, actually, something to fight back with, not what was previously given to them. And there was, again, from the President, himself, no pressure put on him.

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Your whole case is sort of destroyed if you are coercing somebody if there was no pressure felt; yet, we don't seem to get that part on this floor debate today.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. GIANFORTE).

Mr. GIANFORTE. Madam Speaker, today this Chamber is pushing through the most partisan, baseless Articles of Impeachment in our history.

House Democrats' hyperpartisan impeachment has been a sham since day one, driven by those whose bitter rage against President Trump has blinded their better judgment.

The fact is they resolved to overturn the results of the 2016 election the day President Trump won. Earlier this year, Speaker PELOSI said: "Impeachment is so divisive to the country that unless there's something so compelling and overwhelming and bipartisan, I don't think we should go down that path."

None of those standards have been met—none.

The committee hearings were a scripted, substance-free, made-for-TV show. They would be comedy if impeachment weren't so serious and grave. Witnesses denied awareness of an impeachable offense. And because the majority has failed to make the case for impeachment, there is no bipartisanship.

Compelling? Overwhelming? Bipartisan? Speaker PELOSI has not met her own criteria for impeachment, but here we are. Despite Democrats testing and tweaking their impeachment message, the American people have rejected it.

I will vote against this partisan impeachment sham. Let's get back to the work that the American people sent us here to do on this sad day of an impeachment charade.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GONZALEZ).

Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise on a sad day for America, a sad day for Texas, and a very sad day for the people I represent. I am not gleeful for today.

I came to Congress to lower the costs of prescription drugs, fight for a debt-free education, and improve the care of special-needs children, our seniors, and our veterans.

I did not come to Congress to impeach a sitting President, but we have been given no choice. He has eroded the foundations of our democracy and used the office of the Presidency for personal and political gain.

Our Founding Fathers feared that one day the power of the Presidency would stretch beyond its limits; thus, they enshrined in the Constitution a system of checks and balances.

We cannot and will not lower the ethical standards of our Presidency. We cannot afford to wither like a cheap flower in bad weather, watching our democracy crumble and rot from within.

That is not the America the world knows and loves, and it is certainly not

the America we would be proud to have our future generations inherit. And that is why today, I must vote to impeach the President of the United States and fulfill my oath to the Constitution.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HURD).

Mr. HURD of Texas. Madam Speaker, throughout this process, the American people have learned of bungling foreign policy decisions, but we have not heard evidence, beyond a reasonable doubt, of bribery or extortion. Allegations of these two crimes aren't even mentioned in the Articles of Impeachment being debated today.

Today, we have seen a rushed process divide our country. Today, accusations have been hurled at each other, questioning one another's integrity. Today, a dangerous precedent will be set: impeachment becoming a weaponized political tool.

We know how this partisan process will end this evening, but what happens tomorrow? Can this Chamber put down our swords and get back to work for the American people?

This institution has a failed history of passing legislation that has not only changed our country, but has inspired the world. This feat has been possible because this experiment we call America has one perpetual goal: make a more perfect Union.

We can contribute to this history if we recognize the simple fact that way more unite our country than divides us. Tomorrow, can we start focusing on that?

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS).

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, this is, indeed, a sad day for our country. This is, indeed, a sad day for America. But it is a good day for our Constitution.

It is a sad day for our country because President Trump has defied our Constitution, our rules, our requirements, and our expectations.

It is clear that President Trump places himself above the law, above our Constitution, and above the expectations of the American people.

At my last townhall meeting, which was held Saturday, December 15, at Malcolm X College in Chicago, someone asked the question: What is our position on impeachment?

Madam Speaker, every person there rose and said: Impeach.

When I speak, I speak for the people of the Seventh District of Illinois, and my vote will be impeach, impeach, impeach.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT).

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, in 1998, Senator SCHUMER said: "This impeachment will be used as a routine tool to fight political battles."

We thought it was a prediction. It was a promise, and now it is playing

out. That is exactly what is being done here.

And for those who say we don't address the defenses of fact, here you go. The impeachment served two purposes: Number one, stop the investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice and Ukraine into the corruption of Ukraine interference into the U.S. election in 2016.

You have said this was about, oh, this terrible Russia collusion. Oh, then that fell through. It is about emoluments. It is about bribery. It is about extortion. It has changed.

But one thing hasn't changed, and that is the intent to impeach this President. It has always been there.

But let's be honest. The President turning his back on Ukraine, that happened in 2009, because in 2008 Ukraine invaded Georgia.

What happened? Bush put sanctions on Russia to teach them a lesson.

What happened after that? Well, in March of 2009, Hillary Clinton was sent over to Russia with a reset button to say: Bush overreacted. We are okay that you invaded Georgia.

It was a green light to Russia to invade Ukraine.

And what do you do? Oh, yeah, you send blankets and MREs. They can eat and be warm while the Russians are killing them. That is what the Obama administration did.

This is a travesty, and we are in big trouble because SCHUMER was right. Now it has lowered the bar even farther. It will be used for political battles, and this country's end is now in sight. I hope I don't live to see it.

This is an outrage. Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I am deeply concerned that any Member of the House would spout Russian propaganda on the floor of the House.

I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS).

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, the United States Constitution is explicit: Bribery is an impeachable offense.

Bribery involves the abuse of power, and the President of the United States abused the power of his office by soliciting a bribe of a foreign leader to interfere in an election that he was afraid he could not win honorably, fairly, or freely: You, President of Ukraine, open and announce an investigation of my political rival, and I, President of the United States, will release \$391 million in military aid and give you the stature-amplifying White House meeting that you need.

This is a this-for-that, something-for-something transaction. Soliciting a bribe from a foreign leader is an abuse of power and a Federal crime.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS).

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my Republican colleagues who have toiled honorable in defense of the Constitution and the rule of law under difficult circumstances. Madam Speaker, it is a

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darn shame that we have found ourselves in this position today.

Every time I step into this Chamber, I am humbled to be serving in the greatest legislative body in the history of the world. However, it is deeply disappointing that the hyperpartisanship that has gripped this country has made its way into this Chamber.

I pride myself on being a consensus builder who works across the aisle to get things done for the American people, but when it comes to the matter of impeachment, I have no doubt that the entire process has been politically motivated.

There is absolutely no evidence that President Trump committed an impeachable offense, which is why I will vote "no."

This whole process has been a ploy to circumvent the will of the people by removing a duly elected President of the United States. It is a national disgrace, and it sets a dangerous precedent.

But we are a great nation, and we will survive this indignity. Let's put this ugly chapter behind us, Madam Speaker, and get to work.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON).

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, the question that will be answered today is: Will Members honor their oath to uphold the Constitution?

Democrats are not supporting impeachment based on a policy disagreement or the election results of 2016. No one is above the law. The President must be held accountable.

A constitutional process is not a hoax or a witch hunt. President Trump just opposes it. No one is above the law, not even President Donald J. Trump.

The President abused his power by pressuring Ukraine to help his reelection campaign. Impeachment is a constitutional remedy for these actions.

Trump betrayed his oath, betrayed the Constitution, and undermined the integrity of our elections. Those who are against the impeachment inquiry are willing to turn a blind eye to constitutional violations by the President.

As a nation, we have no other alternative. We must protect our Constitution and the United States of America.

In his own words: "No intelligent person believes what he is saying."

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BAIRD).

Mr. BAIRD. Madam Speaker, the totality of this process is just another reminder that my colleagues across the aisle are more focused on politics than policy. The American people deserve better. Our Republic deserves better.

The brave men and women of our military, myself included, have fought for freedom and democracy all around the world. Yet, today, my colleagues are eroding those freedoms through a process that ignored facts, abused power, and was shrouded in secrecy.

Those facts could not be more clear: The President committed no crime, broke no laws, and there was no quid pro quo.

I look forward to doing the right thing, representing the Hoosiers in my district, and voting against this impeachment charade. I stand with President Trump and look forward to passing policies that continue to move our country forward.

□ 1545

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, thanks to the hard work of our committees and the leadership of the Speaker, we found overwhelming evidence Trump invited foreign interests to interfere in our elections for his personal gain, and then he took unprecedented efforts to cover it up, obstructing Congress.

I am proud of the courage of new Members to do their duty, so that, for the first time in his privileged life, Donald Trump will be finally held accountable for his reckless personal behavior and business practices.

I vote proudly for these two Articles of Impeachment. And then I hope the House retains control of the articles until the Speaker and Leader SCHUMER can negotiate an agreement on process and witnesses from MCCONNELL so that the next stage will be open and fair so that Donald Trump will ultimately be held accountable.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. KEVIN HERN).

Mr. KEVIN HERN of Oklahoma. Public hearings began November 13. Less than a month later, Speaker PELOSI announced Articles of Impeachment on December 5, saying the investigation had revealed enough information to move forward with impeachment.

Let's think about that 22-day investigation. Six of those days were weekends where hearings weren't happening, and the House was not in session. Seven of those days were weekdays that the House was in recess, including the week of Thanksgiving. Two of those days were fly-in days, where Congress doesn't hold hearings. So out of the 22 days, just 7 days were used to investigate, debate, and vote on the impeachment of the duly elected leader of our country.

No wonder my constituents are upset; 7 days to impeach the President of the United States. Not to mention that this 7-day investigation uncovered zero facts in support of impeachment. I spent every minute I had in there as an observer of these hearings, and all I learned is if you hate someone so strongly and enough people agree with you, that is grounds enough to be impeached.

We asked for 12 hours of debate, the same amount of time allotted to President Clinton's impeachment, 12 hours of debate for possibly the biggest vote

I would cast in my tenure as a Representative. It isn't asking too much, but, no, they want to get out of here before Christmas, so it is okay to rush the process.

I am ashamed to be part of this today, even as I vote against the impeachment. My constituents are calling every day mad as hell, saying we should be ashamed that this historic Chamber has fallen so low as to allow something like this to happen.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, my friend, the gentleman from Georgia, has a tagline about the clock and the calendar. Madam Speaker, this is not about the clock and the calendar. It is about corruption and the Constitution. It is about a President who abuses power to coerce an ally to intervene in our election and poses a continuing threat to the integrity of our next election.

The President's defense is built on three pillars, and when those three pillars fall, the entire defense of the President collapses.

First, they claim there was no quid pro quo. Well, the evidence is undisputed. President Trump conditioned a White House visit and military aid on President Zelensky's public announcement of the investigations. Ambassador William Taylor wrote at the time, "I think it's crazy to withhold security assistance for help with a political campaign."

A reporter asked White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney if there had been a quid pro quo here, and he replied, "We do that all the time. Get over it." The President refused to help our ally until he got a personal political favor, and so the first defense falls.

Second, the minority claims that the Ukrainians didn't know about the hold. The evidence, again, is undisputed. Ukraine knew about the hold on the military assistance within hours of the President's July 25 call. Laura Cooper of the Department of Defense testified under oath that on July 25 the State Department sent two emails to the Department of Defense notifying them that Ukrainian officials were asking, "Where is the aid? The Ukrainians understood exactly what President Trump was asking. He wanted a personal political favor before the aid was released. And so the second defense falls."

Third, and finally, my Republican friends say the aid was released. But the aid was released only after the President got caught. This House launched its investigation on September 9. The hold on the aid was lifted on September 11. This is not evidence of innocence. It is evidence of culpability. The evidence is overwhelming. And when the President got caught, he did everything in his power to prevent the American people from learning the truth about his actions by defying the congressional investigation, by ordering that all requests and demands for information be denied.

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With our national security and the integrity of our election at risk, we must act, not because of the clock and the calendar, but to fight against corruption and for continued self-government by the American people.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I would just point out that, to believe everything that was just said, you have to also believe that President Zelensky is a pathological liar.

I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN).

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, we are not debating impeachment of an American President today. Your minds are already made up. The Democrat majority has had a verdict, impeachment, looking for a crime since the inauguration.

The Washington Post ran the headline, "The Campaign to Impeach President Trump Has Begun" just 19 minutes after President Trump took the oath of office.

The freshman Congresswoman from Michigan told a group of supporters, "We are going to impeach the mother-blank" shortly after she was sworn in.

Even Speaker PELOSI admitted last week that the impeachment effort has been going on for 2½ years, long before any phone call between two world leaders.

In fact, 71 percent of the Democrats on the Judiciary Committee supported an impeachment before the phone call. The impeachment sham is based on hearsay, conjecture, and opinion. And you know what, you can't even get a speeding ticket in this country based on hearsay, yet we are going to impeach an American President based on just that.

Where are the crimes of treason, high crimes or misdemeanors committed here? Those are things that constitute impeachable offenses, not hatred or policy disagreements. If memory serves me right, Congress told the administration to withhold aid to Ukraine until they got their act together, addressed corruption, and straightened it out. That was in multiple NDAs voted on by both parties in this Chamber.

So in the simplest terms, we are impeaching the President for doing something we told him to do. Give me a break. We have wasted precious time we were given to serve the American people while you held secret hearings and depositions behind closed doors in Chairman SCHIFF's chamber of secrets.

But the American people have a great sense of fairness. I promise you. They see President Trump has not been treated fairly in this process. Impeachment based on hearsay and opinion, not facts. It is a sad day in this Chamber, the people's House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I now inform you that the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) the chair of the

Intelligence Committee, will now serve as my designee and will control the remainder of the time on the majority side.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, Chairman NADLER, for yielding, and I thank him for the extraordinary job that he has done as chairman of the Judiciary Committee throughout these difficult proceedings.

Madam Speaker, my colleagues, my fellow Americans, I rise to support the impeachment of President Donald J. Trump.

"When a man unprincipled in private life desperate in his fortune, bold in his temper, possessed of considerable talents, having the advantage of military habits—despotic in his ordinary demeanor—known to have scoffed in private at the principles of liberty—when such a man is seen to mount the hobbyhorse of popularity—to join in the cry of danger to liberty—to take every opportunity of embarrassing the general government and bringing it under suspicion—to flatter and fall in with all the nonsense of the zealots of the day—it may justly be suspected that his object is to throw things into confusion that he may ride the storm and direct the whirlwind." These are the words of Alexander Hamilton written in 1792. Could we find a more perfect description of the present danger emanating from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue?

The Framers crafted a Constitution that contemplated free and fair elections for the highest office in the land, but also afforded the Congress with a power to remove a President who abused the powers of his office for personal gain, who compromised the public trust by betraying our Nation's security or who sought to undermine our democratic system by seeking foreign intervention in the conduct of our elections.

I would say that the Founders could have little imagined that a single President might have done all of these things, except that the evidence has sadly proved this is exactly what this President has done. Hamilton, among others, seems to have predicted the rise of Donald Trump with a staggering prescience.

Having won freedom from a king, the drafters of our Constitution designed a government in which ambition was made to check ambition, in which no branch of government would predominate over another, and no man would be allowed to be above the law, including the President, especially the President, since with whom would the danger be greater than with the officer charged with being our Commander in Chief?

Over the course of the last 3 months, we have found incontrovertible evidence that President Trump abused his power by pressuring the newly elected President of Ukraine to announce an investigation into President Trump's political rival, Joe Biden, with the

hopes of defeating Mr. Biden in the 2020 Presidential election and enhancing his own prospects for reelection. He didn't even need the investigation to be undertaken, just simply announced to the public, the smear of his opponent would be enough.

To effectuate this scheme, President Trump withheld two official acts of vital importance to a nation at war with our adversary, Vladimir Putin's Russia. The President withheld a White House meeting that Ukraine desperately sought to bolster its standing on the world stage. And even more perniciously, President Trump suspended hundreds of millions of dollars of military aid approved by this Congress to coerce Ukraine into doing his electoral dirty work.

The President of the United States was willing to sacrifice our national security by withholding support for a critical strategic partner at war in order to improve his reelection prospects.

But for the courage of someone willing to blow the whistle, he would have gotten away with it. Instead, he got caught. He tried to cheat, and he got caught.

Now, this wasn't the first time. As a candidate in 2016, Donald Trump invited Russian interference in his presidential campaign, saying at a campaign rally, "Russia, if you're listening, I hope you're able to find the 30,000 emails that are missing," a clear invitation to hack Hillary Clinton's emails. Just 5 hours later Russian Government hackers tried to do exactly that.

What followed was an immense Russian hacking and dumping operation and a social media disinformation campaign designed to help elect Donald Trump. Not only did candidate Trump welcome that effort, but he made full use of it, building it into his campaign plan and his messaging strategy. And then he sought to cover it up.

This Russian effort to interfere in our elections didn't deter Donald Trump. It empowered him. The day after Special Counsel Bob Mueller testified before Congress about Russia's sweeping and systematic effort to influence the outcome of our last election, the day after President Trump believed that the investigation into his first electoral misconduct had come to an end, the President was back on the phone urging yet another country, this time Ukraine, to help him cheat in another election.

Three consecutive days in July tell so much of the story, three consecutive days in July of 2019.

July 24, the day that Special Counsel Mueller testified before Congress and President Trump thought he was finally in the clear.

July 25, the day that President Trump got on the phone with the Ukrainian President and, in the context of a discussion about military support for that embattled nation that the President had recently frozen, said, "I

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would like you to do us a favor, though," and asked Ukraine to do two investigations to help his reelection efforts in 2020. That was July 25.

And then we come to July 26, the day Gordon Sondland called President Trump on his cell phone from a restaurant in Ukraine. Gordon Sondland, not some anonymous "never Trump-er," but a million-dollar donor to the President's inauguration, and his hand-picked ambassador to the European Union.

□ 1600

What does President Trump ask Sondland? The day after this call, what does President Trump ask? What does the President want to know?

Did he ask about Ukraine's efforts to battle corruption? Of course not. Did he ask how the war with Russia was going? Not a chance.

On the phone, his voice loud enough for others to hear, President Trump asked Sondland, "So he is going to do the investigation?" And the answer was clear. Sondland assured Trump that the Ukrainian president was "going to do it" and that "he would do anything you ask him to."

Madam Speaker, I say to my colleagues, if that wasn't telling enough, in a conversation that followed, an American diplomat dining with Sondland asked if it was true that President Trump didn't give a blank about Ukraine.

Sondland agreed, saying, the President cared only about "big stuff."

The diplomat noted that there was big stuff in Ukraine, like a war with Russia.

And Sondland replied that the President cared only about big stuff that benefits him personally, like the "Biden investigation that Mr. Giuliani was pushing."

In that short conversation, we learned everything we need to know about the 45th President of the United States. He doesn't care about Ukraine or the impact on our national security caused by withholding military aid to that country fighting for its democratic life. All that matters to this President is what affects him personally: an investigation into his political rival and a chance to cheat in the next election.

As Professor Gerhardt testified before the Judiciary Committee 2 weeks ago: "If what we are talking about is not impeachable, then nothing is impeachable."

Even as this body uncovered the facts of this Ukraine scheme, even as we opened an impeachment inquiry, even as we gathered evidence, President Trump continued his efforts to seek foreign help in the next election.

"Well, I would think," he said from the White House lawn on October 3, "that, if they are being honest about it, they would start a major investigation into the Bidens. It is a very simple answer," he said.

And he made it clear it is an open invitation to other nations as well, say-

ing, "China should start an investigation into the Bidens," too.

President Trump sent his chief of staff to the White House podium, and he told the world that, of course, they had linked aid to investigations, and that we should just "get over it."

And even as these articles have made their way to this House floor, the President's personal attorney has continued pursuing these sham investigations on behalf of his client, the President.

The President and his men plot on. The danger persists. The risk is real. Our democracy is at peril.

But we are not without a remedy prescribed by the Founders for just these circumstances: impeachment.

The only question is this: Will we use it? Or have we fallen prey to another evil that the Founders forewarned? The excess of factionalism, the elevation of party over country.

Many of my colleagues appear to have made their choice: to protect the President, to enable him to be above the law, to empower this President to cheat again as long as it is in the service of their party and their power.

They have made their choice, despite this President and the White House stonewalling every subpoena, every request for witnesses and testimony from this co-equal branch of government.

They have made their choice, knowing that to allow this President to obstruct Congress will empower him and any other President that follows to be as corrupt, as negligent, or as abusive of the power of the Presidency as they choose.

They have made their choice, and I believe they will rue the day that they did.

When Donald J. Trump was sworn in on January 20, 2017, he repeated these words: "I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the Office of the President of the United States, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Has he lived up to that sacred obligation? Has he honored his oath of office? Has he preserved, protected, and defended the Constitution of the United States?

The uncontested evidence provides the simple yet tragic answer: He has not.

In America, no one is above the law.

Donald J. Trump sacrificed our national security in an effort to cheat in the next election, and for that and his continued efforts to seek foreign interference in our elections, he must be impeached.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It is nice to see you here, Chairman SCHIFF. It would have been nice to have either you or the whistleblower present in either the Judiciary or the Oversight hearings.

I think we are continuing to neglect the four key facts of this. The tran-

script is out. Everybody can read it. The American people can read it. There is no conditionality or aid discussed on that call. The two principals on that call, President Trump and President Zelensky, have said there was no pressure. President Zelensky has basically screamed from the rooftops on numerous occasions that there was no pressure, no bribery, no quid pro quo.

The Ukrainian Government got the money and didn't know the aid was being paused, and no investigation was announced and a meeting with the President took place, and the aid was released.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are once again reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH), my friend.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Madam Speaker, I come from a State that raises corn and cotton, cockleburs and Democrats.

Your frothy eloquence neither convinces nor satisfies me.

I am from the Show Me State. You have to show me.

The only thing that you all have shown so far is that you are about to impeach a duly elected President who has done nothing wrong.

Democrats are not impeaching the President because they are scared for our republic or that he has committed a crime; they are impeaching him because they fear the President's policies and how well they are working for the American people. Most of all, they fear the election, because they know they can't beat him.

In fact, one of my Democrat colleagues is quoted as stating: "I am concerned if we don't impeach him, he will get reelected."

This kind of rhetoric is disgusting.

Impeachment is not a political weapon, and any Member who votes for impeachment should be ashamed today.

You cannot undo the results of the 2016 election simply because your flawed candidate did not win.

And I thank God she didn't.

Over the last 3 years, unemployment has dropped to the lowest point in generations, we are seeing better trade agreements with our trading partners, and record numbers of taxes and regulations that stifle economic growth have been rolled back, all thanks to President Trump's leadership and commitment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 15 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Madam Speaker, this is very important. We shouldn't be surprised. Democrats have introduced Articles of Impeachment against five out of our last six Republican Presidents.

They are the party of impeachment. The Democrats are the party of impeachment.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore. Once again, Members are admonished to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL).

Mr. SWALWELL. Madam Speaker, Donald Trump is using the Presidency to put his own personal gain above our national interests.

He is using our taxpayer dollars and foreign interference to cheat the next election, and it jeopardizes our national security and integrity at the ballot box.

Not a single fact in this case is seriously in dispute.

I ask my colleagues: Who sent his personal lawyer to Ukraine to investigate his political rival? Who fired an ambassador who stood in his way? Who conditioned a White House meeting on investigations that only personally benefited him and not the national interest? Who cut off military aid to an ally that desperately needed it? Who pressured President Zelensky to conduct those investigations? Who stood on the White House lawn and asked not only Ukraine to investigate his rival, but also China? Who has buried evidence and blocked witnesses from testifying? And who is still today sending his personal lawyer to Ukraine to dig up dirt and rig an election?

The answer to all of these questions is President Donald Trump.

This is a crime spree in progress, but we know how to stop it: courage.

Yes, this investigation has shown us how corrupt President Trump is, but it has also shown us the courage of some of our fellow patriotic civil servants, who have used their courage to not only stand up around the world to extinguish corruption, but also to extinguish it at the White House.

How so? Well, my colleagues argue: "No harm, no foul. Ukraine got the aid."

Wrong. Trump cheated. Patriots caught him. Then Ukraine got the aid. Standing up, it turns out, works.

Now is the time to summon the courage of those patriots and to summon the courage that they showed against Donald Trump.

If they can risk their careers, even their lives, to do the right thing, can my colleagues also do the same?

After all, more is on the line than just military aid to an ally.

Our national security is at stake. Stand up for that.

Our election integrity is at stake. Stand up for that.

Our Constitution is at stake. Stand up for that.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time remains on each side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from North Dakota has 1 hour, 23 1/4 minutes remaining. The gentleman from California has 1 hour, 18 minutes remaining.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the detail.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 1/2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, this is a sad day for America. This partisan impeachment sham seeks to disenfranchise 63 million American voters.

I want to use my time to call on this Chamber, for Members to rise and observe a moment of silent reflection, to give every Member here the chance to pause for a moment and remember the voices of the 63 million American voters the Democrats today are wanting to silence.

Madam Speaker, disenfranchising 63 million voters gives me 63 million reasons to vote "no", and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL).

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Madam Speaker, it is with a heavy heart and a profound sense of the gravity of this moment that I rise today in support of the impeachment of President Donald J. Trump.

To be clear, I did not run for Congress to impeach a President.

I come to work every day on behalf of the hardworking people of Alabama's Seventh Congressional District.

But the facts are uncontested. The truth is clear. And I have been left no other choice.

As a member of the Intelligence Committee, I sat in shock, in awe as witness after witness came forward, their stories painting a clear picture of the President's abuse of power.

□ 1615

They testified that the President had direct orders to withhold vital military aid for Ukraine and a White House visit in exchange for investigations into the Bidens.

To date, all the military aid has not been released, and there still has been no White House meeting.

The bottom line is clear. President Trump endangered our national security and the very essence of our democracy for his own personal political gain. Then, President Trump sought to cover it up by subverting the oversight authority of Congress.

If Presidential abuse of power is left unchecked, we all become accomplices when he does it again. This cannot become the new normal, not on our watch.

While President Trump's indefensible actions set in motion this event, my vote for impeachment today is not about the President. It is about my oath to defend and protect the Constitution of this United States of America and to make sure that I uphold and honor the sacred trust that my constituents gave me.

President Trump has betrayed his oath of office. Let us not betray ours.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I am back. I also noticed some changes around here since I left.

I notice I have a new manager on the other side, who, as I came back in from getting a quick bite, I noticed gave an eloquent defense of his side of this story that we are telling. I just wish we could have had that same eloquent defense before the Judiciary Committee, where he could have been asked questions instead of just giving one side.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 1/2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLER).

Mr. KELLER. Madam Speaker, today will forever be remembered as a stain on our Republic.

These impeachment proceedings are not based upon facts, evidence, reason, or any inappropriate or impeachable actions by our President. Instead, the actions being taken by those favoring impeachment are a product of their disdain for President Trump, his America First agenda, and, particularly, a disdain by the other party for the 63 million Americans who elected him as President.

Again, these Articles of Impeachment are not based on any facts but, rather, on hearsay, presumptions, innuendo, and feelings, feelings by Democrats and career bureaucrats who have wanted President Trump removed from office since the day he was elected.

In defense of the Constitution, I urge all Members to oppose both Articles of Impeachment. It is unclear who will judge those voting for impeachment today more harshly: history or voters.

I want Democrats voting for impeachment today to know that I will be praying for them from the Gospel of Luke, the 23rd chapter, verse 34: "And Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'"

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, my colleagues have referred to patriotic Americans who testified before the Intelligence Committee as career bureaucrats. I want to remind people just who those career bureaucrats are.

They are people like Ambassador Bill Taylor, who has served this country for decades. He graduated top in his class at West Point, served during Vietnam in combat, and earned a Bronze Star.

They are people like Colonel Vindman, who served in Iraq and earned a Purple Heart.

They are people like Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch, who served in dangerous places all over the world, one of the most respected of all of our Foreign Service officers.

These are the people who my colleagues would pejoratively label as "career bureaucrats." Why? Because they have the courage to do their lawful duty, to answer a subpoena and to come and testify. For this, they are called career bureaucrats. Well, we should have more career bureaucrats of that caliber.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA).

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise with a heavy heart. The two most difficult votes any Member of Congress

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ever has to cast is to vote to go to war or to impeach. Today, I will vote for the Articles of Impeachment.

Over the last few months, I have listened carefully to my constituents. I have weighed all the available information to determine whether or not the President committed any wrongdoing. There are disturbing facts from this administration that informed my decision, including the President's own words.

His handpicked Ambassador to the European Union testified there was a quid pro quo to withhold aid to Ukraine for an investigation of former Vice President Biden, and that everyone was in the loop.

His own National Security Advisor, John Bolton, said he wanted nothing to do with this drug deal, as he called it. Then, the President openly acknowledged that China and Ukraine should investigate Mr. Biden.

There is much more evidence pointing to the President violating his own oath of office. I have not made this decision lightly, but I must uphold my own oath of office because I believe the President has failed to uphold his oath of office.

The weight of history, my belief in the Constitution of the United States, and our own national security interests have led me to this vote.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I appreciate anybody who would come and give testimony. But it is interesting to see that the same chairman who just spoke eloquently about those who testified would have to actually dismiss completely almost anything by Mr. Volker or Mr. Morrison.

But, again, I will say, at least they had the ability and the willingness to come and testify, unlike the chairman, who wrote a report, sent it to the Judiciary Committee, and didn't.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GRANGER).

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the politically driven Articles of Impeachment that have been brought before the House of Representatives today.

For the past 3 years, Democrats have been unable to accept the voters' choice to elect President Trump. They have used any and all undemocratic and unfair means necessary to try and remove him from office.

My vote today is not only against illegitimate impeachment of our President, which began not with facts but with a foregone conclusion; it is against House Democrats making a mockery of due process and the rule of law.

This will not go anywhere in the Senate, so all that Democrats have accomplished is postponing the important work the American people sent their elected officials to Washington to do.

This endless crusade of Democrats to remove the duly elected President of the United States has put partisan poli-

tics above the issues that Americans face today. It is time Democrats stop playing partisan games that hurt hard-working taxpayers. It is time for the American people to be Congress' priority again.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting "no."

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I am more than delighted to refer to the testimony of Ambassador Volker and Mr. Morrison—Ambassador Volker, who acknowledged that, in retrospect, he should have recognized that when they were calling for investigations of Burisma, it really meant the Bidens, and that to ask a foreign leader to investigate a political rival was wrong.

I am happy to refer to his testimony as well as Mr. Morrison, who went to the National Security Council lawyer immediately after he listened to that telephone call and who also testified that he was informed by Ambassador Sondland that the President wanted Zelensky "in a public box," that he wanted him to be forced to go to the mike and announce these sham investigations.

I am happy to refer to their testimony as well.

Madam Speaker, I am now happy to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER).

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, my father fled Nazi Germany for America because he saw what happened when a despot became untethered. He fled because he believed in democracy, the rule of law, and the right to vote. Before he died, he asked to be buried in a simple pine box with an American flag to symbolize his love of this country.

Today, we are called upon to do our duty out of love of country. The President stands accused. We must judge him as we judge any of our fellow citizens: on the facts and on the law.

The facts show that the President's North Star is Russia, not the Constitution.

There is no question that President Trump delayed military aid to Ukraine, our ally, as they were under attack by Russia, our adversary.

There is no question the President withheld a meeting with President Zelensky at the White House, giving Russia the upper hand in peace negotiations with Ukraine.

There is no question that President Trump promoted the Russian hoax that Ukraine attacked our election in 2016, a canard that has been proven to be a lie, a Russian lie.

The only question is his motive. The fact is, his conduct and crimes are reprehensible and unquestionably impeachable.

When I vote today, my father's legacy is deep, very deep, within me. My father loved America, and I love America. That is why I will vote to impeach the President of the United States.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I see how this is playing out. Instead of coming to testify for 7 or 8 hours and answering all questions, we are going to do it in potshots.

Again, let's talk about Mr. Volker. He never testified that anyone wanted to investigate Vice President Biden. What he did testify to, which was left out, was that they wanted to, if the Ukrainians are doing bad things, place Hunter Biden on the board of Burisma to avoid anything that needed to be investigated and found out.

Let's at least tell the story. Again, they had plenty of time to do this in an actual hearing, not here. This is what they want. This is what they have been wanting. The majority has played this the whole time. We will play this out as long as they want to. It would have been better, though, if they actually had a case, to have made it in the proper setting instead of not coming and not testifying.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER).

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, it is very interesting to hear the socialistic left Democrats that have a newfound appreciation for the Constitution and our Founders' principles. Would that those same socialists, Madam Speaker, afford unborn babies the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, as well.

Madam Speaker, history tells us, in the first three impeachments in this country, crimes were involved. Johnson violated a law that Congress had just passed, over his veto. Nixon was involved in a coverup in Watergate. Clinton lied to a Federal grand jury and expected Monica Lewinsky to falsify an affidavit. Crimes, all instances of crimes.

Now come the socialistic-leaning D's, in my opinion, Madam Speaker, ostensibly reading the President's mind, knowing what his intent was, and dictating to us and the witnesses that were in the hearings what his mindset was. Quite frankly, they didn't believe that he had the right to be in charge of foreign policy.

We heard career bureaucrats, career diplomats, whatever you want to call them. They get to ride the bus; they don't get to drive the bus. The President is in charge of foreign policy.

They said that the President had the audacity to use his judgment on foreign policy instead of theirs. Opinions. Opinions. Suppositions, indeed. The very swamp he is draining is objecting. Who knew?

Today, now, during the earlier rule debate, comes the floor manager of the other side from Massachusetts citing not facts, nor fact witnesses, but newspaper articles from CNN and USA Today, opinions and editorials.

Unbelievable. Madam Speaker. Americans are watching. The D's are delusional, deleterious, delirious, and in deep yogurt.

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Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I would just remind my colleagues that Ambassador Volker said that the attacks on Joe Biden were meritless, and he tried to persuade Mr. Giuliani that there was no factual support for them. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. Lewis).

Mr. LEWIS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. Madam Speaker, I rise with a heavy heart to support this resolution.

When we came to Washington in 1961 to go on the Freedom Rides, we chose that day. When we came here on August 28, 1963, for the March on Washington, it was joyful. We met with a young President, President John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

When we came here on August 6, 1965, for the signing of the Voting Rights Act, we were excited and hopeful. We met with President Lyndon Johnson.

But today, this day, we didn't ask for this. This is a sad day. It is not a day of joy.

Our Nation is founded on the principle that we do not have kings. We have Presidents, and the Constitution is our compass.

When you see something that is not right, not just, not fair, you have a moral obligation to say something, to do something. Our children and their children will ask us: What did you do? What did you say?

For some, this vote may be hard. But we have a mission and a mandate to be on the right side of history.

□ 1630

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I always like to be polite, and I do appreciate the gentleman from California confirming everything I just said in my statement a moment ago.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. WENSTRUP).

Mr. WENSTRUP. Madam Speaker, since 2016, America has seen a pattern of failed and disproven attacks and allegations against President Trump.

Today is the fourth impeachment-related vote since President Trump took office. It is yet another attempt to reach their predetermined conclusion of impeachment, a conclusion built on political bias, accusations, and innuendo. These repetitive and false allegations reveal a political obsession disguised as some kind of righteous oversight.

When they didn't win at the ballot box, they pursued a Russian collusion narrative that Special Counsel Robert Mueller had to waste time and taxpayer dollars to prove false.

When the Russian collusion malicious deception didn't work, Madam Speaker, Democrats sought a new path forward to impeach President Trump: They created a made-for-TV set of hearings complete with witness auditions held in the basement of the Capitol.

Despite all of their efforts, the charges the House considers today lack

evidence to support them. There wasn't one witness who said a crime or impeachable offense was committed.

Madam Speaker, I remind my colleagues, no crime, no impeachable offense. That is a pretty good defense if you ask me.

I will work diligently to further reveal the truths and further reveal the abuses of power. Madam Speaker, that Democrats paid for and enacted during the last 3 years, abuses of power from the other side of the aisle within this body and within our FBI. Americans deserve the truth.

All in all, history will be remembered today as the political impeachment that set the precedent for Presidents to be impeached every time there is a divided government.

I oppose the articles before us today, and I yield to the other side and their superior imaginations.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. QUIGLEY).

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, indeed, we are here today because the President of the United States abused his power and betrayed his oath of office. He laid siege to the foundation of our democracy: the electoral process.

These actions have posed a direct threat to the freedom and fairness of the upcoming 2020 election.

The very day after Robert Mueller testified that Russia had systematically and relentlessly attacked the 2016 election, the President picked up the phone and made his now infamous July 25 call to Ukrainian President Zelensky, asking President Zelensky on that call to "do us a favor though," and announced investigations into his political rival, Joe Biden.

We have since learned from numerous National Security Council and State Department officials that the President did not even expect Ukraine to open these investigations; rather, he just wanted them announced so he could smear his rival. Rather than trusting the voters to decide who should hold the White House, he sought the aid of a foreign country to tip the scales in his favor—again.

After Russia's unprecedented interference, a dark cloud hung over the 2016 election; and instead of leading the American people out from under the cloud, the President, instead, emboldened by perceived lack of consequence, attempted to pressure Zelensky to interfere in the 2020 election.

After a courageous whistleblower came forward and warned Congress and the public about the President's scheme, the President stood on the White House lawn in front of TV cameras broadcasting around the world and called for China to interfere, too.

Some of my colleagues have asked: Why not wait? Why are we proceeding? That is very simple. Because nothing could be more urgent. We are on the precipice of the 2020 election, and Congress has ultimate responsibility to

protect the sacred equalizer: our right to vote.

To defend the integrity of our elections and to fulfill our duty to the Constitution, I will be voting in favor of impeachment today.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN).

Mr. LAMBORN. Madam Speaker, anyone watching this impeachment sound and fury, signifying nothing, should look out for three misrepresentations the Democrats are making:

One, Trump endangered national security.

No. The 55-day delay did not stop Ukrainians from defending themselves. Trump actually gave them lethal aid, which Obama never did. During Obama's negligence, Democrats said nothing.

Two, Trump is not above the law. No one is.

But why don't the Democrats tell us what law he broke? They can't, because he didn't break any. So Democrats have resorted to two vague and subjective articles: abuse of power and obstruction of justice.

And, three, the evidence is not in dispute.

No, the evidence is very much in dispute. In fact, for every statement Democrats cherry-pick to indict Trump, more statements back up the President.

In reality, this is nothing but a partisan ploy by Democrats to overturn an election. But this charade will fail, and the Senate will exonerate Trump, and everyone knows it.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CASTRO).

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Madam Speaker, as my colleagues have said, the evidence of the President's abuse of power and obstruction of Congress is uncontested. But let's outline a few key events involving the nearly \$400 million in military aid that was held up by President Trump and for President Trump despite congressional mandate.

The summer of 2019 was a summer of shame at the White House.

On July 3, the White House first blocked security assistance money for Ukraine with no explanation.

On July 10, Gordon Sondland states, during a White House meeting with Ukrainian officials, that they will get a White House meeting only after announcing an investigation into President Trump's political rival.

On July 18, a White House staffer announces the freeze on Ukrainian aid, per direct Presidential order.

And just one day after Robert Mueller's testimony before Congress, President Trump makes a now infamous phone call with Zelensky asking him to investigate the Bidens.

Then, things start to fall apart. The White House learns that a whistleblower has reported President Trump's phone call with President Zelensky in a complaint.

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On September 9, Congress starts to investigate the President's actions, and then the jig is up.

On September 11, the aid is suddenly released without explanation—over 2 months later.

When you read the call transcript and follow the timeline I have laid out, guilty is guilty. Nothing changed during that time regarding the President's supposed concerns over corruption.

So let's be clear. The military aid was released because the President got caught.

But getting caught doesn't get you off the hook.

And I ask my colleagues: Is attempted murder a crime? Is attempted robbery a crime? Is attempted extortion and bribery by a President a crime? Yes, it is.

The only question now is whether we will find the moral courage to stand up for our country and impeach the President of the United States.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. PALMER).

Mr. PALMER. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the impeachment of President Trump.

Today is a day that diminishes the reputation and stature of the United States House of Representatives, a day I never dreamed I would see.

Today, my Democratic colleagues seek to overturn an election by forcing a vote that will forever be a stain on this Congress. They are not just voting to impeach President Trump; my colleagues are voting to impeach the judgment of every person who voted for him and the process by which we elect a President and by which we will govern our Nation.

My Democratic colleagues claim the Russians influenced the outcome of the 2016 election, but based on their corrupt impeachment proceedings, it appears my colleagues have been influenced by how Russia conducts political trials: no real evidence, no real crime, no due process, and no justice.

The Democrats have failed to show any legitimate justification for the impeachment of President Trump. When they could not find real evidence, they made it up and called it a parity.

They conducted most of the hearings in secret.

They instructed witnesses not to answer Republican Members' questions, and they denied Republicans the right to call witnesses, making it absolutely clear their objective was, from the beginning, pathetically political.

We all understand that elections have consequences.

To all of my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans alike, this day will surely have consequences, as well, as we descend into more disrespect, distrust, and even contempt that will eventually be destructive of this Chamber and, I fear, eventually, our Republic.

I urge all Members to vote "no" on impeachment.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, very quickly, my colleagues have made repeated reference to some secret proceedings in some secret star chamber. This is apparently what they call depositions.

I remind my colleagues that, when they were in the majority, they conducted depositions, but they were different in this respect.

In the depositions we conducted in the Intelligence Committee, over 100 Members were able to participate. That is how secret they were. We revealed all of the transcripts of those depositions.

The repetition of this falsehood does not make it true; it only makes the falsehood that much more deliberate.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. AMASH).

Mr. AMASH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of these Articles of Impeachment. I come to this floor not as a Democrat, not as a Republican, but as an American who cares deeply about the Constitution, the rule of law, and the rights of the people.

Under our system of government, impeachment is not about policy disagreements or ineffective governance, nor is it about criminality based on statutes that did not exist at the time our Constitution was written. Impeachment is about maintaining the integrity of the Office of the Presidency and ensuring that Executive power is directed toward proper ends in accordance with the law.

The Constitution grants the House "the sole power of impeachment" and the Senate "the sole power to try all impeachments."

We in the House are empowered to charge impeachable conduct. The Constitution describes such conduct as "high crimes and misdemeanors," but because it pertains to high office and relates to the misuse of that office, we need not rely on any other branch or body to endorse our determinations. We have "the sole power of impeachment."

In Federalist No. 65, Alexander Hamilton wrote that high crimes and misdemeanors "are those offenses which proceed from the misconduct of public men, or, in other words, from the abuse or violation of some public trust. They are of a nature which may with peculiar propriety be denominated political, as they relate chiefly to injuries done immediately to the society itself."

President Donald J. Trump has abused and violated the public trust by using his high office to solicit the aid of a foreign power, not for the benefit of the United States of America, but, instead, for his personal and political gain. His actions reflect precisely the type of conduct the Framers of the Constitution intended to remedy through the power of impeachment, and it is our duty to impeach him.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, undoubtedly, H. Res. 660 does not matter to the majority, in par-

ticular, the manager of this bill, because the inspector general, his transcript has not been released. There have not been documents that were transferred that were supposed to be transferred to the White House, and we are still not sure we got everything we are supposed to get in the Judiciary Committee.

I guess when you want to be transparent and open, you hold it in a SCIF and do whatever you want.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEUBE).

Mr. STEUBE. Madam Speaker, this impeachment charade did not start with the whistleblower complaint. The campaign to impeach a duly elected President and overturn the will of 63 million Americans started 19 minutes after the President took the oath of office.

Nineteen minutes after the inauguration, The Washington Post published a story, headline, "The Campaign to Impeach President Trump Has Begun."

The first day of this Congress, on day one, a Democratic member of my class called for the impeachment of the President long before the call to Ukraine. Then it was the Russia collusion hoax, then obstruction of justice, then bribery, then quid pro quo—none of which are included in these articles before us today.

The first Article of Impeachment crafted as a fiction is not an enumerated basis in the Constitution for impeachment. The Democratic majority would have you believe that abuse of power is a high crime or misdemeanor. It is not. It is an opinion. It is not even a crime that can be charged in a court of law.

Unlike Presidents Nixon and Clinton who were tried for actual crimes, this President is being impeached on vague phrases that appear nowhere in our Constitution.

The second article, obstruction of Congress, again, doesn't exist in the Constitution as a basis for impeachment and is attempting to impeach a duly elected President for asserting constitutionally based privileges that have been asserted on a bipartisan basis by administrations of both political parties throughout our Nation's history.

This House is impeaching a President over a phone call to another world leader, a few lines in a phone transcript that have been completely and utterly misrepresented by the majority. The process that ensued was anything but open, transparent, bipartisan, or equitable.

Abandoning all past historical due process afforded the minority and the President, the Democrats ran a partisan investigation, refusing rights of the minority, refusing the ability of the President's counsel to call witnesses, refusing to allow the President's counsel to cross-examine fact witnesses, and refusing a minority hearing day, just to name a few.

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The majority waves around a report drafted that the Democratic staff concocted as a matter of fact. When they needed backup for their approach, they paraded out liberal professors with animus against the President who gave them license to impeach the President for any reason they wish.

House Democrats are making themselves kings in a manner far worse and more obvious than what they are accusing the President of doing. The only abuse of power here is by the Democratic-led Congress.

□ 1645

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. CISNEROS).

Mr. CISNEROS. Madam Speaker, when I was 18 years old, I joined the United States Navy and took the oath to support and defend the Constitution for the first time. I took that oath again earlier this year as a Member of Congress, and every day I work hard to live by that oath and give the 39th District the representation it deserves.

I have always maintained that impeachment is a serious undertaking and must be done with incredible care. When the unprecedented allegations against the President and his interactions with Ukraine were first reported, I felt that it was Congress' duty to investigate and find out the truth.

Now the facts are before Congress and the American people. The President betrayed his oath to support and defend the Constitution by attempting to undermine the integrity of our election for his own personal benefit. He asked a foreign government to investigate a political rival and endangered our national security by withholding military aid to an ally.

For me, it is not about personal politics or party affiliation. It is about upholding my oath to put our country and our Constitution first and protect our national security. This is why I will vote to move forward with the impeachment of the President. I hope all my colleagues will join me in recognizing this grave threat and stand up to this administration in defense of our country and our Constitution.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. KUSTOFF).

Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, going back almost 3 years to when the President was sworn into office, we have seen some Members on the other side of the aisle pledging and promising to impeach President Trump. Prior to the start of this inquiry, Speaker PELOSI claimed that the impeachment must be compelling, overwhelming, and bipartisan. The impeachment inquiry was announced less than 3 months ago, and what we know is that the process has been fast, faulty, and flawed.

What we have witnessed since September 24, when the inquiry was announced, is that the evidence we have seen is not compelling, it is not over-

whelming, and the process is undoubtedly and unquestionably not bipartisan.

I am viewing this through the lens of a former United States Attorney, and as we take this vote, here is the bottom line for the American people: there was no bribery, there was no extortion, there was no quid pro quo, and there were no high crimes and misdemeanors committed by the President.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. JUDY CHU).

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Madam Speaker, we know that President Trump withheld needed military aid to Ukraine. We know that he used it to demand Ukraine interfere in the 2020 election for his own benefit, and we know that Ukraine knew. None of these facts have been disputed. Instead, the White House has tried to hide the truth. But the President is not above the law. Nobody is.

Corruption and obstruction; the President is guilty of both. The blatant abuse of power was made clear from over 100 hours of testimony before three committees and was clear in the call summary released by the White House. The obstruction has been made clear by the President's refusal to cooperate at every turn, even when ordered by a court.

Setting a precedent that any President can abuse their power to interfere in our elections is an existential threat to our democracy. It is also a betrayal of the oath of office and the Constitution.

Therefore, in fulfillment of my own oath of office, it is with solemn purpose today that I vote to impeach President Donald Trump.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GIBBS).

Mr. GIBBS. Madam Speaker, Democrats started with quid pro quo. That didn't work so well. Then it was bribery and extortion. Then they brought the witnesses in, and not one could answer if they saw any evidence of bribery, extortion, or any crime when questioned. It was just silence. Then the witnesses testified they heard this from so-and-so. When the Democrats brought their star witness in, Ambassador Sondland, when asked, he said: I presumed the aid was held up.

I presumed?

Testimony was all hearsay, conjecture, and assumptions. So now it is abuse of power with no underlying crime, which is opinion. Abuse of power to the Democrats is they don't like his policies, or he treated a reporter harshly.

Obstruction of Congress: there are three coequal branches of government. When the executive branch and the legislative branch have an impasse, that is when the judicial branch intervenes. They didn't do that. The Democrats didn't take that route.

Every President, including George Washington, could have been im-

peached based on these factless articles. There is no crime, and there is no victim as Ukraine received their aid before the December 30 deadline and no witnesses who witnessed anything.

This isn't about the rule of law. It is politics at its worst. It is disgraceful. It is time to end the charade and scam on the American people.

Madam Speaker, I urge everybody to vote "no" on these Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I am happy to remind my colleagues of Ambassador Sondland's testimony.

He posed the question: Was there a quid pro quo?

The answer is yes.

When he was asked about a quid pro quo involving the military aid, he said it was as clear as two plus two equals four.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, my adult son, Ian Schakowsky, I will always credit for my decision last June to support the impeachment inquiry. It had never been my goal to impeach a President, but Ian made such a compelling case. He reminded me of the oath I have taken 11 times now to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. He said: Mom, this is not about politics, and this is not about party.

Pushing back against my arguments, he said: This has nothing to do with the final outcome. It is about doing the right thing, even if others don't.

He made me see that it was about my legacy, my modest place in history.

I want to thank my son for helping me do the right thing today to vote to impeach the President of the United States, Donald Trump, because no American is above the law.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I also would like to remind the gentleman from California that Mr. Sondland also said he had no direct evidence; he presumed that that was going on.

I guess we are back to presumption again.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FLORES).

Mr. FLORES. Madam Speaker, on March 11 of this year, the Speaker of the House said the following in an interview with *The Washington Post*: "Impeachment is so divisive to the country that unless there's something so compelling and overwhelming and bipartisan, I don't think we should go down that path, because it divides the country."

I think most Americans would agree with that statement because it sounds thoughtful and reasonable.

So here we are today to vote on the Articles of Impeachment.

How did the majority party do in meeting the objectives set forth by the Speaker?

Here are the answers: First, the only compelling attribute about this sham

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is the lengths the majority has gone to to appease the radical, Socialist wing of their party.

Second, the only overwhelming feature about this sham is the abuse of power by the majority and the reckless disregard for fairness by the majority throughout this entire circus.

Finally, the only bipartisan activity related to this sham will be the votes against these flimsy Articles of Impeachment.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in opposing these deplorable Articles of Impeachment and to demand that the House get back to working on the priorities that hardworking American families care about the most.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RUPPERSBERGER).

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Madam Speaker, I spent 12 years on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, including 4 as ranking member. My bipartisan cooperation with the Republican chairman was widely recognized. When it comes to national security, there is no room for bipartisan politics.

All 47 witnesses—mostly Trump appointees—told the same story during the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence hearings, each testifying that our Commander in Chief jeopardized American national security for the sake of his reelection. The President held hostage military aid for the fight against a common enemy, Russia.

He willfully obstructed Congress' constitutionally prescribed impeachment powers.

Over the last 2 years, I resisted calls to begin impeachment proceedings, and I resent those who say this is about reversing the election. This isn't about whether or not you like Trump. It is about upholding our Constitution.

Allowing this conduct to go unquestioned sets a dangerous precedent and permanently damages our system of checks and balances. No one is above the law. President Trump's actions are a clear threat to our national security and democracy. We must uphold our oath of office and support these articles.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG).

Mr. WALBERG. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to these baseless Articles of Impeachment.

Our Founding Fathers never intended impeachment to be a one-sided political weapon. Sadly, the majority has reduced this serious constitutional action to a purely partisan tactic to take down President Trump.

History will not be kind to the vote today. It will be remembered as a rushed process that lacks credibility or transparency with a predetermined outcome that puts a premium on political theater instead of facts. By any objective standard, the Democrats' impeachment case is the thinnest imag-

inable. There is no impeachable offense before us today. It is a complete and total sham.

I close, not by quoting a President from the past, but rather from the duly elected President Donald Trump: "You are the ones interfering in America's election. You are the ones subverting America's democracy. You are the ones obstructing justice. You are the ones bringing pain and suffering to our Republic for your own selfish personal, political, and partisan gain." These are hard words I know, but that is the sad reality of this entire process.

I will proudly vote "no" today, a vote that upholds our Constitution, defends our President, and preserves the pillars of our Nation's democracy.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRUJALVA).

Mr. GRUJALVA. Madam Speaker, I will vote in favor of impeachment today. The facts are irrefutable, and the ongoing obstruction and coverup is shameful.

My parents came here as immigrants, and I am proud to live in a nation that rewarded their hard work by providing a better future for my sisters and me. As a first generation American and now a Member of Congress, a story like mine is only made possible by a nation that upholds the rule of law and truly lives out the values enshrined in our Constitution.

Mona and I are blessed with three wonderful daughters and five grandkids. Because of this living legacy and the legacy I intend to pass on to my grandchildren, my vote today is rooted in protecting their future.

The underpinnings for impeachment are real and historic. Trump has perverted the rule of law, abused his power, and engaged in a coverup. No amount of misdirection, lies, disinformation, tantrums, and cries of victimization by Trump and others can undo the abuse of power and obstruction of Congress that remain clear and present. The President leaves us no choice but to vote to impeach, so that we can protect our democracy and correct the damage that is already done.

I will vote in favor of the impeachment of Donald J. Trump, not as a partisan act but as a serious, urgent, and necessary one.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY).

Mr. BRADY. Madam Speaker, 21 years ago this week, I spoke here on impeachment. Sadly, history will not treat Democrats well. They will forever be remembered as the Senator Joe McCarthys of our time, so blinded by their hatred of President Trump that they abandoned American rights of due process, fairness, and just decency.

Reminiscent of Joe McCarthy, they assaulted the Constitution, took glee in secret hearings, blocked evidence, and switched charges like rogue prosecutors. Ultimately, they chose abuse of power because they practice it so well.

President Trump committed no crime or impeachable offense—none. His legacy won't be stained; Democrats' will. We will look back at these days in shame because Trump haters in Congress, like red haters of the past, are willing to plunge America into darkness for raw political gain.

This impeachment betrays the Nation, the Constitution, and the American people. I vote "no."

□ 1700

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT).

Mr. DOGGETT. Tyranny rarely appears full borne. It arises, it encroaches as freedom ebbs. Our Nation's great Founders sought to protect us from tyranny with a carefully crafted system of checks and balances.

But now along comes a President who actually says he is constitutionally empowered to do whatever he wants, that he can neither be prosecuted nor even investigated for any crime, and that he can totally ignore any impeachment proceeding of which he disapproves.

These are the claims of a wannabe tyrant who has extolled the virtues of tyrants and autocrats from Manila to Moscow.

To advance tyranny, he adopts an open-border policy inviting foreigners to come into our country and intrude in our elections. Foreign nations have their own agendas, especially adversaries like Russia and China.

American citizens should be the only ones determining the fate of America. If the President continues demanding more foreign interference, we will never have truly free elections, and we will not be free.

We act today, recognizing the solemn responsibility to safeguard our security and Constitution. We pledge allegiance to the flag and the Republic for which it stands, not to one man who would be king.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, before I call my next speaker, may I ask the time remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia has 1 hour and 3¼ minutes remaining. The gentleman from California has 57¼ minutes remaining.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN).

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend from Georgia for his great work in dealing with this very sad day in our country.

Madam Speaker, today, for the third time in our Nation's history, a President will be impeached. This will be, however, the first time impeachment has been entirely partisan and without merit. This charade is not because President Trump is guilty of a high crime or misdemeanor but because one political party doesn't like him or his policies of America First.

Fact one: We have a divided government, and House Democrats are at war with the executive branch.

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Fact two: They have been planning for this day since President Trump took office.

Fact three: They accused the President first and have spent months looking for a crime.

Fact four: No evidence has been presented of an impeachable offense.

During one of the partisan hearings, a Member of this body asked: If President Trump had evidence of his innocence, why didn't he bring it forward? The Democrats want Americans to believe that our President is guilty until he proves himself innocent. This whole process is unconstitutional.

Today, we have heard both sides, but we need to get the truth. The truth is, the decision of who should be our President should be made by the American people, not Speaker PELOSI, ADAM SCHIFF, and House Democrats.

Mr. SCHIFF, Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL).

MR. ENGEL, Madam Speaker, I thank my friend.

As chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, I have to say that this is a sad day. No one is gleeful that the President's actions have brought us to this point.

But when you boil it down, we are here today because the President abused the power of his office to help his chances at reelection. He used the enormous weight of the Presidency and American foreign policy to push a foreign government to smear a political rival. And he got caught.

Why is this conduct so serious? Why has the President's behavior pushed the House of Representatives to exercise one of its most consequential constitutional responsibilities? Because corrupting an American election, particularly in cahoots with a foreign power, means corrupting American democracy.

Our elections are at the heart of our democracy, the foundation of what makes our system of government great, our Republic, if we can keep it, as Benjamin Franklin once said.

If our elections aren't fair, then our Republic cannot stand. Anyone who tries to fix an election is taking away the power of the American people to choose their leaders. If it happens at any level of government, it is toxic to our democracy, and this came from the highest level.

In this case, it is even more serious, because what was the President willing to give up for this advantage? What price was he willing to pay? The price was our national security.

When the President devised a shadow foreign policy that undermined our diplomacy and diplomats; when he held back assistance for Ukraine, which was embroiled in a war against Russia; when he pressured a foreign government to interfere in our elections, again, he sacrificed our security. He shook the faith of a loyal ally. He played right into the hands of Vladimir Putin. He weakened our country all be-

cause he thought it might help his reelection bid.

Only the President has that power to corrupt our foreign policy for political gain. The moment he chose to do so, the moment he undermined our security in this scheme to undermine our democracy, whether he succeeded or not—and thank God, he did not—at that moment, it became an abuse of power.

A President who abuses his power for personal gain is exactly what the Framers feared. It is why impeachment is in the Constitution.

We need to pass these articles. The President's actions have left us no choice. He cannot be allowed to undermine our democracy and tear apart the fabric that holds our country together.

Madam Speaker, I will vote for impeachment.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ), who is a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. GAETZ, Madam Speaker, this is not about Ukraine. It is about power. Donald Trump has it, and House Democrats want it.

With no crime, no victim, no evidence, no proof, no agenda for America, this impeachment charade marches on, following no rules and adhering to no sense of honor.

The American people aren't fooled by dirty tricks. Voters will never forget that Democrats have been triggered into impeaching the President because they don't like him and they don't like us.

Those who vote "yes" on today's Articles of Impeachment must carry the heavy burden of shame and guilt for as long as they serve in Congress, which won't be long because the American people will remember in November.

Democrats would rather trip the President just to see him stumble than see America succeed. They would rather impeach the President than work together for the common good of our country and our citizens.

Democrats may have won the House in 2018, but they haven't forgiven Donald Trump for having the audacity to win the Presidency.

And they haven't forgiven you, the American people, for voting for him.

The day before she was sworn in to Congress, one Member of the body said she promised to impeach the motherfucker.

She is not alone. Trump's impeachment was plotted and planned before the ink was even dry on his election certificate and, possibly, before some Democrats could even point to Ukraine on a map.

In seeking the chairmanship of the Committee on the Judiciary, the gentleman from New York said that he was the strongest Member to lead a potential impeachment.

Democrats may not have known why they were going to impeach the President, but they knew it was an inevitability, facts be damned.

This impeachment is a slap in the face to the millions of Americans who voted for President Trump. The same Americans who Democrats in Washington have mocked as smelly Walmart shoppers and "deplorables."

Madam Speaker, this impeachment isn't legitimate. It is the radical left's insurance policy. But we have an insurance policy, too. It is the next election, and we intend to win it.

Mr. SCHIFF, Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH).

Mr. WELCH, Madam Speaker, we, the people, have a common tie that binds us together now as it has since the founding of our country, and it is our shared respect for the Constitution of the United States.

Let us all step back from the maelstrom of the moment to recall that, at our country's inception 243 years ago, the concept of a democratic, self-governing rule was a breathtaking and idealistic aspiration. When the 13 American Colonies boldly rejected the rule of the British monarch, our Founders were determined to form a government that would rule instead with the consent of the governed.

Ensuring that this noble experiment endured through the ages was an enormous existential challenge. It was met with the adoption of the Constitution in 1788.

At its heart are two bedrock principles that have served as touchstones for our country ever since. First, it established America as a nation of laws, where no person is above the law. Second, it established the concept of a separation of powers where three coequal branches of government would check each other, lest power be concentrated in one at the expense of liberty to all.

Madam Speaker, when President Trump abused the power of his office by soliciting foreign interference in the upcoming election for his personal benefit, he willfully infringed upon the right of citizens to decide who will lead our Nation. In doing so, he placed himself above the law and in violation of his oath.

When he denounced, denied, and defied the clear authority of Congress to investigate his conduct, he repudiated our constitutional system of checks and balances and further violated his oath to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution.

It is for these reasons that I will cast my vote in favor of impeaching President Donald John Trump.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS).

Mr. BIGGS, Madam Speaker, some of my colleagues across the aisle have said, "Hey, where are the facts?" as if we have the burden of proof.

Madam Speaker, it is their burden of proof. It is the Democrats' burden of proof.

But the facts are unchanged. Ukraine received aid that they were promised and appropriated for. The aid was lawfully disbursed. In fact, it was disbursed within the time limits set by

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this Congress. If you wanted it sent to them before September 30, 2019, you should have put that in the legislation. You did not.

The Ukrainians gave nothing in return. The Ukrainian President said he felt no pressure, no coercion, no duress, no conditionality.

What changed? On the day that the aid was released, two anticorruption measures were signed into law by the Ukrainian President, President Zelensky.

Democrats have manufactured this sham and then argue that refusing to cooperate is impeachable. The Supreme Court is currently considering the extent of executive privilege when fighting dubious subpoenas. But instead of taking their process to court or waiting for the Court to rule on the pending case, the Democrats chose to press forward because, simply, they said: "We don't want to wait."

"We don't have time," they say. But failing to do so is an abuse of power of this institution that will have grave consequences for our Republic.

When the other side claims they proceed with sobriety, I am bemused by media reports that indicate they have been admonished not to do a jig today when they win the vote, which we know they will. I am struck that solemnity of process shouldn't need to have an admonition against levity.

This process has been partisan, vindictive, dishonest. In this impeachment, Democrats have lied about the content of the July 25 call; met secretly with the whistleblower; held Soviet-style hearings behind closed doors where the Committee on the Judiciary, the committee of jurisdiction, could not attend; and blocked the President's counsel from participating in the fact-finding portion of the inquisition.

Madam Speaker, it has been a sham from start to finish.

Mr. SCHIFF, Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. SCOTT of Virginia asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Madam Speaker, I include my remarks in favor of both Articles of Impeachment.

Every Member of Congress swore an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution, and that oath should be the guide for all of us when considering articles of impeachment against the President of the United States. There has been considerable public debate over what constitutes impeachable offenses; the Constitution names them as "Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors." Under normal circumstances, the country could wait until the next election to remove an undesirable president from office. Issues like the President's Muslim ban, separating babies from their parents at the border, trying to undermine access to health care, cutting funding for education, standing in the way of commonsense gun legislation, or other harmful policy stances are not impeachable offenses, but issues that will be addressed in

the 2020 election. However, our founders included impeachment in the Constitution for times when an official's conduct was so egregious, we could not wait for the next election to remove that individual from office. President Trump's Ukraine scheme was intended to influence the 2020 election to make it an unfair process, and that highlights a key reason why he must be impeached and removed from office.

Multiple House Committees have conducted extensive investigations into the President's conduct. The facts are uncontested. President Trump invited Ukraine to interfere in our next presidential election and leveraged desperately needed military aid and a high-profile visit to the White House to promote his scheme. This constitutes an attack on our electoral system and democracy itself and is a gross abuse of presidential power. This scheme needs to be viewed in the context of other actions by this President. The Mueller report found multiple instances of obstruction of justice committed by the President, and that obstruction has continued. Furthermore, the President has continued to violate the Emoluments Clause by profiting from foreign and domestic business transactions from the moment he took office, and that violation has continued.

With the Ukraine scheme, the President has admitted in public to actions that sacrifice national security for his own personal, political gain and then he insisted that he did nothing wrong. His ongoing attack of the whistleblower serves to discourage other whistleblowers from coming forward, his intimidation of witnesses during impeachment proceedings, his orders to witnesses to ignore subpoenas, and his invitation to China to meddle in our next election all indicate that, left unchecked, this President will not cease his misconduct and will seek to do it again. The President continues to put his own personal and political gain above the law and his conduct in these matters constitutes clear abuses of power and an ongoing threat to our democracy.

If the President had simply acknowledged the basic fact that trying to sabotage the next presidential election is wrong, and that he would not continue such behavior, we could be discussing the question of waiting until the next election to express our views on his conduct. We would have to discuss the credibility of such a statement, but a discussion over waiting for the election would be a relevant issue. However, that is not the case. President Trump continues to obstruct properly convened investigations and he continues to abuse his power by trying to undermine the next presidential election.

For all of these reasons, I will vote for both articles of impeachment.

I came to the 116th Congress to serve the people of Virginia's Third Congressional District, and to focus on my work as chair of the Committee on Education and Labor. Committee Democrats have been working to expand access to the building blocks of a strong middle class—a quality education, a rewarding job, and affordable health care. The House has already passed the Raise the Wage Act, the Lower Drug Costs Now Act, the Paycheck Fairness Act, the Stronger Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, the Butch Lewis Act, the Dignity in Aging Act, and the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act. The Committee

has also approved the College Affordability Act, the Rebuild America's Schools Act, the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, and other critical legislation awaiting a vote by the full House. Later this week, the House will ratify the USMCA with strong labor protections.

However, if we expect our democracy to survive, President Trump's abuse of power cannot be ignored. No one is above the law.

Mr. SCHIFF, Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CARSON).

Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Madam Speaker, as we continue and consider this historic impeachment vote, let's be clear that the President's actions seriously jeopardize not only America's national security but the security of our closest allies. His actions threaten the goals of the U.S.-led NATO alliance.

You see, Ukraine is a nation working hard to make its democracy stronger. Make no mistake, Ukraine is on the front lines of Russian aggression. Thankfully, U.S. military aid helps Ukraine defend itself against Russia and integrate itself into the European community.

When our European allies are stronger, America is stronger. We are better equipped to promote democracy and put a stop to tyranny.

But, Madam Speaker, to President Trump, strengthening this valuable national security objective was not as important as smearing a political rival.

Madam Speaker, we know that he held nearly \$400 million of aid to Ukraine until President Zelensky agreed to help him dig up dirt on his potential 2020 opponent.

□ 1715

This aid was approved by Congress with strong bipartisan support.

President Trump's actions hurt American diplomacy and undermine the integrity of our Nation's promises to our allies. We will not allow our leaders to trade away our national security.

We cannot allow Russia's continued threats to democracy to go unanswered, and we must not allow our own President of these United States to get away with breaking his own oath of office.

Madam Speaker, that is why we take this solemn but necessary vote to impeach.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA).

Mr. LATTA, Madam Speaker, this is a sad day for our country, one that our forefathers warned us against.

We have watched this illegitimate impeachment process unfold while making a mockery of our constitutional duties. House Democrats have conducted the most polarizing impeachment process in our Nation's history, and the men and women I represent are tired of this Democrat-run House putting political games above our Nation's interests.

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House Democrats held secret meetings, withheld important documents, deliberately misrepresented information to the public, and did not give due process to the President. This investigation was unfair, and the American people expect more out of Congress.

The Articles of Impeachment are not based on facts but, instead, are entirely politically motivated. The truth is there was no pressure put on President Zelensky, and the transcripts confirm that there was no conditionality.

This inquiry has been rigged from the start, lacking fairness, transparency, and truth. It has been a waste of taxpayers' dollars, and it is based off the opinion of an unnamed whistleblower and hearsay. The accusations in today's proceedings do not align with the facts.

This impeachment process is out of step with existing precedent for Presidential impeachment proceedings, and it is not a process I will support. I urge my colleagues to put country first and vote in opposition to the Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY).

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the impeachment of President Donald J. Trump.

President Trump abused the power of his office for his own personal and political gain at the expense of our national security.

President Trump's wholesale obstruction of Congress is unprecedented, indisputable, and impeachable. President Trump is the first President in history to openly and completely defy all aspects of the constitutional impeachment process.

In an attempt to cover up his abuse of power, he ordered the entire executive branch not to participate in the inquiry and directed it to defy lawful subpoenas from Congress.

As chairwoman of the Committee on Oversight and Reform, I find this obstruction particularly offensive.

Even President Nixon accepted Congress' impeachment authority and allowed his aides and advisers to produce the documents to Congress. And President Nixon allowed current and former staff to testify in both the House impeachment and the Senate Watergate investigations, including his chief of staff and White House counsel.

By contrast, President Trump, without any legal basis, directed current and former officials not to cooperate with the House's inquiry, which resulted in nine administration officials defying subpoenas for testimony. And in response to the House's inquiry, President Trump refused to turn over even one single—not one single—document to Congress in response to lawful subpoenas.

Put simply, President Trump's actions are even worse than Nixon's.

Let me repeat that. President Trump's actions are even worse than Nixon's.

Our Founding Fathers established a system of checks and balances that spread out power between the branches of government. They decided that no one would be a king, that no one is above the law, including the President. And they gave the responsibility of impeachment solely to the people's House.

When President Trump defies our subpoenas and obstructs our impeachment inquiry, he seeks to place himself above the Constitution and above the law.

We cannot let that stand; and if we do, then that is the end of Congress as a coequal branch of government, and we have allowed President Trump to elevate himself above the law.

It is our solemn duty, under the Constitution, to impeach President Trump for his blatant abuse of power and his obstruction of Congress.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WOMACK).

Mr. WOMACK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for giving me this moment.

Mr. Speaker, years from now, history books will tell of this day. It will tell of a purely partisan effort to remove the President of the United States, an effort not built on a high crime or misdemeanor, not on a process in keeping with the high American standard of due process and equal treatment. This effort is rooted only in the governing party's hatred of a man elected President of the United States.

Members on the other side of the aisle have been in pursuit of this moment since 2016. They are consumed by it. Earlier in this debate, one of our colleagues referred to our President as a "domestic enemy."

Our Founders warned us about this day. That is why our Nation has entrusted the future of the country with the outcome of elections, not the will of a party filled with contempt for a duly elected President.

My hope is that, when historians write about this day, it is not written in the context of a nation that lost its way because its elected Members chose hateful partisanship over the sacred oath that has protected this great Republic since its founding.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MALINOWSKI).

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Mr. Speaker, in America, when we call the fire department or enroll our children in school, we do not expect a government official to say to us: "I need you to do us a favor, though." Why would we tolerate a President using his awesome power to make foreign policy, when the safety of our country is at stake, not for the people, but for himself?

I will vote to impeach today because President Trump did just that when he shook down a foreign country to criminally investigate his political rival.

If we fail to say that this was wrong, then any President will be free to ask

a foreign power—be it Russia, China, or Iran—to help him hurt his political enemies at home, and every foreign tyrant and kleptocrat will know that America's foreign policy can be bought by doing our President a political favor.

If you believe that our highest duty is to protect America, then search your conscience and ask: Do you want our future Presidents to behave as this one has done?

Do not whisper in the shadows of the Capitol that you disapprove and then defend that conduct here today. Do your duty. Keep your oath. Defend your country, as will I.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON).

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, over a month ago, on November 14, I spoke on the impeachment hoax with points true then and still true today.

After over a month of secret investigations into the administration, Democrats have now decided to open these controlled hearings to the public. This continues the deception by Democrats to mislead the American people. It is insulting: no Republican witnesses, no counsel by the President to participate, and full exoneration by courageous President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine.

It is sad that, instead of focusing on funding our military through the National Defense Authorization Act passed only last week or passing the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement to create jobs, Democrats continue, having wasted \$30 million of taxpayers' money on the Russian hoax, now proceeding with a Ukrainian hoax.

This partisan witch hunt diverts attention from the President's successes: The unemployment rate remains at a record low; there is record job creation; and the stock market, again, today, is thriving, showing that President Trump keeps his promises.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. GOMEZ).

Mr. GOMEZ. Mr. Speaker, we are here at this moment in our Nation's history because the President abused the power of his office, bribed a foreign government to intrude into our democracy, and engaged in an unprecedented campaign of obstruction of Congress to cover it up.

Our credibility in the global community has been compromised. Our character and motivations are questioned.

We know where the President's true loyalties lie: not with our constituents, not with our allies, but with our adversaries and himself.

Abraham Lincoln once said: "Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power."

Donald Trump has failed this test, and now our test is whether we will be

a check on that power. Therefore, we must hold anyone to account, regardless of party or politics, who sets fire to the very institutions that define our Nation and our values. With this in mind, I will vote "yes" to impeach Donald J. Trump.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. FOX).

Ms. FOX of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the process and to the resolution.

When Congress sees fit to examine its solemn power of impeachment, it is imperative that it does so in genuine pursuit of justice: fairly, transparently, and objectively. Anything less is unacceptable. This partisan impeachment has fallen far short of that.

Sadly, Alexander Hamilton's prediction in *Federalist No. 65* has come true, where he warned: "In many cases, it will connect itself with the pre-existing factions and will enlist all their animosities, partialities, influence, and interest on one side or on the other; and in such cases, there will always be the greatest danger that the decision will be regulated more by the comparative strength of parties than by the real demonstrations of innocence or guilt."

After years of investigations, hearings, and millions of taxpayer dollars, Democrats found no proof that the President committed a crime—no proof—as the vague accusations in these articles clearly reflect.

A basic prerequisite for impeaching for "high crimes and misdemeanors" is a charge that an actual crime was committed. These empty, baseless articles expose for the American people what this is: a desperate, partisan attempt to avenge the loss of the Democrats' preferred candidate in 2016.

We must respect American voters and reject these articles.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Just a quick fact-check before I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle claim that no Republican witnesses were allowed to testify. That is, of course, not correct.

In the Intelligence Committee, three of the Republican-requested witnesses testified; that is, one out of every four of the witnesses were Republican-requested witnesses. That they incriminated the President did not make them any less requested by the minority.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING).

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, today I reflect on the imperatives of two sons of Massachusetts:

John Adams, who, in one sentence, captured the very foundation of our country, saying, we are a government of laws, not men—translation: no one is above the law; and

John F. Kennedy, who, in his iconic *City Upon a Hill* address, cautioned

that any one of us holding public office would be judged by the high court of history on whether we were truly men and women of courage, with the courage to stand up to one's enemies and the courage to stand up, as well, to one's associates, the courage to resist public pressure as well as private greed, and on whether we are truly men and women of integrity who never run out of the principles in which we believe and for whom neither financial gain nor political ambition could ever divert from the fulfillment of our sacred trust.

President Donald Trump, indifferent and disdainful of this sacred trust, conspired to extract personal benefit from his office.

He dishonored his oath. I refuse to abandon mine.

□ 1730

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I would like to point out very quickly that the only Republican witnesses allowed in the Intelligence Committee hearings were on the Democrats' preapproved list.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. RICE).

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to this partisan sham of an impeachment resolution that is ripping our country apart.

Beginning even before he took office, President Trump has been attacked by a never-ending barrage of lies, corruption, and deceit by the liberal political elite, including James Comey, Peter Strzok, Lisa Page, Hillary Clinton, and the impeachment zealots in this Congress.

Democrats colluded with Russia and Ukraine to interfere in our 2016 election by producing the now-famous fake dossier. Now, they accuse President Trump of colluding with a foreign power. What a joke.

They abuse their office to illegally wiretap and spy on President Trump's campaign. Now, they accuse him of abusing his office. What a joke.

Democrats structure these proceedings to deny the President and Republicans in Congress a fair hearing. Then, they accuse the President of obstructing Congress. Look in the mirror, folks.

The reaction of the American people, that this is contrived and corrupt, was entirely predictable and is entirely correct. The polls will turn against them, and the Democrats are desperate to stop the bleeding. That is why we are cramming this vote in today, just before leaving for recess, to dispose of impeachment as quickly and painlessly as possible.

The actions of the Democrats are a stain on this Chamber. I urge my colleagues to join me in fighting against this shameful abuse of power and vote "no" on this sham of an impeachment resolution.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I didn't think I would have to do another

fact-check so quickly, but, of course, there was no preapproved witness list.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS).

Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, the decision to impeach a President of the United States is of enormous magnitude and utmost significance. There are few issues that so deeply reflect upon the Constitution and the American system of governance.

As a senior member of the United States House Foreign Affairs Committee, I have spent years trying to promote American values of democracy and the rule of law in other parts of the world, including Eastern Europe. Because I have been so steeped in Ukrainian issues for so long, I know how damaging President Trump's actions were.

But the President's damage does not end there. He has consistently obstructed at every turn of this investigation. This Nation's Founding Fathers fought to end unaccountable rule. We did not free ourselves from a King to turn the President into a monarch.

The camera of history is rolling, and I will cast my vote consistent with the principles of democracy, the rule of law, and our Constitution for the impeachment of President Donald J. Trump. I do so because I could not look my granddaughter or any member of future generations in the eye having condoned actions that undermine our democratic system, and I urge all of my colleagues to do the same.

May God bless the United States of America.

I stand before you on a serious and solemn day in the House of Representatives. The decision to impeach a President of the United States is of enormous magnitude and the utmost significance. There are few issues that so deeply reflect upon the Constitution and the American system of governance.

My ancestors were African slaves, forced on a transatlantic journey from the coasts of Sierra Leone to the plantations of South Carolina. I know full well that the designers of our Constitution, who embedded an economy of human bondage into the fabric of our political institutions, were not perfect men. Yet they wrote a malleable document that allowed American society to adjust to changing times while laying down eternal principles: democracy, freedom of speech, freedom of belief, open markets, and a separation of powers. Indeed, they laid the foundation for a nation that would allow men and women like myself, who are descended from slaves, to become Members of Congress with the right and duty to weigh in on the most important questions confronting our republic. I will exercise that responsibility here today.

Given my background as a lawyer and former prosecutor, I believe we must look at the relevant law in question before casting a vote. That language comes directly from the Constitution: "The President . . . shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors." The two articles of impeachment brought against President Trump concern his abuse of power and his obstruction of Congress.

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As a senior Member of the United States House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee with a particular focus on Europe, I have spent years trying to promote American values of democracy and the rule of law in other parts of the world including Eastern Europe. Other nations have not been blessed with political institutions that promoted civil liberties and the rule of law. Today, in Ukraine however there are leaders keen on anticorruption initiatives, invested in following the Western democratic model, and inspired by the American example. Nearly 13,000 Ukrainians have been killed since 2014 because of the conflict provoked and sustained by Russia, who opposes this vision of liberty and opportunity.

Over the years, I have pushed for the U.S. government to fund and protect these Ukrainian freedom fighters from Russian aggression. As the leader of the United States, President Trump has responsibility to help Ukraine lay the ground work for a more sustainable system of governance, one that promotes the rule of law and free and fair elections. This duty is inextricably linked to American national security interests. Because I have been steeped in these issues pertaining to Ukraine for so long, I know how damaging President Trump's actions were. Based on witness testimony and the overwhelming evidence presented, I am forced to conclude that the President abused the power of his office for his own personal gain rather than the public interest and that this was in fact an impeachable offense.

The second article of impeachment concerns President Trump's obstruction of Congress. Our constitutional system was designed to promote checks and balances among the different branches of government, with a particular focus on ensuring that the judiciary and the legislature could check the President. We did not free ourselves from a King to turn the President into a monarch.

In the case of our current President, he has shown his disdain for separation of powers unrelentingly and unrepentantly. This pattern of behavior evidenced throughout the Mueller investigation and repeated itself again as the President has continually defied any oversight initiatives from the legislature. This is in complete contravention of our Constitutional system. And it is an impeachable offense.

In sum, the founders knew from the very beginning that the insertion of domestic political interests into foreign policy would be an existential threat to the United States. Indeed, confidence in our electoral system at home has been indispensable to the strength of our republic while the absence of quid pro quo corruption from our foreign policy has been essential to American leadership abroad. President Trump's misconduct has betrayed both of these vital principals, weakening our democratic institutions at home and our standing abroad.

The camera of history is rolling. Today's vote is not about one man, but instead about the foundations of our republic for the years, decades, and centuries to come. I will cast my vote consistent with the principles of democracy, the rule of law, and the American constitutional system and for the impeachment of President Donald J. Trump. I do so because I could not look my granddaughter or any member of future generations in the eye having condoned actions that undermine our democratic system.

I urge all of my colleagues to do the same.

May God bless the United States of America.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON).

Mr. BACON. Madam Speaker, I am strongly opposed to this impeachment. No law was broken, no high crimes or misdemeanors, no impeachable offenses.

The Ukrainians received aid 1 week prior to the law's requirement, aid that was previously rejected by the administration before it. There was no investigation, and President Zelensky said he received no pressure from the Trump administration ever.

Simply put, there was no quid pro quo and no crime. There was only the majority's disdain for the President, and that is not an impeachable offense.

The elections are in 10 months, but the majority doesn't trust the American people. Too many have said that the impeachment is necessary so that the President is not reelected in 2020, and that is shameful.

Today's vote sets a new precedent for America. In the future, the majority will use impeachment as a tactic to remove a President simply based on partisanship. Our Founders feared this, and I strongly oppose it.

I want my statement to be in the RECORD until the end of time to show that I was on the side of the Constitution, that I oppose the majority taking down a duly elected President who committed no crime, and that I defended the truth.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, my colleagues continue to make the argument that the Ukrainians got the money. Yes, the President got caught, but they got the money. No harm, no foul.

It is the equivalent of saying that if you are pulled over by a cop and you attempt to bribe the cop, and the cop doesn't take the money but arrests you, well, where is the crime in that? They didn't get the money.

This is what my colleagues would have you accept. This is what my colleagues would have you accept, that because the President got caught in the act, we must look the other way. Of course, that is not the way the law works. That is not the way the Constitution works. That is not the way our oath of office works.

Our oath of office requires us to impeach a President who abuses his power, whether he gets away with it or he gets caught. In this case, he got caught.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. NORCROSS).

Mr. NORCROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today at a time of grave concern for all Americans.

This past weekend, I joined a bipartisan delegation traveling to Belgium and Luxembourg for the 75th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, a battle in which over 19,000 Americans gave their lives. Today, we are called to pre-

serve that democracy that they so bravely defended.

Over 2 years ago, I was one of the first Members of Congress to vote to advance the inquiry. Since then, I have withheld final judgment as I reviewed the facts and heard the testimony.

I believe there is overwhelming evidence well beyond a reasonable doubt that President Donald Trump is guilty in both Articles of Impeachment, abuse of power and obstruction of Congress. Therefore, I will uphold my oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States in favor of impeachment.

It is our solemn responsibility to honor all those who have fought and given their lives to uphold the truth. In America, no one is above the law.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Wow, I just love this, again, potshot it in when you can.

Remember, quid pro quo didn't work out really well for them because that was supposedly who had pressure on President Zelensky. In fact, it didn't work out, so, well, you had to go poll test it. The majority didn't work out because focus groups didn't like it.

So, what do we do? We throw it in here, a bribe. It is all in their report, but if they had a bribe or if they actually had a crime, it would be in the articles.

Guess what? He doesn't have it. He can't put it in there. This is all duff and circumstance because they can't get to the President, and that is what is killing them.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON).

Mr. BUCSHON. Madam Speaker, House Democrats have been obsessed with impeaching President Trump since he was elected.

He wasn't supposed to win. "How could the voters support him?" they asked.

The American people were told the only way the Speaker would move forward with impeachment was if the case was compelling, overwhelming, and bipartisan, yet the case for impeachment that has been rushed forward by House Democrats is anything but that.

To be clear, neither of these Articles of Impeachment prove any wrongdoing or impeachable offense has actually taken place. Instead, House Democrats' case rests solely on hearsay testimony and presumptions from cherry-picked witnesses.

The Framers of the Constitution never intended impeachment to be used as a tool to settle political and policy differences. That is what elections are for.

This is a sad and dangerous moment in our history, as impeachment is being used to undo the will of the American people and silence the voices of millions of Americans in the process. Alexander Hamilton would be ashamed.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this partisan impeachment sham.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. CROW).

H12176

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Mr. CROW. Madam Speaker, years ago, I took my first oath to the country, went to war, and fought alongside our Nation's finest men and women. Some of them gave their lives for our Nation. Not a day has passed that I don't reflect on those sacrifices.

I learned during that time that our Nation is built on sacrifice. We have overcome challenging times because people have decided to put aside their personal interests, their livelihoods, and, yes, even given their lives to do what is best for our Nation.

Our Founders created a system to ensure we would have no kings or dictators, a system that vested power in the people to ensure that no man or woman is above the law.

Generation after generation, this system has survived because people have fought for it. Today, it is our turn.

The President's abuse of power and scorn for our constitutional checks and balances is unprecedented. Unless we stand up against these abuses, we will set the country on a dangerous new course.

My oath, my love of our country, and my duty to honor the sacrifices of those who came before us require me to act. To my colleagues, it is time to put aside our personal and political interests and honor those who have come before us.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 35 seconds to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. HICE).

Mr. HICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, the Democrats' new definition for evidence is allegations, allegations based on hearsay, I might add. So, they hurl allegations against the President, and then they say to him that it is not their responsibility to prove guilt but the President's responsibility to prove his innocence.

This impeachment has been a sham and an act of injustice against the President and against 63 million Americans who voted for him. Although this process was rigged from the beginning, Democrats never produced a single true piece of evidence.

It is time for us to stop this hoax and vote against these Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mrs. LURIA).

Mrs. LURIA. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of our Constitution, in support of the military members in harm's way who defend our Constitution, in support of Gold Star families who keep faith that their loved one's sacrifice was justified.

I rise today in support of the oath I first took at 17 upon entering the Naval Academy and took five more times in my 20-year Navy career; an oath that comforted me in the years I spent away from my family, deployed around the globe; an oath that encouraged me to remain vigilant on the bridge of the ship at night; an oath that strengthened me when in command, as I sent my fellow sailors into

harm's way; and today, an oath that gives me resolve to do what is right and not what is politically expedient, resolve to stand with the President at the White House last week, and resolve to stand up to the President in this House today.

I ask my colleagues to have the same strength and the same resolve.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 35 seconds to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER).

Mr. WALKER. Madam Speaker, when emotions supersede the facts, the conclusion is cataclysmic. Today, we are wrapping up not a 3-month process but, rather, a 3-year process with Democrats' disdain so much that it has led to the abuse of this very House.

These are the same Democrats who promised America they saw evidence of Russian collusion. Do the American people trust them? Hell, no, they don't.

A growing number of American people have condemned this impeachment process, and that is with House Democrats setting the rules and then even bending and breaking the rules to fit their narrative. The majority of Americans see this circus for what it is. I wonder how many more will join them.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Ms. ESHOO).

Ms. ESHOO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to defend our Constitution and our democracy by voting for the two Articles of Impeachment.

The words of our sacred oath define our duty, and those words must be kept. Our Founders' primal fear was that powerful members of our government would become, in Hamilton's words, "mercenary instruments of foreign corruption."

President Trump abused the powers of the Presidency by ignoring and injuring national security and other vital national interests to obtain an improper personal benefit. He also betrayed our Nation by abusing his high office to enlist a foreign power in corrupting democratic elections.

Article II I agree with because it details the obstruction of Congress by the President by directing unprecedented, categorical, and indiscriminate defiance of subpoenas issued by this House of Representatives and abused the powers of the Presidency in a manner subversive to the Constitution.

I believe the Constitution is the soul of our Nation, and by defending it, we are saying we will not be soulless.

□ 1745

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 35 seconds to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR).

Mr. BARR. Madam Speaker, don't be fooled. Democrats are not impeaching the President to protect national security.

Democrats are impeaching the President for following a law that they themselves voted for.

No less than five times in the last 6 years, bipartisan Congresses imposed

on the executive branch an affirmative duty to ensure that the Government of Ukraine was countering corruption.

And for good reason: Ukraine is the third-most corrupt nation on Earth.

So the President not only had the legal authority to temporarily pause security assistance to Ukraine, he had a mandate from Congress to do it.

As a result, President Zelensky's government made historic anticorruption reforms, making Ukraine a more reliable ally, countering Russian aggression.

Far from compromising national security, the President's actions advanced national security.

Oppose this impeachment.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, my colleagues would have the country believe that the President held up the aid to Ukraine because he was concerned about corruption. Of course, there is not a shred of evidence for that.

All of the national security experts across all the departments testified that Ukraine met the criteria to receive the aid.

So what was the real motivation here? Well, one thing is telling. In 2017, the President had no problem with aid to Ukraine, raised no issue of corruption. In 2018, he had no problem with the military aid for Ukraine.

So what changed in 2019? Joe Biden announced he was running for President, and all of a sudden, Donald Trump held up the aid for Ukraine.

As Ambassador Sondland testified, the President didn't care about Ukraine. All he cared about was the big stuff that affected him personally, the investigation of the Bidens that Giuliani was pushing.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Ms. SPANBERGER).

Ms. SPANBERGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 755.

As a CIA case officer, I used to meet with foreign nationals who were providing vital intelligence to help inform our hardest national security decisions and keep our country safe. These individuals, from countries where leaders abused their power and defied the rule of law, risked imprisonment and often their very lives in order to provide the United States with information to help us, to inform us.

But why? It was their belief in the United States, their belief in our country, the longest-standing democracy in the world; our country, a beacon of hope in the world, a democratic republic founded on a document and the belief in the rule of law and a belief in its people.

Today, I am proud to serve in the people's House, representing my hometown and again serving our country, that beacon of hope in the world.

And today, especially today, I reflect on the founding documents that have set us apart in the world, leading people across generations and across the

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world to risk everything because of their belief in our great Nation.

Today, especially today, I affirm my commitment to upholding and protecting the Constitution, the rule of law it defines, and the people it governs.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 35 seconds to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARRINGTON).

Mr. ARRINGTON. Madam Speaker, today, many of my Democratic colleagues will be making history, unfortunately, for supporting the first-ever completely partisan impeachment of a President of the United States.

Madam Speaker, I am deeply disturbed that history will indeed be made today in this hallowed Chamber, but for all the wrong reasons: not for love of country, but hatred for a political foe; not to pursue justice, but to punish a political adversary; not to seek truth, but to seize political power.

Madam Speaker, for the love of country, I urge my colleagues to oppose this disastrous partisan ruse.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Ms. WATERS).

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, ladies and gentlemen, unfortunately, the rules of debate won't allow me to cite all of the reasons why this President should be impeached. There are many.

However, Madam Speaker and Members of this House, to quote the late Maya Angelou: "When someone shows you who they are, believe them the first time."

This day was not inevitable, but it was predictable, because this President has shown himself time and time again to believe that he is above the law, and he has no respect for our Constitution or our democracy.

Based on all that we know about Donald Trump, we could have predicted he would have abused the power of the Presidency by "corruptly soliciting the Government of Ukraine" and Ukrainian President Zelensky to publicly announce investigations into his political opponent, former Vice President Joseph R. Biden.

This impeachment resolution includes evidence that this President withheld \$391 million of taxpayer funds that Congress appropriated for the purpose of providing vital military and security assistance to Ukraine to oppose Russian aggression, another blatant abuse of power.

Our investigations revealed that this President advanced "a discredited theory promoted by Russia alleging that Ukraine, rather than Russia, interfered in the 2016 United States Presidential election."

"For corrupt purposes in pursuit of personal political benefit."

Never before in our history have we experienced a President who has so clearly conducted himself in a "manner offensive to, and subversive of, the Constitution," and who directed his Cabinet members, executive branch agencies, and other White House offi-

cials to defy lawful subpoenas from Congress.

Was he attempting to hide wrongdoing?

It is without question that this President "has demonstrated that he will remain a threat to national security and the Constitution if allowed to remain in office, and has acted in a manner grossly incompatible with self-governance and the rule of law," because at every turn, he has shown us who he is.

It is no secret that this President could have been impeached a long time ago.

Today, we stand here with an irrefutable case and an indisputable set of facts that this President absolutely abused his power and obstructed Congress.

Any other individual who would have been caught conducting themselves in the way this President has would have been prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

It is shameful that any Members of this House are willing to disregard the Constitution, turn a blind eye to hard facts, and ignore a confession from the President himself.

History will remember those who were willing to speak truth to power.

Yes, I called for Trump's impeachment early.

This is our country. Our foremothers and our forefathers shed their blood to build and defend this democracy. I refuse to have it undermined.

I wholeheartedly support this resolution. I am proud that, in the final analysis, justice will have been served in America and Donald Trump will have been impeached.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, reclaiming my time that the gentleman did not have, I yield 35 seconds to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM).

Mr. ABRAHAM. Madam Speaker, what is shameful is that Speaker PELOSI has allowed this Democratic witch hunt to move forward. She is the one that has abused her power, and we should be debating her removal from the House.

Reagan said that: "The trouble with our liberal friends is not that they are ignorant, it is just that they know so much that isn't so."

Democrat extreme partisanship will set a dangerous precedent for this Nation. And mark my words, Madam Speaker: This sinister attempt to remove this lawful President will not go unnoticed.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Nevada (Ms. TITUS) for a unanimous consent request.

(Ms. TITUS asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TITUS. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD my statement supporting the impeachment of Donald Trump.

For 35 years I taught American government to university students.

When we discussed impeachment, I never thought I'd actually be participating in the process, but this president has left us no choice.

He tried to rig the 2020 elections by soliciting foreign interference, and then engaged in an unprecedented cover-up once he got caught.

No president can be permitted to abuse the power of the office for personal, political gain, nor try to hide his misdeeds by demanding that his subordinates withhold key documents and refuse to testify before Congress.

President Trump's allies have offered lots of crazy excuses for why he shouldn't be impeached, but even they will not deny that he wouldn't have asked Ukraine to investigate Biden if the former Vice President weren't a leading candidate for president.

I have analyzed the evidence thoroughly. It is consistent and convincing. This is why I am casting my vote to impeach President Trump.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. HIMES).

Mr. HIMES. Madam Speaker, I rise today in anger and hope.

I am angry that President Donald Trump has treated his oath of office so disrespectfully that now we must hold him to account.

The truth is clear to anyone not deliberately looking away. The President withheld military aid and a White House meeting unless and until a vulnerable Ukrainian President announced a nakedly political investigation.

It didn't matter if the Ukrainians uncovered any wrongdoing. The mere announcement of an investigation would damage his political opponent.

Mr. Trump didn't care about stopping corruption in Ukraine. He never mentioned the word "corruption" once in the infamous July 25 call. This was not an attempt to reduce Ukrainian corruption.

It was an attempt by Donald J. Trump to aim Ukrainian corruption straight at the heart of the Presidential election of 2020.

The President knows this, which is why he has not given this Congress a single email, phone record, or document.

That is not the behavior of a man with nothing to hide. It is, simply and undeniably, contempt of this Congress.

But what makes this impeachment essential is that the President's abuse of power has not stopped. As we speak, he continues to urge foreign interference in our democracy: beseeching China to investigate the Bidens, sending Rudy Giuliani overseas to chase Russian conspiracy theories.

This morning, the President tweeted, "I did nothing wrong," all caps. He believes it, too. He sees nothing wrong with inviting Russian, Ukrainian, or Chinese interference into our election.

He did it, he continues to do it, and he sees nothing wrong with it. He will wake up tomorrow and do it again if we don't stop him today.

Therein lies our hope.

Madam Speaker, I am proud today to answer the call to defend our democracy and the United States Constitution, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, for reasons that I really don't understand, I am having to yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I am saddened today that I spent two Christmases defending our country overseas, and I get a measly 30 seconds to speak in this laughable process.

Our President made a campaign promise to drain the swamp, and there are those today relying on swamp creatures' words to preserve the swamp.

How do you suppress the votes of 63 million people in an electoral landslide? You keep repeating the same lies absent any factual basis.

I have heard some of the greatest fiction ever spoken here today. If you don't like the facts, just rewrite them in a parody and repeat.

If the facts are so clear and indisputable, why is the minority leader begging for more witnesses?

You can't disprove something that never happened.

Mr. Speaker, due to a rushed process and limited debate, I was not allocated time to speak on the Floor ahead of this monumental vote, an opportunity that every member should be afforded.

I have spent two Christmases down range, defending our Constitution and Country, and it is a sad day when something this historic is rushed to a desired result so my colleagues will be home in time for the holidays.

I am disappointed in this body for putting their own convenience over the sanctity of our Nation.

I will tell you this: I would rather face attacks from our Nation's enemies than an attack on our Constitution.

This is the first time in history that impeachment proceedings have been completely partisan, shrouded in secrecy, and based on he-said-she-said accusations.

As a former prosecutor, I find it insulting my colleagues have built a case on second hand accounts, editorials, and opinions.

When the facts do not support the elements of crime, my experience tells me there is no crime.

Under the Constitution, it is the duty of the prosecution to prove the crime and not the accused to prove their innocence.

The House has wasted time and tax dollars on an unfounded witch hunt instead of legislating on behalf of our country.

Upon passage along party lines, the Senate will then be obligated to continue this circus at the expense of the American people.

Today is a stain on this esteemed body for generations to come and a detrimental precedent is set for future presidencies.

Today is a day of reckoning and a day the framers of our Constitution warned us about. James Madison foresaw this day when he feared the vague and heavily-disputed claims by my colleagues would turn our republic into an unruly parliamentary system in which Congress could remove a president over political

differences with only partisan motives as evidence.

The power to impeach the President is the single most important vote that a member of this body can cast.

It should not be taken lightly, and it certainly shouldn't be rushed through the House.

Alexander Hamilton feared the greatest danger of abusing impeachment authority is that the decision would be "regulated more by the comparative strength of parties than the real demonstration of innocence or guilt."

The fears of our Founding Fathers have manifested in this Chamber today.

We face a partisan process that will jeopardize our 243-year experiment at self-government, now, and for decades to come.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to vote "no" to this sham.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY).

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Madam Speaker, like many of my colleagues, I never ran for Congress wanting or expecting to impeach anybody, let alone the President of the United States.

However, given the facts, here we are.

While some questions remain unanswered, two key facts are clear and compel me to support the Articles of Impeachment.

First, President Trump attempted to pressure a foreign government to help his reelection campaign.

And second, the President used the powers of his office to obstruct a congressional investigation into that wrongdoing.

The President has falsely claimed he has been denied the chance to defend himself, but at the same time, he is preventing the testimony of witnesses with direct knowledge of the events under investigation.

If the President were innocent, as he claims, surely these witnesses would be able to testify to that. If there had been no quid pro quo, these witnesses could say that. If aid to Ukraine were not intentionally delayed for improper purposes, they could surely testify to that also.

But rather than giving these witnesses the chance to speak, the President has silenced them. The President has silenced witnesses at the Defense Department. The President has silenced witnesses at the State Department. The President has silenced witnesses at the White House. He even silenced the loquacious Mick Mulvaney, who uttered at a press conference that there was a quid pro quo and "get over it."

By choosing to block this testimony, the President is not proving his innocence; he is just proving he is afraid of what they have to say.

As a wise man once said, the truth will come to light. And it has. It is our duty to act on it.

□ 1800

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, it is a shame, on the floor of this House, when you accuse somebody

and then make them prove they are not guilty of what you are accusing them of.

Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. JOHN W. ROSE).

Mr. JOHN W. ROSE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today, I rise in strong opposition to this partisan impeachment spectacle that just seeks to accomplish what President Trump's opponents failed to do at the ballot box in 2016.

Our votes today are merely formalizing the decision my colleagues on the other side of the aisle reached 3 years ago. This has been an embarrassment to our country, an insult to our Constitution, and a distraction from the real work we should be accomplishing for the American people.

I stand with the people of Tennessee's Sixth District in strongly supporting President Trump, and I will vote against the Articles of Impeachment before us today.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA).

Mr. HUIZENGA. Madam Speaker, in her own words, Speaker PELOSI said impeachment must be compelling, overwhelming, and bipartisan. These Articles of Impeachment being considered today by the House fail to meet Speaker PELOSI's own standards.

Process matters, folks. Representing a good chunk of Gerald Ford's old district and being a staffer during the Clinton administration, I have an intimate understanding of the effects of impeachment on this Nation. I am stunned to see my Democratic colleagues whitewash, or maybe I should say "Whitewater." Bill Clinton's cooperation with the House of Representatives. That is not exactly what was going on.

This is the most partisan impeachment that we have seen in our Nation's history.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CLOUD).

Mr. CLOUD. Madam Speaker, it has been very clear from the beginning that this impeachment proceeding has never been about an honest search for the truth. If it were, our Democratic friends would not have polled to see what to charge the President with.

Calling an opinion a fact does not make it so, and repeating it over and over does not make it more true. When one produces a committee report with fabricated findings based on no fact witnesses and then quotes from it like it is authoritative, it is no more valid than having a campaign pay for a foreign entity to create a private dossier and then selling it to a FISA court in order to spy on a campaign.

This has always been a verdict in search of a crime, an impeachment

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birthed at a resistance movement. It is time to end this charade and get back to doing the work we were elected to do.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. FULCHER).

Mr. FULCHER. Madam Speaker, in a day heavy in verbal debate, I choose to use my time to enumerate in detail every high crime and misdemeanor committed by the President of the United States. I will do so now.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. DEGETTE). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. FLEISCHMANN).

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Madam Speaker, my heart aches for our great Republic today. I implore my Democratic colleagues in this House: We are not Republicans or Democrats. We are Americans.

This is not the right place. This is not the right procedure. Settle our political differences politically.

We owe the American people a great duty to come together. Don't give the Senate the victory lap. Give the House the victory lap. Vote "no" to impeach. We owe it to the American people.

They want so dearly for us to come together for our great Republic and thank our great President.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, may I inquire of the time remaining for both the majority and the minority.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia has 43 minutes remaining. The gentleman from California has 29 minutes remaining.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WALTZ).

Mr. WALTZ. Madam Speaker, I am a Green Beret and a proud veteran, but this process does not make me proud. I fought all over the world, from Africa to Afghanistan, and I have seen fair and more transparent processes than this.

Since the Democrats lost the election in 2016, they have been focused on impeaching this President. Meanwhile, we have not solved the problems America entrusted us to solve: immigration, healthcare, and infrastructure.

Nothing in President Trump's call rises to the level of high crimes and misdemeanors worthy of impeachment. For that reason, I will be voting against impeachment today.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. GUTHRIE).

Mr. GUTHRIE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Articles of Impeachment on President Trump.

My Democratic colleagues have been planning to impeach President Trump since he took office. After months of wasting House time on partisan investigations, they have been unable to produce evidence that President Trump committed a crime.

I will vote "no" on today's Articles of Impeachment. I look forward to getting back to the business on behalf of Kentuckians.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY).

Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, the facts and the evidence establish beyond peradventure that the President abused the power of his office for personal gain and sought to cover up his misconduct by obstructing the Congress.

What we do today goes to the heart of the oath we take to support and defend the Constitution. These actions are as necessary as they are heart-breaking.

It is the President, not any Member of this House, who has brought us to this sad place. His actions echo in this Chamber and, like a tin can tied to his leg, will rattle behind him through the pages of history.

For in the final analysis, none of us will escape the truth. It will come for us all in this world or the next.

What is the truth? The President used taxpayer money and official acts to pressure a foreign government to help him win reelection by slandering a fellow American.

How do we know this truth? We know because brave Americans, soldiers and public servants, came forward to reveal the President's misconduct.

And the President? He continues to undertake an unprecedented coverup to stonewall the public and obstruct their Representatives in Congress. He withholds access to documents and records belonging to the public that would further establish his mendacity. He blocks his advisers and associates from testifying before the public to conceal the wrongs they witnessed.

These actions are unworthy of the Presidency.

Today is about right and wrong and whether we still know the difference. Today, we hold the President accountable. If we fail to do so, future Presidents would see corruption as without consequence. And there, our democracy goes to die.

We inherit this Republic from our ancestors, and we borrow it from our children. With humility, we pray that the history of this day will guide us to a better future for our Nation.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LONG).

Mr. LONG. Madam Speaker, we have never, ever, in the history of this country, seen a Presidency like this one.

Once the President was sworn in, 19 minutes later, The Washington Post said impeachment begins today. A million women marched the next day in Washington. Bank of America and Starbucks, both who supported Hillary Clinton, had their windows broken out here in Washington because people were so upset that this man was elected President of the United States.

He has had his head held under water for almost 3 years now, never coming up for a breath of air, just keep pushing him down.

Lowest Black unemployment ever, lowest Hispanic unemployment ever, highest stock market ever, and the very lowest unemployment in years.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY).

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Madam Speaker, I have been concerned since the beginning of this impeachment process that it has been driven by a predetermined guilty verdict.

It is unfair. It is wrong. And now, every future President, Democrat or Republican, will have to worry that the impeachment process will be driven as a blunt-force political instrument.

It has been said that this day is sad. It is not sad; it is regrettable. But this day will end shortly. The House has had its cathartic moment. Tomorrow will begin a new day. Let's get back to work.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, ready, fire, aim.

What we are hearing today are made-up articles to fit an ever-shrinking impeachment foothold. George Washington could be impeached under this criteria.

Democrats believe they are saving our democracy with these hysterical, made-up charges, which is odd because we are a republic, not a democracy, as they keep insisting.

No one came to Congress to impeach, we hear. Several new and returning Members have come specifically to impeach President Trump.

I hear a lot today about sadness and solemnity. From impeachment? No, because their candidate lost in 2016. The American people chose Donald J. Trump to lead us into prosperity, not a socialist government.

We will survive this day, but I call upon the American people to see through this sham, heal, and unite by speaking the truth.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

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Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Madam Speaker, I am voting "no." Impeachment is not in the best interest of this country. In fact, it has only deepened the partisan divide that truly plagues this country.

When the Sun comes up tomorrow, I pray with all my heart that the anger and the division in this Chamber will give way to an honorableness, a productivity, and a time of working together.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ADERHOLT).

Mr. ADERHOLT. Madam Speaker, today, a duly elected President is being impeached by the House of Representatives, by the Democrats compelled by partisanship and not by the facts.

I am proud to stand here with President Donald Trump, and I plan to cast my vote against both Articles of Impeachment.

It is not that the President abused his power. It is my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who are abusing one of the most powerful tools that has been entrusted to Congress in the Constitution by our Founding Fathers.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON).

Mr. OLSON. Madam Speaker, Webster's dictionary defines the star chamber as "characterized by secrecy and often being irresponsibly arbitrary and oppressive."

Sadly, my Democratic friends have turned this Chamber, the people's Chamber, into the star chamber of the people.

One great example is the most important thing we can do as Members is declare war. The next one is to impeach a President.

We are hoping Republicans can have every Member stand up and vote, like for Speaker, and say their vote loudly.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON).

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, while this institution should rightfully ensure the law is faithfully executed by the administrative branch, this exercise has shown itself to be the ultimate manipulation of the legislative branch's oversight powers in order to achieve political gains.

I caution my colleagues, who have placed political expediency ahead of moderation, their votes later today

will forever change this institution. Imagine a future where this body utilizes the most severe of its constitutional tools to continually put the opposition party on trial.

Madam Speaker, the American people have elected their Representatives to be their voice and vote on matters most important to this country. We must collectively focus on these issues, not on the political impulses of a few.

This cannot become the new normal. I will be voting a resounding "no" on these Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BROWN).

□ 1815

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Madam Speaker, when I was commissioned a second lieutenant in the United States Army, I swore an oath to support and defend the Constitution, and I have done so 13 times in my 35 years of public service. That oath means everything: to serve and fight for our country and to protect and promote our values.

Yet, President Trump betrayed his oath. He abused his power, the immense power of the Presidency. He threatened our elections by inviting foreign interference. He chose investigating a political rival over defending our national security.

So, today, we must use our power, the extraordinary power endowed by our Constitution and entrusted by the people: the power to impeach. We must hold President Trump accountable or else we will be complicit in undermining our democracy, our security, and our dignity.

His conduct demonstrates his unfitness to serve as Commander in Chief and warrants removal from office. The oath I took as a Member of Congress is the same I took as a soldier, an oath that reminds me values matter, that duty, honor, and the rule of law matter.

To keep my oath to the people I serve, the country I love, today I will vote to impeach the President of the United States.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD).

Mr. LAHOOD. Madam Speaker, I have said from the beginning of this process, impeachment is and should be the nuclear option reserved for the most treasonous activity and the most serious activity. Clearly, that has not been met here.

As I reviewed the facts and evidence, as a former Federal prosecutor—I have read the transcripts; I have watched the hearings; I have read the whistleblower report—that has not been met here.

In addition, this process has lacked fairness, due process, and transparency.

We shouldn't be here tonight doing this. This is a travesty.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HARRIS).

Mr. HARRIS. Madam Speaker, it is unbelievable to the few Americans who are going to be watching this because they know what the outcome is. We all know what the outcome is.

They are wondering: Why are we trying to negate the vote of 63 million Americans instead of talking about the things that Americans care about: prescription drug coverage, the high cost of prescription drugs, the high cost of healthcare, securing our borders, keeping our economy going? These are the things we should be talking about.

No, instead, we are going to pass this resolution tonight and then go home for Christmas vacation instead of doing the job of America.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. WATKINS).

Mr. WATKINS. Madam Speaker, I was a political newcomer before this; and just like President Trump, perhaps like me, he was naive to think that this House, that in the people's House, everybody was true and just. That is not the case.

Democrats weren't saddened by this sudden day. They weren't waiting for all of the evidence. This was always about politics because they loathe the President because he doesn't play by their beltway rules.

I should have known. But the fact is Kansas is better, the U.S. is better, and the world is better because of Donald Trump.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mr. CALVERT).

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, my friends on the other side of the aisle have been clamoring for this day since President Trump was elected.

The refusal to accept the election results and, later, the findings of the Mueller investigation have brought forth Articles of Impeachment that are negated by two simple facts, namely, the military aid to Ukraine was provided, and no investigation was ever started.

The real offense is that the President won the election, and their fear is that he will win again, despite all of their efforts.

I will vote against the partisan attempt to overturn the election.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. BURCHETT).

Mr. BURCHETT. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to impeachment against President Donald Trump.

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This is based on hearsay that was made by partisan witnesses behind closed doors. This impeachment is a sham, Madam Speaker, and it has divided this country.

Congress' wasted time on this impeachment would have been better used to address issues that are facing Americans, like securing our southern border, the opioid epidemic, or establishing a constitutionally mandated budget.

Now American workers have to wait until the Senate trial to pass USMCA that the President and the House Republicans have been working on for over a year.

I am disappointed in the path Congress chose to go down.

Mr. SCHIFF, Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR).

Mr. GOSAR, Madam Speaker, it is obvious today that there is an intense hatred by the Democrats for President Donald Trump.

Why do they hate the man so much? Maybe it is because of the out-of-control government gone wild: the abuses of FISA, the abuses of the FBI, the abuses in the State Department.

Maybe it is just the previous administration they are trying to cover up.

It is sad. This is a shameful act in what we are doing today.

Shame on the Democrats. Shame on them for pursuing this.

I ask every Member to vote "no" and to take notice of who votes for these Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. SCHIFF, Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. POSEY).

Mr. POSEY, Madam Speaker, this is a sad day for America.

We know this impeachment is a sham. They know this impeachment is a sham. They know we know this impeachment is a sham, and they know that most of the American people know that this impeachment is a shameful sham.

We know that it began the moment the President was elected, long before he ever had a telephone call with any foreign leaders. We have heard the numerous quotations from them that validate those very points, yet they persist in trying to overturn the duly elected President of the United States of America's election.

Mr. SCHIFF, Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I have heard several of my colleagues in a row now, and it is interesting to see how very few of them want to address any of the facts of the President's misconduct.

Apparently, Madam Speaker, I have struck a nerve. Nor do they wish to defend a President who would extort an ally, withhold military aid to help him cheat in an election.

They don't want to defend that conduct, so, instead, they say: Oh, Demo-

crats really want to impeach the President, or Democrats don't like the President.

But what they can't say is that this President's conduct was ethical.

What they can't say was that this President's conduct was legal.

What they can't say was this President's conduct was constitutional.

What they can't say is this President has upheld his oath of office.

No, they can't say that. All they can say is: We don't like the process, or. Our colleagues are just too happy to impeach, or. It is overturning the will of the public when it is a Republican President.

Interestingly, my colleagues who supported the impeachment of Bill Clinton did not think it was overturning the will of the people. Apparently, this impeachment provision only overturns the will of the people if it is a Republican President.

I would like to give them more credit than that.

What is the distinction here is the seriousness of the conduct. This remedy was put in the Constitution for a reason. It is not an unconstitutional remedy. It is part of the Constitution.

The only way you can conceive of this remedy as being unconstitutional is if you believe, as the President does, that he is the state, that anything that opposes him opposes the state and is, by definition, anticonstitutional.

But that, of course, is nonsense. But it is more than nonsense; it is dangerous nonsense.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Washington (Ms. SCHRIER).

Ms. SCHRIER, Madam Speaker, the people of Washington's Eighth District sent me to Congress to fight for their families and make thoughtful, evidence-based decisions.

I did not come to Congress to impeach a President, but evidence is evidence, and a balance of power is fundamental to our democracy.

On my first day in office, like everybody else here, I took an oath to uphold the Constitution and protect our country. History will judge this moment. Given all of the facts before us, impeachment is the only remedy.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I am sure it did strike a chord with the chairman since he showed up a little late, hadn't heard all of the arguments. We beat the facts back all the time. It is the majority side that had to run through this. That clock and that calendar are killing him, and it is killing him because his arguments are falling flat.

To speak of evidence, we looked at the evidence, and the evidence doesn't fit anything.

And by the way, if the gentleman had extortion put in articles. The gentleman can't because he can't make the case. He can only put it in his notes and then come to the mike when

he can't be questioned and talk about it. That is the question, and that is the chord that has been struck.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. ARMSTRONG).

Mr. ARMSTRONG, Madam Speaker, once President Trump was sworn in. Articles of Impeachment were introduced almost immediately. In 3 years, House Democrats have introduced 10 resolutions, getting support of over 100 of their Members, and all of that before the July 25 phone call.

But also during that time, the Russia conspiracy hoax was exposed. Obstruction of justice charges were abandoned after the Mueller hearings fell flat.

So, after 2 years, 19 lawyers, 40 agents, 2,800 subpoenas, 500 warrants, and 17 lies in a FISA warrant application, they had nothing to show for it.

Undeterred by the facts and uninterested in governing, the beat marched on. So here we are today. We have no quid pro quo, no bribery, no extortion, no crimes alleged in the articles at all.

But don't worry, because we have a brand-new, 632-page report alleging all kinds of things, some for the very first time.

This isn't a somber, solemn process. This is a political drive-by. They just want President Trump gone.

But this never-ending march toward overturning the 2016 election has consequences, because you are telling 63 million voters that you don't respect their vote.

Voters in States like mine, who not that long ago used to send Democrats to this august Chamber but, recently, have found no home in the Democratic Party, feel that their values have been replaced by a liberal, elitist agenda and feel that partisan points are more important than practical solutions.

Your never-ending impeachment quest is a constant reminder to them that you don't trust their judgment, you don't understand their way of life, and you couldn't care less about the issues that are important to them.

As Chairman NADLER has so ominously stated, if you are serious about removing a President from office, what you are really doing is overturning the results of the last election.

Well, they were serious. They spent the last 3 years talking about it, unwilling to accept the results of 2016.

I wonder if my colleagues recognize the irony that their impeachment vendetta is the greatest election interference of all, and it was homegrown right here in the Halls of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. SCHIFF, Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN).

Mr. ZELDIN, Madam Speaker, this impeachment is an embarrassment for House Democrats.

On the substance, the Democrats claim that their case is uncontested,

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relying on presumptions, hearsay, and 3 percent of the story trying to connect dots that actually aren't connected.

Some inconvenient truths: President Zelensky didn't know that there was a hold on aid until August 29. The aid gets released shortly thereafter, and Ukraine didn't have to do anything in order to get that aid released. President Zelensky says no demand, no quid pro quo, no pressure.

But Democrats want the public to ignore the other 97 percent of this story. It doesn't work like that.

Senate Democrats want new witnesses to show why there was a hold on aid. That is an odd request if you think you have already proven your case.

At the heart of this debate, two investigations are being discussed between countries. Democrats and media allies want the public to believe it is all just debunked that Ukrainians interfered in the 2016 election. They want you to ignore Avakov and Chaly's comments, that Chalupa worked with the Ukrainian Embassy, origins of the Steele dossier, the black ledger, and more.

The problem with all of this is that the American public are smarter than Democrats are giving them credit for.

Next, the Democrats claim the Republicans are arguing that it was Ukraine and not Russia that wanted to interfere and was interfering in the 2016 election. No, that is not what Republicans are saying.

Of course, we have the Burisma-Biden issue of a corrupt Ukrainian energy company run by a corrupt Ukrainian oligarch hiring Hunter Biden for at least \$50,000 per month, with no energy experience and no Ukraine experience, solely because he is Vice President Biden's son.

Now, the company wanted to hire Hunter Biden because they wanted to curry favor while there was this ongoing corruption investigation. Enter Joe Biden. He gets that prosecutor fired, threatening the loss of \$1 billion if it didn't happen immediately, which it was.

Now, Democrats believe that Burisma and Biden should be immune from scrutiny. I disagree. Never again should that conflict of interest ever happen. And our governments should be working together to get to the bottom of all of this.

This has also been a total disaster on the process, from getting a Federal worker to file a whistleblower complaint to Schiff's made-up version of the July 25 call.

In the closed-door interviews, Schiff was prosecutor, judge, jury, and witness coach. Every day he loved getting America drunk on his favorite cocktail, three ingredients: cherry-picking leaks, withholding key facts, and misstating evidence.

In the depositions and in the public hearings, the President's counsel was not invited to attend, present evidence, or cross-examine witnesses; and Republicans weren't allowed to call witnesses

like Hunter Biden, Joe Biden, and others.

Then there was the House Judiciary debate where Schiff couldn't even show up to present his reports. He had to have one of his staffers present it for him. This impeachment is ripping our country in half. It is fatally flawed on the process, the substance, the intentions, and the consequences. It is a total Schiff show. I encourage all my colleagues to vote "no."

□ 1830

Mr. SCHIFF, Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS).

Mr. MEADOWS, Madam Speaker, today, as we sit here debating impeachment, all they want to talk about is the Constitution and Alexander Hamilton. During the last 30 days I have heard more about Hamilton from my Democrat colleagues, and until then the closest they ever came to Hamilton was a \$10 bill. All of a sudden, what we have are these strict constitutionalists on the other side of the aisle.

Madam Speaker, this has nothing to do with the Constitution. It has nothing to do with anything but raw politics.

There is only one person on the other side of the aisle who got seven Pinocchios for not telling the truth. No one on this side of the aisle got that during this impeachment process, Madam Speaker.

The American people need to understand two key facts: The Democrats in control set their own rules of evidence. They said, what we need to do for impeachment is to have compelling evidence and bipartisan support.

They don't have either of those two things. They failed the rules that they made up themselves.

We have got President Zelensky of Ukraine saying that there was no pressure. We have got the number two guy in Ukraine saying that there was no pressure. We have got the number three guy in Ukraine saying that there was no pressure. These are the supposed victims of this alleged crime, and yet here we are supposedly having this compelling evidence and facts when the best witness they have—the very best witness they had—had to change his testimony twice. They mentioned him 611 times, and ultimately, he said: I presume that that is what the President meant.

Madam Speaker, I can tell you that there are not facts here to support it. But what is more important than that, Madam Speaker, is that here we are today and we have bipartisan opposition to impeachment, not bipartisan support.

My colleagues opposite want the American people to think that this is a sad and somber day. This is a sad day. It is a sad day for this institution be-

cause we have lowered the bar to impeach a President who continues to give us an economy that not only is growing, but growing at levels that we have never seen in the history of our country. When we look at unemployment at a level that is truly remarkable, they want to impeach.

But it is another sad day because now what they are doing is they are telling the American people that 233 Democrats deserve to decide who the President of the United States should be and disenfranchise 63 million voters.

When all is said and done, when the history of this impeachment is written, it will be said that my Washington Democrat friends couldn't bring themselves to work with Donald Trump, so they consoled themselves instead by silencing the will of those who did: the American people.

Mr. SCHIFF, Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

Mr. SHERMAN, Madam Speaker, Robert Mueller lays out facts from 2017 that constitute Obstruction of Justice but says the President cannot be indicted, only Congress can apply the law to those facts.

Many of us have been talking about impeachment, since those facts emerged in 2017.

Of course, today, we focus on more recent crimes.

So why did we talk of impeachment back when a Republican-led Congress would not act?

Why do we impeach today when a Republican-led Senate is unlikely to act?

First, because it is our constitutional duty, no matter what the political consequences.

Second, because it is the most effective tool to chasten and restrain a President who does not naturally feel constrained by the rule of law.

I would note that the President's attempt to extort Ukraine was secretive and furtive, far different from his modus operandi of brazen threats that we saw in 2017.

We can only imagine what high crimes and misdemeanors this President would have boldly committed had nobody been talking about impeachment then—had he felt immune from impeachment.

Today we will demonstrate that the President is not above the law.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Madam Speaker, it would have been nice if they had actually thought those crimes were bad enough to have put them in the articles, but they didn't.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RATCLIFFE).

Mr. RATCLIFFE, Madam Speaker, do you know who doesn't think the Democrats have presented enough testimony or evidence to impeach President Trump today?

It is the Democrats.

Sure, here in the House, Democrats running this inquiry have declared they have done everything needed and

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they have all the testimony and evidence necessary to impeach right now.

But right now, down the hall, Democrats in the Senate are saying the exact opposite. They are complaining they need more evidence and more testimony, because Senate Democrats know that House Democrats have built them a house-of-cards impeachment, an impeachment built by the same Democrats who told America: Trust us, President Trump committed treason; he is a Russian agent, and we have got evidence—which, of course, proved to be totally false.

To quote the favorite catchphrase of one Member of this House, they got caught.

Along the way, those same Democrats said: Trust us, the FISA law and court weren't abused by the Obama administration using a Democratic opposition research dossier against the Trump campaign and President Trump—again, totally false, and, again, they got caught.

When Democrats started this latest impeachment inquiry, they said: Trust us, we have not yet spoken to the whistleblower.

Again, totally false, and they got caught.

Sadly, my Democratic colleagues have placed their own credibility in the hands of Members of this body who have no credibility left. Members whom nobody trusts because they keep getting caught betraying America.

Unless a bolt of courage and integrity strikes that side of the room in the next hour, history will reflect that Donald Trump is the third President to be impeached. History may also shortly reflect that he will be the first President to be reelected after being wrongfully impeached.

If that happens, Democrats won't be able to hide behind a pretend veneer of caring about the Constitution. History will record the Democrats' legacy as a betrayal of the Constitution because the Founders meant for impeachment to be used for actions so extraordinary and so rare that it has happened three times in two and one-half centuries. It wasn't meant for congratulatory phone calls where there is no crime alleged, where there is no victim, and where the Democrats themselves couldn't even decide what to accuse the President of doing wrong before ending up with this embarrassment of a grab bag of an abuse of power article.

An obstruction of Congress?

To even allege it is an admission of constitutional illiteracy. The Founders had a term for what the Democrats call the obstruction of Congress. The Founders called it the separation of powers. The funny thing about obstruction is every time Democrats get caught trying to frame this President for some crime he didn't commit, they follow up by accusing him of obstructing their efforts to frame him for the things he never did in the first place.

The Founders warned and feared today might come when impeachment

was used politically by the party that had the most votes. Today the Democrats are the Founders' worst nightmare come true. I think most Americans are probably wishing they could impeach the Democrats.

To them I say: You can next November.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I think, when the history of this time is written, it will record that, when my colleagues found that they lacked the courage to stand up to this unethical President, they consoled themselves by attacking those who did.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. TAKANO asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD my remarks supporting the impeachment of President Donald Trump.

Madam Speaker, I rise today as a strong believer in the American experiment and the democratic norms that distinguish us from the monarchies that existed at the birth of our nation and from the authoritarian tyrannies that exist today.

The facts that were uncovered during the House's impeachment inquiry point to unlawful misconduct by President Trump—misconduct that demands that we, the Congress, hold him to account.

The president's egregious abuse of power undermined the integrity of our elections, which are the foundation of our democracy, and threatened our national security.

Furthermore, his refusal to cooperate with the House's impeachment inquiry represents an unprecedented level of contempt for the law and violation of our democratic norms. What the president obstructed wasn't trivial, nor was it about concealing private conduct—he obstructed a Congressional investigation of great significance to our national interest and infringed on Congress's ability to carry out our constitutional duty.

As a separate and co-equal branch of government we must hold the president accountable for his abuse of power and his violation of the public trust.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Ms. CLARKE) for a unanimous consent request.

(Ms. CLARKE of New York asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Madam Speaker, I will include in the RECORD my remarks supporting my vote for the impeachment of Donald J. Trump.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mrs. NAPOLITANO asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD my remarks supporting the Articles of Impeachment against Donald Trump.

Madam Speaker, I rise to say no one is above the law, not even the President. Today,

we assert this truth, uphold our constitutional duty, and hold President Trump accountable for his actions. To fulfill my oath of office and protect the Constitution, I will vote to impeach President Donald Trump.

President Trump abused the power of his office when he solicited help in the 2020 election from Ukraine. He did this not to root out corruption or with our nation's interests in mind, but to gain a personal, political advantage in the election. The President withheld \$391 million in congressionally-approved military aid for Ukraine until it agreed to investigate his political rival. This corrupt scheme put at risk Ukraine's security as well as our own national security, and it undermined the integrity of our elections. It is a clear abuse of power.

President Trump then obstructed Congress, which sought truth and accountability. He ordered the complete defiance of lawful subpoenas for relevant documents and prohibited witnesses from giving testimony, further violating the Constitution. This unprecedented blockade has threatened our cherished system of Checks and Balances.

Madam Speaker, it is time to finally hold President Trump accountable for these corrupt and unconstitutional actions. We must pass the two articles of impeachment before us today to make certain no one is above the law. I urge all of my colleagues to stand up for the Constitution and join me in voting yes.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mrs. BEATTY asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD my remarks supporting the impeachment of President Donald Trump.

Madam Speaker, I rise today—a day that will certainly be looked back upon by future generations.

Many years from now, when conspiracy theories are put aside and the truth made plain, the American people will know that President Trump broke his oath, abused the power of that great office, and thought himself above the law.

But they will also know that many members of this body—the People's House—kept their oath to defend the Constitution and held President Trump accountable.

History will note each of our names and where we stood today—for democracy, for justice, and for this great country.

When we vote to impeach this president this evening, I can tell you that I will do so with a clear conscience and with the full confidence that future generations will judge us on the right side of history.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Ms. WEXTON) for a unanimous consent request.

(Ms. WEXTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WEXTON. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD my remarks supporting the impeachment of President Donald Trump.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of both articles of impeachment.

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I did not come to Congress to impeach the President, but his actions have left us no choice.

The facts are uncontested and the truth is inescapable.

The President leveraged the highest office in the land for personal political gain. In doing so, he jeopardized our national security, undermined the integrity of our elections, and betrayed the public trust. The Framers gave Congress the power of impeachment precisely to protect our democracy from this kind of abuse of power.

The President's pattern of misconduct outlined in the articles of impeachment, and his unrepentant contempt for the rule of law, make it clear that he poses a clear and present danger to the very foundations of our democracy.

Voting to impeach the President is not an easy decision, nor is it one I take any pleasure in.

I will cast my vote tonight with a heavy heart and a solemn sense of duty to protect our Constitution.

Mr. SCHIFF, Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL, Madam Speaker, we are here today because of the failure of so many to cast aside narrow ambition to confront the threats standing before us. Offered the chance to investigate this government together, the President and his party stonewalled and obstructed. We are here today because we choose comfort over courage and aversion over the Republic.

This is the ongoing tragedy of our age. And it is ongoing. The matter is now solely in our hands and belongs to us and us alone. The buck has stopped. Many have invoked the judgment of history as an anecdote to this threat, but the threat to democracy is here today, not tomorrow.

We need not and we must not await the verdict of time for Donald Trump's abuse of power and obstruction.

We can offer that verdict right now, and we are.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN).

Mr. JORDAN, Madam Speaker, the Democrats forgot two key things. They forgot about the facts, and they forgot about fairness. Four facts will never change: We have the call transcript, no quid pro quo; we have the two guys on the call who have repeatedly said there was no pressure and there was no pushing; we have the fact Ukraine didn't know aid was held up at the time of the phone call; and, most importantly, Ukraine took no action and no announcement of investigation to get the aid released.

But Democrats don't care. They don't care about the facts, and they sure don't care about the process.

There was no subpoena power for Republicans and no Republican witnesses. During the depositions, Republicans were prevented from getting all their questions answered, but Democrats got every one of their questions, the witnesses responded to every one of theirs,

but not Republicans'. The chairman wouldn't let them.

Of course, there was the whistleblower, the anonymous whistleblower, with no firsthand knowledge, who was biased against the President, who worked for Joe Biden, and who was never compelled to testify—the guy who started it all.

This is really about that the President has been driving these guys crazy because he is getting things done. He is doing what he said he was going to do. He is having results. Taxes have been cut, regulations have been reduced, unemployment is at its lowest level in 50 years, the economy is growing, Gorsuch and Kavanaugh are on the Court, we are out of the Iran deal, the embassy is in Jerusalem, hostages are home from North Korea, and a new NAFTA agreement coming tomorrow.

But guess what, Madam Speaker?

When you drain the swamp, the swamp fights back. And they started attacking the President before the election even. On July 31, 2016, they opened the Russian investigation. The FBI spied on four American citizens associated with the Trump campaign. The FBI took the dossier to the FISA court. The dossier they already knew was false, they took to the court and lied to the court 17 times.

Guess what, Madam Speaker?

Three days ago on national television, even James Comey had to admit the FBI was wrong. Yesterday—1 day ago—the FISA court sends the FBI a letter and says: Straighten up and get your act together when it comes to the FISA application process.

Think about this: the attacks started then, and they have continued right up until today. But, Madam Speaker, I want you to think about something: the individual who said that the FISA process was fine, the dossier was fine, and the Russian investigation was fine, that same individual ran the impeachment process. That same individual's staff met with the whistleblower, that same individual is the only guy in Congress who knows who the whistleblower is for sure, and that same individual released the phone records of the President's personal attorney, released the phone records of a member of the press, and released the phone records of a Republican Member of the United States Congress.

This process has been unfair, it has been dangerous, and it has been harmful to our country.

Democrats have never accepted the will of the American people. NANCY PELOSI made that clear 4 weeks ago when she called the President of the United States an imposter. The will of the people, the 63 million folks who voted for this guy and made him President in an electoral college landslide, they never accepted that fact.

We are less than 11 months away from the election. Let the American people decide who should be President. Let the American people decide.

□ 1845

Mr. SCHIFF, Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHNEIDER).

Mr. SCHNEIDER, Madam Speaker, I rise to defend the Constitution and support these Articles of Impeachment.

The President abused the power of his office by corruptly putting his own political interest ahead of our Nation's security. He blocked congressionally authorized military aid to coerce Ukraine to launch a phony investigation into his political rival.

In the months since, he has waged a campaign of absolute obstruction against Congress' constitutional authority, ordering all Federal officials to defy subpoenas and refusing to produce even a single document.

Madam Speaker, I take no joy in today's impeachment vote or that the President's actions demand this response. This is a sad moment for our Nation. Only twice before has the House voted to impeach a President, and never before on accusations of compromising our Nation's security. I hope, in the Senate, prosecution and defense can call and cross-examine witnesses, and the Senators will hear the evidence and make their decisions without prejudice or prejudgment.

This is a solemn moment, but our system of checks and balances was designed for times like these. I have faith that our Constitution will guide us on the path ahead.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. NUNES).

Mr. NUNES, Madam Speaker, as the Democrats now admit, their attempt to remove the President began on Trump's Inauguration Day. When the Democrats' semi-official mouthpiece, The Washington Post, declared: "The campaign to impeach President Trump has begun."

For years, the Democrats tried to expel the President with the preposterous accusation that he was a Russian agent. As detailed by Inspector General Horowitz, dishonest intelligence officials used fake allegations spread by the Democrats to gain approval of a spying operation against the Trump campaign.

As they falsely accused the Trump campaign of colluding with Russians, the Democrats, themselves, colluded with Russians to manufacture these allegations in the infamous Steele dossier. They even tried to get nude pictures of Trump from Russian pranksters.

With the Russian collusion hoax, the Democrats had everything going for them: Federal investigations run by Trump haters; an endless supply of media cheerleaders; and a galaxy of leftwing interest groups amplifying their ridiculous messages.

Yet, even with all those messages at their disposal, the Russia conspiracy theory collapsed, so they quickly concocted plan B.

The Ukraine hoax was based on a supposed whistleblower who colluded

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beforehand with the Democrats. The Democrats then prevented Congress from interviewing the whistleblower while conducting bizarre secret depositions and selectively leaking testimony to discredited media hacks. The Democrats showcased the most useful witnesses in public hearings that somehow reduced support for impeachment. It is not easy to make a coup attempt boring, but the Democrats found a way. As it turns out, the American people don't think a routine phone call with a foreign leader is a good basis for ousting a U.S. President.

The Democrats also put forth ever-changing accusations against the President, including campaign finance violations, quid pro quos, election interference, bribery, and extortion. Eventually, they ended up with the ridiculous charges we consider today, abuse of power, an utterly meaningless term, and obstruction of Congress. One Democrat has pronounced the President guilty simply because he won't cooperate with their plan to railroad him.

But the only thing President Trump is guilty of is beating Hillary Clinton. The Democrats refuse to accept that loss, and now they are indicating they will continue their impeachment efforts even after this one falls in the U.S. Senate.

Madam Speaker, after all their deceit, phony investigations, ginned-up crises, and manufactured outrage, the Democrats need a long period of rehabilitation. They must learn how to do something productive for the American people instead of ripping the country apart in their lust for power.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the gentleman for his remarks.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL), chairman of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. NEAL. Madam Speaker, it is deeply unfortunate that we have to undertake this impeachment proceeding that unfolds this evening, but the part we play in this process is not optional.

Among other things, as the Intelligence Committee and Committee on the Judiciary have painstakingly documented, the President has indeed abused his authority, and he has indeed obstructed justice.

He threatened to withhold congressionally appropriated U.S. taxpayer dollars from an ally under attack from Russia unless they agreed to interfere in our election on his behalf. He has expressed no remorse, and he continues to maintain that his behavior was "perfect," while simultaneously obstructing legitimate congressional oversight and subpoenas and blocking members of his administration from providing truthful testimony to investigators.

His actions are so far beyond the pale that they have left us with no remaining recourse except impeachment, and so we shall impeach because, as drastic and as unwelcome as this step is, our

country faces even greater long-term risk if we fail to respond.

We cannot excuse a President who feels entitled to disregard or break the law with impunity. We are a nation built upon the rule of law, not the law of rulers.

The Framers gave us their best effort in 1787, and, indeed, it was an extraordinary one. The Constitution they set down wasn't perfect, but it founded a republic that has endured and thrived with exceptional stability.

As the late Senator Moynihan pointed out, only two countries in the world both existed in 1800 and have never had their governments changed by violence since then: the United States and Britain. Only eight governments have existed since 1914 and have not had their form of government changed by force since then: the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden, and Switzerland.

The innovative system of checks and balances that they constructed, with the separation of powers, brought about and successfully negotiated a generation of challenges that we have sustained.

In the very first week that the Framers began crafting this blueprint for America's freedom and stability, negotiations immediately started on impeachment. No government in the world at that time exposed the head of government to impeachment, but America was to be different.

In the view of the Framers, impeachment is in no way a constitutional crisis. It is a process that the Framers wisely judged that we would sometimes need. This evening is one of those rare moments.

Madison worried that, one day, the country would elect a President who "might pervert his administration into a scheme of peculation or oppression. He might betray his trust to foreign powers." George Mason asked the Delegates: "Shall any man to be above justice? Above all, shall that man be above it who can commit the most extensive injustice?"

Of course not, because having just thrown off one King, they would never consent to anoint another one. America firmly rejected the notion of divine right.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. NEAL. Article I of the Constitution prescribes Congress as the first branch of government. Just as importantly, let me quote Speaker Rayburn, who was asked: How many Presidents did you serve under?

Speaker Rayburn answered: None. I served with seven Presidents of the United States.

Impeachment is reserved for moments of grave danger when the constitutional order becomes dangerously out of balance, moments like this one. That is why I will vote to impeach.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. FERGUSON).

Mr. FERGUSON. Madam Speaker, well, here we are, on the verge of doing exactly what America doesn't want us to do and what they feared that you would do.

In 2016, I, along with 63 million American voters representing 304 electoral college votes, went to the polls, and we raised our collective political middle finger to D.C. and voted for Donald Trump, folks like my father, who watched this place destroy his profession of community banking; my friends and family in the textile industry who saw their way of life destroyed following NAFTA; Americans in rural areas whose opportunity and life and voice have been drowned out by the screams of socialist Democrats; our friends and neighbors living in poverty and crime, broken-down, project-based public housing, who for generations have been told by this place: "This is the best that we think you can do. Here is your check. God bless you. Now, move along." Those voters.

Now you want to remove our voice from office. Well, our voice will be heard. I stand here determined to make sure that it will be because we will fight back against this corrupt and unfair impeachment process.

How dare you, the liberal elites, the condescending bureaucrats, and every other kind of swamp critter in this godforsaken place tell the American public who the President should be. That is the job of the American voter, not yours.

This whole flipping rodeo is a sham and a shame, and it will not be forgotten.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HECK).

Mr. HECK. Madam Speaker, this week, Americans are busy finishing up their Christmas shopping mostly for their children, or if they are lucky enough to have them, their grandchildren. And high school and college students are taking final exams and sweating out the results.

That got me to thinking about those who follow and what our obligation is to them, and that got me to thinking about those who came before and how they might have seen their obligation to us, people like my grandfather, who our family believes literally was born on the boat on the way over here from Germany, or my father, who fought in World War II against the very people that his grandfather had left.

We are all here today, all of us, because someone before us sacrificed so that they could journey here and build a new life in this unique land. We are here today because those immigrants and their children were dedicated not just to the land of America, but to the idea: freedom and opportunity secured by self-government, choosing our own leaders in free and fair elections, and the rule of law under the Constitution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.
Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. HECK. This idea of America is in peril, brought about so by this President, who sought to cheat in an election, a President who puts himself above the law and attacks the bedrock constitutional precept of checks and balances.

Yet, the question is, can America survive this behavior? What ideal will we hand down to those who follow us? And, finally, what is our obligation to those who would follow?

It is simply this: to do our duty, to defend the Constitution and the values underpinning it by voting "yes" on the Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS).

Mrs. DEMINGS. Madam Speaker, we live in the greatest democracy in the world, and I am convinced that the overwhelming majority of Americans are good, decent people who work hard and play by the rules.

But then, we have people who have no respect for the law, people who have little regard for the rules, people who spend a lot of their time trying to figure out how to game the system. Law enforcement officers call them habitual offenders. The more they get away with, the more likely they are to engage in misconduct.

Some say it takes courage to hold powerful people accountable, but I see it differently. I see it as a sense of duty, a regular part of my job as a Member of Congress.

However, habitual offenders usually don't sneak up on you. They usually telegraph their intentions time and time again.

On July 27, 2016, in my home State of Florida, then-candidate Trump said, "Russia, if you are listening, I hope you're able to find the 30,000 emails," thereby inviting foreign interference into U.S. elections.

Then, the day after the special counsel testified before Congress, the President, feeling undeterred and emboldened, called President Zelensky and pressured him to help him rig the elections and chose to hold much-needed military aid over our ally's head until the President's demands were met.

Now, I served 12 years on the hostage negotiations team, and I know that pressure and demands come in many forms. In this scheme, we had both.

I have enforced the laws, and now I write the laws. But the laws mean nothing if the accused can destroy evidence, stop witnesses from testifying, and blatantly refuse to cooperate. I ask you to name somebody in your community or your family who can do that.

I know the President said that he can get away with anything he wants to. I come today to tell you that, no, he cannot, because no one is above the law, and he shall be held accountable.

□ 1900

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. CRAWFORD asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CRAWFORD. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD my remarks in opposition to this sham impeachment.

Madam Speaker, the talking points that we have heard all day are the same that have been repeated for months—and they all point to the same conclusions: the President did not abuse his power and he has been subjected to the most partisan, lopsided impeachment attempt in history.

President Trump said there was no quid pro quo. President Zelensky said there was no quid pro quo. The two people with any direct knowledge both said that there was no crime. Despite that, one of my colleagues—the same one who publicly claimed for over a year that he had seen clear evidence that the President was a Russian spy—secretly met with a whistleblower who had heard that the President had withheld aid for a quid pro quo. Now, we don't know if that knowledge came to the whistleblower second, third, or even fourth hand because we weren't allowed to question them—we just know it was hearsay.

What is readily apparent after years of this garbage is that the Democrat party simply cannot accept the will of the American people. Robert Mueller investigated the Russian collusion hoax for over a year and cleared that cluster of lies with his report. Rather than indemnify President Trump for promoting and campaigning on that sham, my colleagues across the aisle cooked up another scandal to deliver on their impeachment promises.

In 2024 there will be no Soviet-bloc countries left to accuse the President of colluding with and then what will you do?

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY).
Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today on the floor of this magnificent Chamber, the very heart of our democratic Republic, and I would imagine, Madam Speaker, that every one of us in this Chamber, regardless of party, understands, shares a common view, that being citizens of this great Republic is among life's most tremendous blessings.

We all know that no force on Earth is more powerful than the force of freedom. It is our miraculous constitutional system, Madam Speaker, defended by our men and women in uniform that has safeguarded that freedom for 230 years.

Each one of us in this Chamber bears a sacred duty, passed down to us through generations and affirmed in our oath of office, to preserve and protect our Constitution.

Madam Speaker, our Nation's Framers recognized that this Republic is fragile and that extreme partisanship can be among the most severe threats to its survival. That is why, in Federalist 65, Alexander Hamilton wrote: "...there will always be the greatest danger that the decision will be regu-

lated more by the comparative strength of parties, than by the real demonstrations of innocence or guilt."

Madam Speaker, our Democratic colleagues have been working to remove this President since the day he was elected, searching for an offense on which they could impeach. Failing to find one, Madam Speaker, they have decided to assume one.

Rather than attempting to enforce their subpoenas in court, they have also decided to declare it a high crime and misdemeanor when the President of the United States asserts his constitutional privileges.

The Democrats are asking Members of this body to impeach, despite the fact that they have presented no direct evidence of any impeachable offense.

Let me say it one more time, Madam Speaker. They have presented no direct evidence of any impeachable offense.

If anyone in this Chamber still believes the Democrats have proven their case, I would urge those Members to ask the chairman of the Intelligence Committee, Mr. SCHIFF, why he failed to appear to answer questions about his report. Before Members vote for impeachment, they might want to know why the author of the impeachment report will not defend it under questioning.

If the House impeaches here, Madam Speaker, it will create exactly the type of risk the Framers cautioned us to avoid: It will mean that divided government can imperil a democratically elected President based on unproven allegations and innuendo in the absence of direct testimony.

Despite all the rhetoric you have heard today, Madam Speaker, passage of these Articles of Impeachment may permanently damage our Republic. From this day forward, a hyperpartisan bare majority can cite this precedent to try to remove a future Commander in Chief.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to think of our Republic, think of the Constitution, think of the oath that we all swore to protect and defend that Constitution, and vote against these partisan, reckless, and dangerous Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, today we proclaim that no person is above the law, not even the President of the United States.

Donald J. Trump abused the power of his office and violated his oath of office by extorting a new and inexperienced President of a vulnerable foreign ally to dig up dirt on Mr. Trump's domestic political opponents.

He then obstructed the Congress, this equal branch of our government, from undertaking our duty, outlined in the Constitution itself, to investigate and check these violations.

Today, we do nothing more and nothing less than fulfill our duty to our country and to our Constitution.

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Mr. Trump has allowed foreign powers to interfere in our domestic affairs. He has endangered our national security and our democracy itself. Madam Speaker, for those reasons, we must impeach this President.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. WALDEN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WALDEN. Madam Speaker, I oppose this resolution on impeachment, and I include my statement in the RECORD.

Madam Speaker, President Donald Trump is unique in the history of the American presidency. No one has led as he has. His success and his style have frustrated his opponents.

Remember back to the fall of 2016 when pundits and politicians on the left lectured Americans about the historical need to accept the outcome of the election? Then Hillary Clinton lost. Some began undermining and attacking the President before he had even taken office. Others called for his impeachment.

Meanwhile, we now know—as a result of the Horowitz investigation—that some in the FBI engaged in nefarious actions to investigate the Trump campaign. They lied to and misled the FISA court in an incredible abuse of power by a government agency. Civil libertarians are rightly outraged by what occurred. Laws designed to protect America from foreign terrorists were misused to spy on an American presidential campaign.

The false narrative of the Trump campaign colluding with the Russians dominated the first two years of the Trump presidency. I supported the appointment of Mr. Mueller and repeatedly stood up for the independence of his investigation. I wanted the facts.

The Mueller investigation spent years and millions of taxpayer dollars and came up empty. That report produced nothing impeachable, or the articles of impeachment would include the findings of that report.

For me, overturning the outcome of an election demands two things: A bipartisan and fair process to determine wrong doing, and a criminal offense worthy of overturning the outcome of the voters' will. Neither threshold has been met in this case.

With a clear conscience, I will vote against both articles of impeachment.

Read the articles of impeachment. "Abuse of power" and "obstruction of Congress," are the charges. Neither of these are criminal violations. This isn't perjury or burglary.

Every administration—Democratic and Republican—pushes back against Congress' request for witnesses and information. The Constitution enshrines this separate-branch conflict. Congress doesn't like being told no. At times we've sued over it. It's the tension our founders designed into the competing branches of government. Work it out, or go to the courts. But in this case, they truncated the timeline to exclude a judicial review. They announced the outcome before the investigation was completed.

I voted to hold President Obama's Attorney General in contempt of Congress for refusing to turn over documents related to the "fast and furious" fiasco. Congress sued and won this case. But Republicans never seriously thought about impeaching the President.

I threatened to subpoena President Trump's Attorney General Jeff Sessions to his face in the East Room of the White House during our investigation of the opioid crisis. We eventually worked it out and got to review the data we sought. Not once did I think about impeaching the President over this matter.

The anti-Trump crowd has weaponized impeachment and converted it into a partisan tool, something one of America's founding fathers—Alexander Hamilton—warned against. The American people elected President Trump to shake things up in Washington, D.C. And that's precisely what he's done.

Lower taxes and less oppressive regulations would not have happened under a Clinton Administration. Hillary Clinton would not have stood up to China as President Trump has. She would not have demanded and gotten a new and better trade deal with our friends to the north and south. As for the Russians, she's the one who led the "reset" with Russia that offended our European allies and played into Putin's hand.

We've never had a better economy or lower unemployment in the modern era. We're the envy of the world. America is standing up to our competitors and enemies. We're getting new and better trade agreements and bringing more jobs back to America.

We've never had a President lean in more to get lower drug prices or make our allies keep their promises to help pay for their national security.

President Trump is doing exactly what he promised, and that includes violating the political norms of the Washington, D.C. swamp. And for that, the left wants to send him packing.

In fact matter, we should not impeach this president, but instead get back to work solving the problems facing American families.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. NORMAN) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. NORMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NORMAN. Madam Speaker, I oppose this resolution, and I include my statement in the RECORD.

Madam Speaker, Today I have heard my Democratic wam that our Republic is in a constitutional crisis. Yet the only crisis I see is the crisis of one party unable to accept its defeat.

When you lost, you called for the abolishment of the Electoral College, to redraw the electoral map, and now for impeachment.

You claim to be the Defenders of our Constitution, but is there any article you would not shred to gain power?

But if we pretend for a second that you are sincere about the dangers to our Republic, I am left wondering:

Why would you not follow the historical precedent of impeachment processes?

Why would you not have an open and fair investigation?

Why would you rush through the entire process?

In other words, if you are so concerned with the fate of our Republic, why on earth would you play politics with it?

The truth is, yours words do not match your actions.

As you pretend to cry about the state of our Republic, save a few tears for the state of your own party.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. PALAZZO) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. PALAZZO asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PALAZZO. Madam Speaker, I oppose the Articles of Impeachment, and I include my statement in the RECORD.

Madam Speaker, as the Democrats continue suppressing Republicans' right to speak out against the ridiculous impeachment inquiry, I was unable to provide remarks during the debate in the House on the two articles of impeachment today. I now ask my colleagues on the other side of the aisle why they chose to silence not only members of Congress but also our constituents. The responsibility of impeachment is not one I take lightly. I am disappointed the Democrats continued ramming this baseless impeachment through the House without hearing from every single member of Congress. Had I been provided the opportunity to speak before the House, I would have shared the following thoughts.

I rise with a heavy heart for our nation today.

Later this evening, House Democrats will force a vote on the weakest articles of impeachment this legislative body has ever seen in an attempt to overturn the fair and lawful election of Donald Trump.

Since the day President Trump was inaugurated, Democrats have made it their sole purpose to impeach this man, but for what? No facts have been presented to substantiate a single allegation made by the liberal majority.

Simply put Mr. Speaker, the Democrats in Congress do not care about free and fair elections. They do not care about the will of the American people. They care about obstructing the work of a great American president with whom they disagree.

The articles of impeachment before the House today, fall significantly short of an impeachable offense. This vote sets a horrible precedent that any majority can undo an election based on personality conflicts and policy disagreements.

The Democrats have entirely disregarded process and procedure by blatantly ignoring the notion that all are innocent until proven guilty—the president is not guilty of obstruction of Congress, and he is not guilty of an abuse of power.

The president making efforts to curb corruption in a country well known for corruption is not quid pro quo; it is good governance by a chief executive dedicated to doing right by the people of this country.

Make no mistake about it, when the work of this House is done, and the Senate votes to dismiss these charges, the other party will continue to obstruct and slander the president at every turn.

My constituents and I agree that the president is changing the face of America for the better. While some on the other side may not like his straight-forward manner, it is hard to argue that our country is not better because of him.

The Democrats have forgone due process in an attempt to fulfill their electoral shortcomings.

When my colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to find reasons why they lost in 2016, they should not look beyond the confines of their own caucus.

I encourage my colleagues to give up this charade, get back to leading, and move past personal vendettas against a duly elected president.

The majority party could take some lessons from our president. Let's put Americans first and get back to taking care of our country.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I would ask the gentleman if he is ready to close.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I have a few more speakers.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ESPAILLAT).

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Madam Speaker, if you live on Lenox Avenue in the village of Harlem in my district, you are not above the law.

If you live on Webster Avenue in the Bronx part of my district, you are not above the law.

If you live in Washington Heights, the immigrant neighborhood in my district, you are not above the law.

So I submit to you, if you live at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, you are not above the law, and you will be held accountable.

President Donald Trump asked the Ukrainian President to "do us a favor" and look into the Bidens. That is abuse of power.

President Trump used the official White House meeting to extort the Ukrainian President. That is abuse of power.

President Trump ordered White House staff to withhold \$400 million in aid to Ukraine. That is abuse of power.

President Trump and his staff defied multiple subpoenas from Congress. That is obstruction of Congress.

He blocked witnesses from testifying before this body. That is obstruction of Congress.

No one is above the law. I cast my vote for these Articles of Impeachment, and I ask my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. WITTMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I include my statement in the RECORD, recording that I am opposed to these Articles of Impeachment on the basis that they do not measure up to Article II, Section 4.

Madam Speaker, following the release of reports from the Oversight, Intelligence, Foreign Affairs, and Judiciary Committees, it is clear the hearings held by House Democrats over the last month have by no means proved President Trump committed an impeachable offense. Unhappy with the results of the election, House Democrats have been working to build a case for impeachment since the day President Trump took office. Speaker PELOSI said from the beginning that the impeachment must be 'compelling, overwhelming, and bipar-

tisan'; and today, none of those are true. In actuality, there is one thing bipartisan about this impeachment: the opposition to it.

There is a reason why only three presidents have gone through this before—it is supposed to be an exceedingly rare occurrence. The founders warned against a single party impeachment because it would divide the country—and that is what we are seeing right now, we are seeing Democrats weaponize the impeachment process and I am worried for the precedent this will set for the future.

The majority has wasted the Fall by being solely focused on impeachment—leading us to pass two continuing resolutions, miss important deadlines for the NDAA, and leave funding to the last minute. I believe we need to be focused on solving problems and working on solutions for our constituents; the American people are sick of this partisan stalemate. I hope in the beginning of the next session we can get back to the real issues—finding a bipartisan solution to lowering the price of prescription drugs, creating an infrastructure package, reforming our broken budget process, and expanding access to broadband in rural areas.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Ms. BROWNLEY).

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Madam Speaker, as the chair of the Women's Veterans Task Force, I see, every single day, the immense sacrifice our women veterans and all of our Nation's veterans have made in service to our country, in service to our Commander in Chief, our Constitution, to protect our democracy, and for every single man, woman, and child in our country.

When the President of the United States used \$400 million meant to protect our national security in order to cheat in our elections, he not only abused his power, he turned his back on the sacrifices our veterans and their families have made for all that we hold so dear. That abuse of power is reprehensible, and it is exactly what impeachment was designed to prevent.

We have a solemn duty to protect our Constitution, to protect our democracy, and to honor all those who have laid their lives on the line for these United States of America.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mrs. WALORSKI asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. WALORSKI. Madam Speaker, I will include in the RECORD my opposition to these Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mrs. DAVIS).

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, make no mistake. We are not impeaching this President. He is impeaching himself.

If you are the President and you obstruct justice, try to bribe a foreign leader, and threaten national security, you are going to get impeached. End of story.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. BUDD asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BUDD. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD my opposition to these Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Mexico (Ms. HAALAND).

Ms. HAALAND. Madam Speaker, I stand before you as a Representative of New Mexico, a place where we believe in dignity and respect for all. In Congress, I have been fighting for them. We have been working to make healthcare more affordable, education accessible, and move our country forward for the people.

But today, this President has forced us into a serious debate. We are talking about a President who used the power of the Presidency for his own political gain, risking our national security, and putting the integrity of the next election at risk.

It is a sad day when a President shows complete disrespect for Congress as a coequal branch of government and for the American people who elected us.

We collected the evidence, and the facts are indisputable. We all took an oath to protect and defend our Constitution. We have the solemn responsibility to hold this President accountable because it is our job.

I urge my colleagues to live up to our responsibility and show our fellow Americans that no one, not even the President, is above the law.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. MULLIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MULLIN. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD my opposition to these Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS) for a unanimous consent request.

(Ms. ADAMS asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ADAMS. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD my statement in support of the Articles of Impeachment against President Donald J. Trump.

After reviewing hours of testimony, countless pieces of evidence, and the Administration's own words and actions, I believe the case has been made that the President abused his power and obstructed Congress from fulfilling its constitutional duty.

As such, I will support both articles of impeachment today on the House floor.

The evidence shows that the President put his interests above those of the country.

We must act quickly because President Trump's behavior poses a clear and present danger to our democracy.

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His words and actions show that he is actively looking to interfere in next year's election by any means necessary.

We cannot stand for that kind of misconduct in our country's Chief Executive.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE), the minority whip.

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Speaker, impeaching a President of the United States. This isn't about some solemn duty tonight. Let's talk about what this is really about.

This has been about a political vendetta, a political vendetta that didn't just start with the Zelensky call. It started long before that.

Just listen to some of the quotes from Democrats in this Chamber:

Speaker PELOSI: It's been going on for 22 months, 2½ years, actually. We cannot accept a second term for Donald Trump. What's more serious is that he can't win.

This isn't about some crime that was committed. It is about fear that he might win reelection.

That is not why you impeach a President.

□ 1915

Al GREEN: "I'm concerned that if we don't impeach this President, he will get reelected."

The list goes on, Madam Speaker. In fact, there are some quotes that I can't even read on this House floor that some of our colleagues made.

And keep in mind, more than 100 Democrats on this House floor voted to impeach this President before the Zelensky phone call.

Just look at some of these Articles of Impeachment they voted for 2 years ago:

Fifty-eight Democrats voted to impeach the President over comments he made about NFL players kneeling for the Pledge of Allegiance. Over 50 Democrats voted to impeach him for that.

Just this summer, over 90 Democrats voted to impeach the President for comments he made about The Squad. So he makes comments about some other Members of Congress who make a lot of comments about him, and 95 Members vote to impeach the President of the United States.

This is a political vendetta. It has nothing to do with a crime committed. There was no crime.

And why don't we listen to some of the witnesses? Obviously, we weren't able to call all the witnesses we wanted, but there were witnesses. In fact, Gordon Sondland, U.S. Ambassador to the European Union, he is mentioned over 600 times in the Schiff report. He was their star witness.

And what did he say when asked: "Did President Trump ever tell you personally about any preconditions for anything?"

His answer: "No."

"Any preconditions for the aid to be released?"

"No."

"Any preconditions for a White House meeting?"

Under oath, he testified: "No."

Abuse of power, let's talk about that Article of Impeachment, Madam Speaker.

George Washington Law Professor Turley, who admitted under oath that he voted against Donald Trump, spoke to this claim of abuse of power. In fact, he said: "If you make a high crime and misdemeanor out of going to the courts, it is an abuse of power; it is your abuse of power."

You are doing precisely what you are criticizing the President of doing, abuse of power.

There is a House rule, Madam Speaker, that requires—not allows, but requires—that the minority get a day of hearing, which we asked for multiple times. They broke this rule. They didn't allow us to have a minority day of hearing. They didn't want to hear the facts about this case because it was never about the facts because there was no crime. It is about a personal political vendetta.

Now let's talk about obstruction of Congress, as they make up these terms to impeach a President because they didn't find a crime, and they were looking. It has been an impeachment in search of a crime.

But they talk about obstruction of Congress in saying the President defied subpoenas, subpoena after subpoena. Let's go through the Departments.

The Department of State they subpoenaed. Do you know that, literally, just 4 days after the subpoena, the Secretary of State, himself, responded to their subpoena?

The Department of Defense, a week later responded to the subpoena.

The Department of Energy responded to the subpoena.

We can go on and on with all of these agencies.

That is an abuse of power, that is an obstruction of Congress, responding to your subpoena?

That is what they did: They responded.

You might not have liked the answer, but that is not the way this works. You don't impeach a President because you don't like his foreign policy, as so many of those foreign policy experts came and testified.

But this isn't just about Donald Trump. They don't just hate Donald Trump, Madam Speaker. They hate the 63 million Americans who voted for this President, the forgotten men and women of this country who have been left behind, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, it is those forgotten men and women of this country that Washington had left behind.

And what is this President doing for them? He is delivering for them: 600 jobs in Pennsylvania; 1,000 jobs, workers in Mingo Junction, Ohio; \$750 million investment for 600 new jobs across this country; The Detroit News; Chrysler, 6,500 new jobs. That is what this

President is doing to deliver for those men and women of this country who have been left behind.

It is about time somebody stands up for Americans, and President Trump is. So it is a political vendetta.

But if they are going to go through with this, Madam Speaker, impeachment will not just be a stain on this Democrat majority; the impeachment will be their legacy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. KUSTER) for a unanimous consent request.

(Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire. Madam Speaker, I include my statement in the RECORD regarding the 75th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge in favor of the Articles of Impeachment.

Madam Speaker, earlier this week, I returned from a bipartisan trip to Belgium to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge—the Germans' last significant offensive during World War II.

We celebrated with courageous 95-year-old American veterans who turned the tide at Bastogne and the Ardennes Forest, so that my generation and generations to come may live in peace and freedom from tyranny.

My late father, Malcolm McLane, was shot down during the Battle of the Bulge and spent the final six months of World War II in a Nazi prisoner-of-war camp.

In this solemn moment, on this historic day for our nation, I reflect on the legacy of my father and all World War II veterans. We owe them—and all of the men and women who have served our nation—an incredible debt of gratitude for their service and bravery.

Today, we must defend a future worthy of their sacrifice.

Just moments ago, I upheld my oath to protect and defend the Constitution when I cast my vote to charge President Donald John Trump with articles of impeachment.

I did so with a heavy heart, to protect and defend the future of our great nation—our American democracy—for generations to come.

The evidence and facts are clear and uncontested: President Trump has abused the power of the Presidency for his own personal gain, at the expense of our national security and the integrity of the 2020 election.

Articles of impeachment are formal charges against the President—this is not a vote to remove him from office. That decision will be made following a trial in the United States Senate.

I hope that the Senate will hold a fair, transparent and thorough trial to get to the truth for the American people.

Meanwhile, I will continue to focus my efforts on our important work to improve the lives of Granite Staters and all Americans. I wish you and your family a Merry Christmas, joyful holidays and peace in the New Year. May God bless the United States of America.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the majority leader of the House of Representatives.

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Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I have had the honor of serving in this House for over 38 years. I have served during six Presidencies. I have been here through moments of tremendous progress and terrible tragedy. I have seen periods of rank partnership and patriotic bipartisanship. I have seen our two-party system work, and I have seen it break down.

Never in all my years of serving in this great institution that I love and the people of my district did I ever expect to encounter such an obvious wrongdoing by a President of the United States, nor did I expect to witness such a craven rationalization of Presidential actions which have put our national security at risk, undermined the integrity of our elections, and defined the constitutional authority of the Congress to conduct oversight.

We have heard from Republicans that this impeachment really has to do with policy differences or how we feel personally about the President, about his temperament or that we simply dislike him.

Throughout the Trump Presidency, Democrats have resisted pursuing impeachment even as we watched with dismay and disgust at a pattern of wrongdoing. That pattern included:

Ordering Federal agencies to lie to the public;

Firing the FBI Director for refusing to end investigations of his campaign;

Siding with Vladimir Putin against our intelligence agencies;

Taking funding away from the military to put towards an ineffective border wall; and

Setting policies that have led to the separation of families and caging of children.

We have, to be sure, deep disagreements with the policies and actions taken by this President.

There has been a lot of talk about the 63 million people who voted for Mr. Trump, little talk about the 65 million people who voted for Hillary Clinton.

The policy difference, or those votes, this President was elected legitimately because we have an electoral college. But none of these are reasons to pursue what Chairman SCHIFF has called a wrenching process for the Nation.

In fact, Democrats rejected that process emphatically in three specific votes:

In December of 2017, Democrats overwhelmingly voted against pursuing Articles of Impeachment, including the Speaker and me.

We did so again in 2018, with over 60 percent of the Democrats rejecting pursuing Articles of Impeachment.

And again just months ago, in July of 2019, 60 percent of the Democrats said no to pursuing Articles of Impeachment just days before the infamous July 25 telephone call. We did the same with 60 percent of Democrats voting not to proceed.

Credible witnesses, many of whom were appointed to office by President Trump, have corroborated the details and timeline of his abuse of Presidential power, which forms the basis of the first Article of Impeachment in this resolution. I will not recount all of the witnesses or abuses that have occurred.

I congratulate my colleagues and Mr. NADLER and his committee and Mr. SCHIFF and his committee for setting forth a compelling case. They have been laid out fully in the articles before us and by colleagues in their remarks.

What I will do is remind Americans that the House provided President Trump every opportunity to prove his innocence, but the witnesses were precluded from coming forth.

The witnesses who had personal knowledge did not come, either at the President's request, in which he refused to show up because he thought it was a sham, as so many of you have said, or to the committees. Instead, he ignored congressional subpoenas for documents and for testimony by White House officials and ordered his subordinates not to cooperate. Perhaps they could have exonerated him.

This, itself, I suggest to you, is unprecedented. When Presidents Nixon and Clinton were asked to hand over documents and allow officials to testify, ultimately, both complied because it is the law.

Such actions of the President can be taken as further evidence of his obstruction and abuse of power. It is, in and of itself, impeachable conduct, the subject of the second Article of Impeachment.

These two articles, of course, concern two very profound constitutional issues about the abuse of power in our Republic:

First, whether it is acceptable for the President of the United States—any President—to solicit foreign interference in our elections.

There is a difference as to whether he has done that, and the place to try that is in the United States Senate. But we believe strongly there is probable cause to conclude that, to undermine our national security, the integrity of our elections, and the integrity of our democracy.

Secondly, whether it is permissible for the President to obstruct Congress and act as if he is above the law and immune from constitutional oversight.

On December 4, the Judiciary Committee heard the testimony of constitutional law experts who weighed in on these points.

Some 1,500 historians have said the same thing as Professor Noah Feldman said: If we cannot impeach a President who abuses his office for personal advantage, we no longer live in a democracy. "We live in a monarchy or we live under a dictatorship."

The votes we are about to take concern the rule of law and our democracy itself.

Let us not forget the words of John Locke, so influential to the Founders of our Republic. John Locke, a millennium ago, said this: "Wherever law ends, tyranny begins."

□ 1930

This impeachment asks whether we are still a republic of laws, as our Founders intended, or whether we will accept that one person can be above the law.

In America, as we have said over and over again, no one is above the law, but only as long as we hold every person accountable for breaking the law, even a President, will that be true.

If the House does not act, if we wait and delay, we run the risk of allowing the President's misconduct, if we believe it to be so, to be repeated at the expense of the integrity of our elections, our national security, and our constitutional system of separation of powers.

Democrats did not choose this impeachment. We did not wish for it.

We voted against it. We voted against it once, we voted against it twice, we voted against it three times, as recently as July.

We did not want this.

However, President Trump's misconduct has forced our constitutional Republic to protect itself.

These votes that we are about to take and the process that will follow in the Senate are not only an assessment of the President's commitment to the Constitution or to his oath of office; it is, as well, a test of our own.

Damning evidence of the President's high crimes has emerged.

Nevertheless, Republican Members of this House and of the Senate have continued to defend the President, whose actions seem to many of us to be indefensible.

All of us feel a sense of loyalty to party. It is what makes our two-party system function. It is what helps hold Presidents and majorities accountable. But party loyalty must have its limits.

And as evidence of the President's impeachable offenses have mounted daily as the witnesses testified, it has become increasingly clear that the limits of partisanship have been reached and passed.

Now, Democrats and Republicans together face a test before our constituents, our countrymen, and our creator.

The New York Times on October 18 summarized the question now posed to House and Senate, Republicans and Democrats: "Compromise by compromise, Donald Trump has hammered away at what Republicans once saw as foundational virtues: decency, honesty, responsibility," and, yes, even civility.

It went on to say: "Will they commit themselves and their party wholly to Mr. Trump, embracing even his most antidemocratic actions, or will they take the first step toward separating themselves from him and restoring confidence in the rule of law?"

Madam Speaker, we have seen Republican courage throughout our history, from the Civil War to the Cold War.

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In 1950, Margaret Chase Smith, the Senator from Maine, a Republican, spoke bravely against the cancer of McCarthyism in her party, leading six of her Republican colleagues in a "Declaration of Conscience" against their own leadership.

"We are Republicans," they declared. "But we are Americans first."

In 1974, one Congressman took the brave and principled step of becoming the first Republican on the Judiciary Committee to support impeaching President Nixon.

He said to his colleagues and to the country: "It is not easy to align myself against the President, to whom I gave my enthusiastic support . . . on whose side I have stood in many a legislative battle, whose accomplishments in foreign and domestic affairs I have consistently applauded."

"But it is impossible," he went on to say, "for me to condone or ignore the long train of abuses to which he has subjected the Presidency and the people of this country. The Constitution and my own oath of office," he said, "demand that I bear true faith and allegiance to the principles of law and justice upon which this Nation was founded," he concluded, "and I cannot, in good conscience, turn away from the evidence of evil that is to me so clear and compelling."

My colleagues, that Congressman's name was Larry Hogan. Sr. He represented the Fifth District of Maryland, which I now represent. His son is presently the second-term Republican Governor of our State.

When Larry Hogan, Sr., died in 2017, every obituary led with praise for his act of political courage.

Who among us, many years from now, will receive such praise as a man or woman of courage?

Who will regret not having earned it? We have talked a lot about partisan differences.

There is one person who has spoken today who is neither a member of the Republican Party nor the Democratic Party. His name is JUSTIN AMASH, who represents a Republican district. He left the Republican Party, and in doing so, he admonished his colleagues that: "This President will only be in power for a short time, but excusing his behavior will forever tarnish your name."

He spoke on this floor in support of the two articles that we will consider this evening, neither a Democrat nor a Republican.

Representative AMASH, of course, is the only Member of this House who has no allegiance to either party, but to his country. He is supporting, as I have said, both articles.

We need not ask who will be the first to show courage by standing up to President Trump.

The question we must now ask is: Who will be the last to find it?

The pages of our history are filled with Americans who had the courage to choose country over party or personality, but as President Kennedy wrote:

"The stories of past courage . . . can teach, they can offer hope, they can provide inspiration. But they cannot supply courage itself. For this," President Kennedy said, "each man"—each woman—"must look into their own soul."

Madam Speaker, I urge my fellow colleagues in the House and, yes, in the Senate, to look into your soul, summon the courage to vote for our Constitution and our democracy.

I understand we will all not see the same conclusion, but to do less betrays our oath and that of our Founders, who pledged their lives, their fortune, and their sacred honor.

Let us neither turn away from the evidence, which to me seems so clear, nor from our good conscience, which compels us to do what, in our hearts, we know to be right.

Let us not allow the rule of law to end or for tyranny to find its toehold.

With our votes today, we can bear true faith and allegiance to the vision of our Founders and we can show future generations what it truly means to be Americans first.

Vote "Yes."

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, a few weeks ago just off of this floor, I said that a dark cloud was descending upon this body. And today, because of the clock and the calendar, it is closing.

It is amazing to me what I just heard from the majority leader: that Mr. SCHIFF and Mr. NADLER presented a compelling case for impeachment.

If this is a compelling case for impeachment, I am not sure why we are here right now.

It is not anywhere close to compelling.

But you know what is interesting is what I have heard today. The majority leader just spoke and said that the President was given every opportunity to come prove his innocence.

I tell you what, Madam Speaker, let me have just a few minutes, stop the clock, and let me go around to the press corps and everybody here and I am going to accuse you of something.

You did it. You did it. You did it. You did it. Now prove it is wrong. You did it.

Guess what? You don't want to, because deep down, you know that that is turning the entire jurisprudence of this country upside down.

You are not guilty until you are proven innocent. You are innocent.

And today from this floor, we have heard the majority leader say this President is guilty, and not the other way around.

He is innocent, and these articles come nowhere close to proving it.

But what is left of this body? Let's have an honest conversation, Madam Speaker.

What we have found over the past few weeks is that it is okay for the majority to tear down a foreign leader because they can't make their case. They have called him a liar or weak or

worse, or as he was called in the committee, he even looked like a battered wife.

It is below the dignity of this body and this majority to tear down a foreign leader because they can't make their case against this one.

We have broken rules in this House, even to this moment, Chairman SCHIFF and the others have broken H. Res. 660 by not turning over the things that they should be turning over.

I still have not gotten a transcript and the White House still has not gotten their stuff.

I guess to the minority here, the rules today don't matter either.

You see, there is a problem here, because we are going to vote on this tonight while breaking the rules. What a shameful incident.

But we also found a creative interpretation of minority rights. We saw the rise of partisanship, because of the things that have been done even further.

We have even seen Members smeared in reports by drive-by political hacks when they match phone numbers of the ranking member and members of the press.

That ought to concern every one of you as much as it concerns every one of us. Nothing but a drive-by hit.

But you know something? This majority leader also just said wherever law ends, tyranny begins.

But I will say this: In this House, wherever the rules are disregarded, chaos and mob rule actually begin, and the majority has taken that to a new level.

It has been said today, where is bravery?

I will tell you where bravery is found and courage is found: It is found in this minority, who has lived through the last year of nothing but rules being broken, people being put down, questions not being answered, and this majority saying, Be damned with anything else, we are going to impeach and do whatever we want to do.

Why? Because we won an election.

I guarantee you, one day you will be back in the minority, and it ain't going to be that fun. Because when you look at it, when you actually trash the rules of this House, you want to really look at: What did you gain at the end by trashing the institution you claim to love?

Those are the things we have found out so far.

But you know they are really careful in saying, Oh, you want to deal with process and process.

As I said last night in the Rules Committee—where they didn't want to listen—I will win on process and I will win on facts, because we have the truth on our side.

Let me remind you that here is what the facts actually say. There was no pressure. Look at the call between President Zelensky and President Trump: no pressure. There was no conditionality. There was nothing done to get the aid, and the aid actually came.

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There were five meetings, but when you look at it right now, none of which matter, because right now the dark cloud is descending upon this House.

I am fearful, Madam Speaker, when I look out into that abyss. I don't know what I see, but I tell you what I do see. I see coming up a President who will put his head down, even through this sham impeachment, and he will do his job. He will put the American people first. He will tell them, I care about you. He will still put the economy first, and he will make sure that this country stands strong.

That is what I see in this abyss. That is where we are going.

□ 1945

Madam Speaker, it is with that hope in the future that I recognize right now that I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the Republican leader of this House.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Madam Speaker, I must warn you, I am about to say something my Democratic colleagues hate to hear: Donald J. Trump is President of the United States. He is President today. He will be President tomorrow. And he will be President when this impeachment is over.

Madam Speaker, when they accept that, maybe this House can get back to work for the American people.

But, tonight, I rise not as the leader of the opposition to this impeachment or as the elected Representative from the Central Valley of California. I rise as KEVIN MCCARTHY, citizen, no better, no worse than the 435 Representatives who are in this Chamber or the 330 million Americans watching this institution make what I believe to be one of the worst decisions we have ever made.

It doesn't matter whether you are Democrat or Republican, whether you are liberal or you are conservative, whether you are the first generation or the tenth, at our core, we are all American, all of us. We choose our future. We choose what kind of Nation we want to be.

Here is our choice tonight: Will we let impeachment become an exercise of raw political power, regardless if it damages our country? Or will we protect the proper grounds and process for impeachment now and in the future?

For months, Democrats and many in the media have attempted to normalize the impeachment process that would remove a duly elected President from office. After 3 years of breathless and baseless outrage, this is their last attempt to stop the Trump Presidency.

Madam Speaker, Speaker PELOSI even recently admitted that Democrats have been working on this impeachment for 2½ years. Those were her words; they were not mine. Because they lost to him in 2016, they will do anything or say anything to stop him in 2020.

That is not America. That is not how democratic republics behave. Elections matter. Voters matter. And in 11 months, the people's voice will be heard again.

Impeachment is the most consequential decision Congress can make other than sending our men and women into war. Yet, 85 days ago, Speaker PELOSI chose to impeach the President of the United States. She wrote the script and created an artificial timeline to make the details fit. Why else are we doing this just hours before Christmas?

If that is all it was, a rush to judgment, she could be forgiven. But before the Speaker saw one word, one shred of evidence, she moved to impeach.

In the past, in this body, such a step demanded a vote from all of us from the start, but not only did she move to impeach before she gave this House and the hundreds of millions of people we represent a say in whether to pursue an impeachment inquiry, she threw out the bipartisan standards this House gave Presidents Nixon and Clinton.

That is why I immediately sent Speaker PELOSI a letter asking her to follow the rules of history, of tradition, to follow those standards that have served America well. What did she say? She rejected it. She rejected it because Democrats knew a fair process would crumble their case.

A fair process would have exposed to the American public what many already knew: Democrats have wanted to impeach President Trump since the day he was elected, and nothing was going to get in their way, certainly not the truth.

Madam Speaker, Chairman SCHIFF said he had evidence, more than circumstantial, of collusion. That was false.

In January, when we all stood in this body, we stood up, we raised our hands, and we swore that we would uphold the Constitution. A few mere hours after that, Congresswoman TLAIIB said she was going to impeach the motherfucker. Those are not my words.

A year before taking the majority, Chairman NADLER campaigned to the Democrats that he wanted to be chairman of the Judiciary Committee, where impeachment is. The New York Times writes, Madam Speaker, because he is the "strongest Member to lead a potential impeachment."

Congressman RASKIN, a leading Democrat on the Judiciary Committee, one who the Democrats had represent them in the Rules Committee for these articles just yesterday, told a crowd he would impeach President Trump 2 days before he was even sworn into office.

What we have seen is a rigged process that has led to the most partisan and least credible impeachment in the history of America. That is this legacy. Any prosecutor in this country would be disbarred for such blatant bias, especially if that prosecutor was the fact witness, the judge, and the jury.

Madam Speaker, Democrats haven't just failed on process. They have also failed on evidence. I have heard a lot of debate on this floor today, but I haven't heard one Member of this body dispute this simple fact: President Trump provided lethal aid to Ukraine.

It came before the call; it came after the call; and it continues to this day.

President Trump provided Ukraine tank-busting bombs. The previous administration, they gave blankets. This is the truth.

Meanwhile, the Democrat's case is based on secondhand opinions and hearsay. Simply put, there are no grounds for impeachment.

As constitutional scholar Jonathan Turley—and I would challenge to say he is probably the most respected, and we all know it—a Democrat who did not vote for the President said, under oath: There was no bribery. There was no extortion, no obstruction of justice, and no abuse of power.

Based on the facts, based on the truth, based on the lack of evidence, Turley called this the fastest, thinnest, and weakest impeachment in U.S. history.

Such a definitive answer should be the end of all of this. But Speaker PELOSI is still moving forward with this impeachment, without evidence or facts or truth or public support. The Speaker says it is out of allegiance to our Founders.

On this, I agree. I agree with the Speaker that we should listen to the Founders. If one does, it is very clear that this impeachment is unfounded and improper.

In the Federalist Papers, Alexander Hamilton wrote there would always be the greatest danger that impeachment would be driven by partisan animosity instead of "real demonstrations of innocence or guilt"—that impeachment would be driven by partisan animosity instead of "real demonstrations of innocence or guilt."

James Madison, another author of the Federalist Papers, wrote the danger of legislative abuse "must lead to the same tyranny as is threatened" by executive abuse.

The Founders did not want impeachment to be used for political or partisan battles. If my colleagues do not want to follow the constitutional high standards for undoing a national election, perhaps they could have followed Speaker PELOSI's standard, at least the one she promised to follow back in March. It was a very sensible standard. She said that "impeachment is so divisive," the evidence must be "overwhelming," "compelling," and "bipartisan."

Not one of those criteria has been met today. Based on the facts, based on the evidence, based on the truth, this impeachment fails even that Pelosi test.

Those who now say removing President Trump would protect the integrity of our democracy have it backward. By removing a duly elected President on empty Articles of Impeachment, Congress will erode public trust in our system of government.

I understand they dislike the President, his beliefs, the way he governs, and even the people who voted for him. How do I know this? Because they say so, day in and day out.

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In 2016, they even dismissed his supporters, calling us “deplorables.” Now, they are trying to disqualify our voice before the 2020 election. They want to undo the results of the last election to influence the next one.

As I said, President Trump will still be President when this is all over. But Congress will have wasted months of time and taxpayer dollars on impeachment rather than doing what the American people want us to do. It didn't have to be this way.

Is this why we came here to serve, to trample on due process rights, to issue more subpoenas than laws, to appease the new Democrat-socialist base? That is not leadership. That is raw partisan politics, and they know it.

By refusing to acknowledge the truth or follow the facts by substituting partisan animosity for real demonstrations of innocence or guilt, and by continuing a 3-year effort to undermine the President, this impeachment has divided this Nation without any concern for the repercussions. Moreover, politicizing this process has discredited the United States House of Representatives and could forever weaken the remedy of impeachment.

To again quote Professor Turley, it is the Democrats' rush to impeachment on these grounds, with unfair procedures, that is an “abuse of power.” History will right that.

Madam Speaker, as I said at the beginning, we face a choice. Do you trust the wisdom of the people, or do you deny them a say in their government? Fortunately, the people will have the opportunity to speak up and render their verdict in 11 months.

□ 2000

To my fellow Americans, if you approve of the way this House has conducted their business, if you want to see your tax dollars go forward to endless investigations, support this impeachment.

But if you want to restore a working Congress like the previous Congress that listened to you and worked to bring the best economy this country has ever seen and one that, once again, will work with the President to get things done for you and your family, then join with us in rejecting this baseless impeachment.

That is what is wonderful about this system of ours. We are a government of, by, and for the people. Always remember, we work for you, not the other way around.

Now, I will say this stronger and with more conviction than I have ever said it before: In this time of great trial and tribulation, may God bless America.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, after 8 hours, let us return to where we began, with the articles themselves.

Article I charges the President of the United States with abusing the power

of his office by coercing an ally into cheating in a U.S. election on his behalf. It charges the President of the United States with abusing his power by withholding official acts; by withholding a White House meeting that the President of Ukraine desperately sought to establish the support of his most important benefactor, the United States; by withholding hundreds of millions of dollars of military aid to a nation at war in order to get that nation to intervene in our election by smearing his opponent. That is the gravamen of the charge in Article I.

And what is the defense from my colleagues?

And I have listened carefully to my colleagues for the last 8 hours, and I have to say, it has been hard for me to follow. But I think, when you cut through it all, when you cut through all of the sound and the fury signifying nothing, what it really amounts to is this: Why should we care? Why should we care about what the President did to Ukraine?

Well, first of all, we should care about our allies. We should care about Ukraine. We should care about a country struggling to be free in a democracy.

We used to care about democracy. We used to care about our allies. We used to stand up to Putin and Russia.

We used to. I know the party of Ronald Reagan used to.

Why should we care about Ukraine? But, of course, it is about more than Ukraine. It is about us. It is about our national security.

Their fight is our fight. Their defense is our defense.

When Russia remakes the map of Europe for the first time since World War II by dint of military force and Ukraine fights back, it is our fight, too.

And when the President sacrifices our interests, our national security for his election, he is sacrificing our country for his personal gain.

That is the gravamen of Article I.

Article II charges the President of the United States with obstructing the Congress, with denying the Congress any witness, any document, by telling all of his administration people: You will not appear. You will ignore a co-equal branch of government.

And what is the defense to this from my colleagues again? It is: Why should we care? He is the President of our party. Why should we care if he ignores this Congress?

Well, I remind my friends that he will not be the last President. There will be another President, and you may be, one day—although you do not act like it—you may one day be in the majority, and you will want to hold a President accountable.

What will you say when that President says: “You are a paper tiger. You have no oversight. I can ignore your subpoenas”? What will you say? What will you argue?

“Well, no, no, that was different. Then we were in the minority. Then it was a Republican President.”

Will that be your argument? Is that how little faith you have in our democracy and our Constitution? Is that how poorly you defend and uphold our Constitution?

But, finally, let me ask this question that overrides it all: Why should we care about any of this?

I will bring you to one conversation that came to light, because it is not the most important conversation, but, in many ways, it is the most revealing.

It took place on September 14 in Ukraine, when Ambassador Volker sat down with Andriy Yermak, the top adviser to Zelensky, and he did what he should do. He supported the rule of law, and he said: You, Andriy Yermak, should not investigate the last President, President Poroshenko, for political reasons. You should not engage in political investigations.

And do you know what Yermak said: Oh, you mean like what you want us to do with the Bidens and the Clintons?

And in that abrupt, brutal retort, we see why we should care, because what he was saying is: You, America, have forgotten what it means to uphold the rule of law. You have forgotten what it means to say that no one is above the law. We are a struggling democracy, but even we know better than that.

What is at risk here is the very idea of America. That idea holds that we are a nation of laws, not of men. We are a nation that believes in the rule of law.

When we say we uphold the Constitution, we are not talking about a piece of parchment; we are talking about a beautiful architecture in which ambition is set against ambition, in which no branch of government can dominate another. That is what it means to uphold the Constitution.

If you ignore it, if you say the President may refuse to comply, may refuse lawful process, may coerce an ally, may cheat in an election because he is the President of our party, you do not uphold our Constitution. You do not uphold your oath of office.

Well, I will tell you this: I will uphold mine. I will vote to impeach Donald Trump.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. OMAR. Madam Speaker, on March 7, 1788, six months after the Constitution was signed at Independence Hall, Alexander Hamilton laid out in detail the standards for impeachment in the Federalist papers.

Impeachment should, quote “proceed from the misconduct of public men, or, in other words, from the abuse or violation of some public trust,” Hamilton wrote.

Donald Trump has without question met these standards.

These words from our framers—they don't only serve as guidance for people in this country.

They serve as guidance for people around the world wishing to build a sound system of government.

And they have allowed us in the United States of America, to stand for democracy and the rule of law around the world.

So as the world watches, captivated and bewildered by the lawlessness of our president, I hope they are also able to see the full functioning of our democracy as we hold him accountable.

With this impeachment vote, the world is able to see the fruits of our democracy and the glory of the checks and balances preserved in our Constitution.

Unlike the dictatorship that my family fled from, in a democracy, we don't just vote. We get to impeach a lawless president.

Mr. ESTES. Madam Speaker, I speak in opposition to the unprecedented and unauthorized impeachment of the President of the United States.

Since the day after the 2016 election, many of my colleagues have vowed to impeach President Trump and have since spent more than two years searching for a reason to do it.

Today, they have brought forward two articles of impeachment based on unfounded accusations of abuse of power and obstruction.

Despite a lack of evidence, an unfair process and no bipartisan support, my colleagues across the aisle have barreled toward impeachment, ignoring or delaying key priorities like the US-Canada-Mexico Agreement along the way.

This is a sad day and the fact remains that this effort seeks to overturn the 2016 election not based on evidence, but on a disdain for President Trump.

I will vote against the articles of impeachment before us because I think the American people deserve better from the House of Representatives.

So on behalf of hardworking Kansans in the Fourth District and Americans across our country, I call on my colleagues to vote against articles of impeachment and focus on priorities that matter like growing our economy, supporting our veterans and military, lowering prescription drug costs, and helping Americans prepare for jobs and retirement.

That's what the American people sent us here to do and it's time we got back to work and beyond this shameful impeachment.

Mr. JOHN W. ROSE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this partisan impeachment spectacle that seeks to accomplish what President Trump's opponents failed to do at the ballot box in 2016. The bedrock of this country is our Constitution. Article II of the United States Constitution grants our President the necessary authority to deal with other nations and their leaders.

This President was lawfully elected by the American people. When President Trump was sworn into office, he assumed the role of our nation's Commander-in-Chief. And, as Commander-in-Chief, he has done absolutely nothing illegal. The impeachment votes today are a sad continuation of the efforts that have been underway since President Trump was elected.

The majority has wrongly denied President Trump the fair process that was afforded to President Clinton and President Nixon at every stage of this investigation. I am also profoundly disappointed that the House Judiciary Committee refused to hold a minority day hearing in compliance with Clause 2(j)(i) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House.

It should also greatly concern all Americans that co-equal subpoena authority was not granted to the minority during this hyper-partisan process. Co-equal subpoena authority for

both the minority and majority has been a bedrock of past impeachment investigations. I am disappointed that my resolution, H. Res. 667, which would have granted co-equal subpoena authority to the minority and majority, was not adopted.

Instead of working to combat rising prescription drug prices, securing our southern border, protecting religious freedom, and reining in out-of-control government spending, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have been laser-focused on removing President Trump from office for purely political reasons.

I want to remind those who are leading this ridiculous waste of taxpayer resources that there will be another election in 2020. The next election is the avenue for deciding a new president, not this. Throughout the history of this country, impeachment has been a rare process. With today's impeachment, I worry that in the next 230 years of our republic, it will be rare that a president is not impeached.

On behalf of my fellow Tennesseans, and on behalf of my constituents in the Sixth District of Tennessee, I stand with our President and Commander-in-Chief and will vote "no" on both articles of impeachment.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, long before today's votes were scheduled, my wife Karen and I made arrangements to visit our son Joshua in Tanzania where he's serving in the Peace Corp. At the White House last week I informed President Trump that I would not be present for these votes, and he was supportive of me visiting my son. I told him I did not support his impeachment, and I have requested that this statement of my reasons for opposing both articles of impeachment be entered into the Congressional Record.

I've been to Ukraine twice this year. I was an observer of the second round of the Presidential election on April 21, 2019. I returned with a bipartisan Congressional delegation from September 28 thru October 5, 2019 right in the middle of this supposed controversy.

We met with many people. We met with our embassy leadership. We also met with the Ukrainian Foreign Minister and Minister of Defense. We had a chance to visit our soldiers who are helping in the training mission of the Ukrainian military. During that time, we met with the military leadership of both countries. Finally, we met with members of the Ukrainian parliament. During all these meetings no one mentioned a quid pro quo.

What I also know is this: The Trump Administration provided the long-overdue aid to Ukraine, including lethal Javelin anti-tank missiles, that had been authorized by Congress but withheld by the previous administration in their misguided efforts to appease Russia. Other assistance to Ukraine was temporarily delayed this year following the election of a new president—a political outsider we knew little about.

The new president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, also addressed this issue several times. He has rejected the accusation that any quid pro quo or any pressure was applied to him or the Ukrainian government. The aid was also released prior to the Ukrainian government being pulled into this political controversy. These observations convince me that the first article of impeachment, "abuse of power," is not credible.

My experience in Congress, including during the impeachment of President Clinton, likewise convinces me the second article of impeach-

ment, "obstruction of congress," is not a credible charge.

Constant tension exists between our legislative and executive branches of government. Every president I've served with has said at one time or another he is empowered to do this or to withhold that. When Congress disagrees, we have at times taken those questions of executive authority or privilege to our third branch of government: the courts. But the Democrats haven't even given President Trump an opportunity to defend his executive privilege through the courts, and they're demanding that he just give up his constitutional powers under Article II.

I'm disappointed to miss these votes but not embarrassed. I'm embarrassed that they are even happening.

Mr. POSEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to oppose the articles of impeachment which have been produced by this flawed process, which was based on hearsay and testimony largely collected from a closed-door, one-sided investigation.

In fact, the only witness we heard from who had direct knowledge of the conversation in question, testified that President Trump did not want a quid pro quo and confirmed that the aid to Ukraine was released without the launching of any investigation that the President's detractors say he was seeking.

The two articles of impeachment in the resolution—abuse of power and obstruction of Congress—are broad and cite no specific crimes that the President committed. The House Democrats are basing the entire impeachment on hearsay testimonies grounded on absolutely no evidence of a crime.

However, last week we had a look at some real wrongdoing. We found out from the Justice Department's Inspector General that the investigation into whether President Trump colluded with the Russians was based on fraudulent information filed with the secret court. The FBI was found to have withheld exculpatory evidence and senior FBI leaders were found to have manipulated facts in order to support this false collusion narrative, justify their investigation and expand it. This happened on multiple occasions.

While the Mueller investigation found no collusion, some Members of Congress, like House Impeachment Leader ADAM SCHIFF, knowingly promoted this falsehood and used similar tactics to engineer this impeachment inquiry. This is unacceptable.

For the above reason, I voted to censor Chairman ADAM SCHIFF and will vote against these articles of impeachment.

We know this impeachment is a sham. They know this impeachment is a sham. They know that we know it is a sham.

We all know this shameful impeachment began the moment the President was elected, long before he ever had a single telephone call with any foreign government. We've heard the numerous quotations by those on the other side that validate that fact. And, yet the other side persists in attempting to overturn the results of the legitimate election of President Donald J. Trump, because he dares to drain a swamp to which they are beholden.

When the President calls for an investigation of corruption, the other side calls it "digging for dirt." When they dig for dirt, they call it an "investigation."

This is a sad day for America. This impeachment is the worst case of partisan politics in the history of our Republic.

December 18, 2019

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

H12195

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, there is no joy for me in the impeachment process, because I know the nature of impeachment is polarizing. Unfortunately, based on his own words, conduct, and the evidence from credible witnesses, there is no other option but to impeach.

The first article alleges the President abused the power of his office for personal gain. He withheld military aid and an Oval Office meeting from a foreign government unless they gave him dirt he could use against his likely challenger to help his own re-election bid. The President admitted he did this. This conversation was in the transcript the White House released. Two State Department officials' texts and phone calls confirmed the transcript and the President's own words.

The second article alleges the President obstructed Congress by refusing to comply with the lawful requests made by Congress in the impeachment inquiry. President Trump repeatedly instructed government officials and agencies not to cooperate and spurn subpoenas. In the history of impeachment in our country, this has never happened. No President or Administration facing impeachment has ever categorically denied subpoenas and refused requests for documents, until President Trump.

The facts are not in dispute. The President and his Chief of Staff have admitted they did it and told us "we do that all the time, get over it." We must not get over it. We must not let the abnormal become the normal. We cannot allow this President to "do whatever he wants" if it violates the Constitution and laws of the United States.

To not impeach would say to future presidents they can disregard the Constitutional authority given to Congress. To not impeach would announce to foreign countries that America's presidency is for sale. To not impeach would tell future presidents they too can try to rig an election in their favor instead of letting voters decide. To not impeach would say our President is above the law.

The President and Members of Congress take an oath to the Constitution. The President violated his oath, but I will not violate mine.

Mr. McCAUL. Madam Speaker, for the first time in history, the House is moving to impeach a duly-elected president without asserting a crime. Instead, they are charging President Trump with a vague "abuse of power" for allegedly conditioning U.S. security assistance to Ukraine on an investigation into an energy company.

This deeply flawed inquiry did not produce clear evidence or bipartisan support. At a minimum, one would expect bipartisan support for such an extraordinary measure.

As a former federal prosecutor with the Public Integrity Section of the Department of Justice, I approached this inquiry with the same standards I would have applied to any case I handled during that time. During six weeks of depositions, I listened diligently and sought out relevant facts. But the Majority, driven by a political timeline, insisted on a rush to judgment with an incomplete factual record. Instead of interviewing multiple people with first-hand knowledge, they settled for speculation and innuendo.

Ultimately, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle failed to prove the President tied U.S. aid to a political investigation. Here's what we learned instead:

The president placed a temporary hold on U.S. security assistance in mid-July and re-

leased it September 11 without Ukraine ever announcing an investigation.

Multiple witnesses provided testimony that the pause was due to the President's long-standing concerns about corruption in Ukraine. It took for firsthand accounts from administrative officials, such as Vice President Mike Pence, to see the sincerity of Ukraine's new President Volodymyr Zelensky. He campaigned as an anti-corruption reformer and made historic progress after his party took over the Ukrainian parliament in August.

The Democrats' key witness—of which there was the only one who talked with the President about the aid—is Ambassador Gordon Sondland. When pressed, Sondland admitted he never knew why the aid was delayed. Neither President Trump, nor anyone else, ever told him that aid was tied to investigations, and any opinion he expressed to others about such a connection was only him "speculating."

President Zelensky and his senior advisor Andriy Yermak, the key Ukrainians in the Democrat narrative, have repeatedly and strongly denied they were ever pressured or given any sense that the temporary hold was connected to investigation requests. Indeed, they were not even aware of the hold until it was publicly reported in the press.

History will judge this inquiry for the rush to impeach President Trump without direct evidence, in defiance of historic precedent and as a one-sided political probe. The "investigation" was held in the most secret room in the Capitol. Depositions occurred on days lawmakers were out of town. The Minority was denied basic fairness and did not allow them to call a single witness. The administration was not allowed to bring executive branch lawyers to defend themselves during depositions.

This contrasts with previous impeachment inquiries, where Presidents Nixon and Clinton could have administration lawyers attend all depositions and hearings, ask questions, make objections, present evidence, and request their own witnesses. Those rights were denied in this inquiry, as this impeachment process was weaponized for political gain.

Opposing impeachment does not mean embracing every decision made by the administration in this case. I strongly disagreed with the hold on the security assistance that Congress had appropriated for Ukraine and wrote an urgent letter with the gentleman from New York, Chairman ELIOT ENGEL, a week before the aid was released. Then and now, I believe that unwavering support for Ukraine to counter Russian malign influence is a vital component of U.S. national security.

But the truth is, Democrats began their three-year effort to impeach the President the day he was sworn into office. In fact, 104 of my Democratic colleagues voted for impeachment before the phone call between President Trump and Ukrainian President Zelensky ever took place.

Our constitutional order demands far more than this to remove a duly-elected President. Sixty-three million Americans voted for President Trump. With an election less than a year away, Americans should decide their elected president at the ballot box, as our Constitution requires.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, the U.S. Constitution is clear and unambiguous—impeachment of any president is permitted only for treason, bribery, high crimes and misdemeanors.

Undoing the will of the people expressed in a free and fair election with the proposed articles of impeachment, totally fails to meet the legal standard prescribed by the U.S. Constitution. Despite hearings and a process that were egregiously flawed and unfair, there is still no direct evidence whatsoever of any crime.

Disagreement with or intense dislike for this or any other president of the United States is not now—nor should it ever be—grounds for impeachment.

Mr. HORSFORD. Madam Speaker, when I made the decision to return to Congress, I did so with a clear understanding of how important this moment is for our country and the democracy of our nation. My desire to serve has always been to help people who deserve an effective voice fighting for them.

I did not come to Congress to impeach a president. Despite the ongoing inquiry, I've remained laser-focused on the issues that I hear from my constituents most often—access to affordable health care, lowering the cost of prescription drug prices, passing commonsense gun reforms that will make our communities safer, and addressing income inequality in all of its forms.

My role as the Representative for Nevada's Fourth Congressional District also includes faithfully preserving and upholding our Constitution and the system of laws and norms that undergird our federal government. Our Constitution clearly lays out Congress' role in protecting our democratic institutions and the delicate balance that exists within it. Today, the House of Representatives is voting to uphold this solemn responsibility to hold President Trump accountable.

In an effort to fulfill my obligation to uphold our Constitution and the rule of law, I have paid careful attention to the investigations of the impeachment inquiry in the House of Representatives. The Committees of jurisdiction and witnesses have brought forward evidence uncovering the truth of President Trump's July phone call and subsequent inappropriate behavior toward President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine.

It has become apparent that President Trump is a continuing threat to our democracy and danger to our national security. He abused the power of his office for personal and political gain at the expense of our national security; he conditioned official acts—millions in military aid and a White House meeting—for his personal, political gain; and he attempted to cheat our democracy and corrupt our elections. And so today, I will vote in favor of the two articles of impeachment against President Trump. No one is above the law. Not even the President.

The first article of impeachment charges President Trump with violating his oath of office by abusing the powers of the Presidency when he solicited the interference of Ukraine in the 2020 United States presidential election. The second article of impeachment charges President Trump with violating his oath of office by obstructing justice and directing defiance of subpoenas issued by the House as part of its impeachment inquiry. This is no longer a question of facts, it is a question of duty—my duty to this country, our Constitution, and my oath of office to uphold that Constitution and protect our democracy.

This decision took careful thought and consideration. When I made my oath of office, I

swore to uphold the Constitution of the United States and to serve this country. As difficult as this moment is for the country given the political divisiveness, preserving the integrity of our system for posterity is how I can best serve the interests of the people of Nevada. I hope that following this vote I can turn my full attention back toward the issues that matter to Nevada's working families.

My mission in Washington has not changed, and I'll continue to fight for the issues that will improve the lives of my constituents. My focus will be on their stories and passing legislation to positively advance their futures. I will continue to work to lower health care costs for all Nevadans, to bring down the cost of prescription drugs, to protect our children from mindless gun violence, and to ensure all Nevadans have access to well-paying jobs and accessible job training programs. It is the honor of my life to serve the people of Nevada's Fourth Congressional District and I will continue to put their interests first as I work to deliver on their behalf.

Mr. BANKS. Madam Speaker, I'm pretty angry.

I'm angry with you, the Speaker of the House, I'm angry with Chairman ADAM SCHIFF, I'm angry with the Chairman JERRY NADLER. I'm angry they're putting the country through this.

They've bastardized the tool of impeachment and are attempting to use it to overturn the votes of 63 million people.

In just a few short hours, our president will be the first president in history to be impeached by just one single political party.

Every person who is responsible for getting us to this point should be held accountable.

Mr. SUOZZI. Madam Speaker, tonight, I will vote for impeachment. The President threatened to withhold Congressionally approved military aid to an ally under Russian attack unless the ally, a foreign government, agreed to help the President with his campaign. That is an abuse of power. The President refused to cooperate with Congress's constitutional duty to provide oversight. That is obstruction.

As drastic and unwelcome as this is, inaction would not only give this president a license to further abuse power and obstruct, but set a dangerous precedent for all future presidents, that their misdeeds are immune from consequences. Inaction would also seriously undermine our system of government by relegating the Congress to a less than co-equal branch of government.

As difficult as this is for our country, I believe this is the right thing to do for our country.

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, the President should be impeached. His actions were an abuse of power that jeopardizes America's national security and compromises our elections. No one is above the law, and that includes the President. By withholding \$400 million Ukraine desperately needed to defend itself against Russia until Ukraine did the President's political bidding, the President committed High Crimes and Misdemeanors for which he should be impeached under Article I, Section 2, Clause 5 and Article II, Section 4 of the Constitution.

This abuse of power is compounded by the President's refusal to cooperate with Congress' impeachment investigation and his stonewalling of witnesses from testifying or turning over documents to Congress.

Almost 14,000 people have been killed since Russia invaded Ukraine. Withholding \$400 million Congress appropriated to help Ukraine defend herself unless Ukraine helped the President dig up dirt on his political rival Joe Biden was the last straw for me. People's lives and our national security were placed at risk. This was more than paying hush money for strippers, profiting from foreign governments staying at resort properties, or even obstructing justice as laid out in the Mueller Report.

The Founders fought and died for freedom and independence from a tyrannical ruler and foreign government. Impeachment and removal from office was the remedy they included in the Constitution to act as a check on a President who placed himself above the law, abused his power for his own personal benefit, and invited foreign governments to get involved in our domestic affairs, especially our elections. A President who flaunts the separation of powers and checks and balances in our Constitution and who refuses to allow witnesses to appear before Congress would receive our Founders' universal condemnation.

Treating taxpayer money as his own to extort a "favor" from a foreign government to aid him in his re-election goes to the very heart of concerns raised by our Nation's Founders when they drafted and advocated for impeachment to act as a check on the awesome powers of the chief executive. For instance, Madison said in *Federalist No. 47*, "the accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive and judiciary, in the same hands . . . may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny." He went on to say during the Constitutional Convention, "the Executive will have great opportunities of abusing his power," and further that a President "might betray his trust to foreign powers." George Washington's Farewell Address warned of "foreign influence and corruption" which leads to the "policy and will" of America being "subjected to the policy and will of another." Alexander Hamilton wrote in *Federalist No. 65* that impeachment "proceeds from the misconduct of public men . . . from the abuse or violation of a public trust."

The USA Today editorial board stated it perfectly when they wrote in their December 12, 2019 editorial:

In his thugish effort to trade American arms for foreign dirt on former vice president Joe Biden and his son Hunter, Trump resembles not so much Clinton as he does Richard Nixon, another corrupt president who tried to cheat his way to re-election . . . This isn't party politics as usual. It is precisely the misconduct the Framers had in mind when they wrote impeachment into the Constitution.

Impeachment is the remedy the Founders placed in the Constitution to remove a President during his or her term of office. This is especially true when the misconduct involves an upcoming election. The President invited foreign participation in our elections at least three times. First with, "Russia, if you're listening . . ." second with his demands on Ukraine to "do us a favor, though," and third with his request for China to get involved in the 2020 election by starting "an investigation into the Bidens." Any further delay or simply allowing the election cycle to run its course results in the harm and abuse impeachment was designed to prevent.

For the sake of the Constitution, fair elections free of foreign interference, and our na-

tional security, President Trump should be impeached.

Ms. WILLSON of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the impeachment of Donald J. Trump. This is not a joyous moment. Impeachment ought to be an act that is exceedingly rare. Madam Speaker, this is one of those rare occasions because this President's abuse of power strikes at the very heart of our republic.

I was initially one of the holdouts on impeachment, preferring first to see a strong, defensible case that Donald Trump had abused the power of his office before endorsing such a serious step. When it became clear that President Trump abused the power of his office by attempting to extort the Ukraine government by withholding military aid in exchange for a political investigation, our only choice was to move forward on impeachment. Mr. Trump attempted to use the power of the Presidency to subvert democracy itself.

My Republican friends argue, in part, that no crime was committed because Mr. Zelensky claims he never felt pressure when asked to criminally investigate the political rival of the most powerful man in the world. I agree in part. These crimes were not committed against Mr. Zelensky. Donald Trump believes that the power of the Presidency is his personal tool to coerce the weak to do his bidding. If it had not been Mr. Zelensky, it would have been some other poor fellow compromised by need or greed. These crimes were committed against the Republic and the American people who belong to it. And the power of impeachment was given to this body to save us from small men entrusted with great power. In 1787, Benjamin Franklin was asked this simple question: "What have we got, a republic or a monarchy?" I hope that my colleagues will answer as Mr. Franklin did: "A republic, if we can keep it." I will vote yes to impeach the President of the United States. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. GARCIA of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my support for the impeachment of Donald J. Trump.

Today's vote to impeach the President is sobering. While I have deep disagreements with President Trump on immigration, health care, climate change and other policy areas, I did not come to Washington to impeach the President. I came to represent the voices of my constituents and I take my duty very seriously.

The facts tell a disturbing yet highly consistent story. The President's misdeeds have been verified by an immense body of evidence and the testimony of dozens of witnesses—including civil servants and constitutional scholars of the highest caliber. President Trump abused his power to bribe another country for his own personal and political gain. This is wrong.

I voted to impeach President Trump to do right by the constituents, the future of our democracy, and to uphold the rule of law and my oath to defend the Constitution. The facts are clear. The President obstructed Congressional investigations by instructing his accomplices to ignore compulsory calls to testify before Congress. No matter how he tries to spin it, President Trump violated the Constitution and must be held accountable. Regrettably, House and Senate Republicans are going along with the President's lies and attempts to cover up his actions.

December 18, 2019

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

H12197

No one is above the law, not even the President.

Donald Trump indisputably violated the Constitution and is, without a shadow of a doubt, no longer fit to discharge the duties of the President of the United States of America.

I urge my colleagues to support these articles of impeachment.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, this year, our nation finds itself in the midst of historic turmoil. President Donald J. Trump's defiance of the Constitution and disregard for the rule of law have given Congress no other choice but to proceed with impeachment. The President has brought this on himself through his actions. As instructed by H. Res. 660, on November 19, 2019, the House Permanent Select Intelligence Committee began conducting open public hearings to ensure the American people were able to hear directly from witnesses as the committee collects and examines evidence in a fair and professional manner. This was followed by public hearings in the House Committee on the Judiciary, which allowed for an examination of the constitutional grounds for impeachment and an airing of evidence against the President.

After weeks of depositions, public hearings and a thorough review of evidence, the House Judiciary Committee concluded that President Trump violated his oath of office and, on December 11th, 2019, approved H. Res. 755, which set forth two articles of impeachment: Abuse of Power and Obstruction of Congress. As the House today deliberates and decides on these articles, it is important to lay the full scope of the President's misconduct before the American people.

My constituent and authentic American leader, Ralph Nader, a consumer advocate, renowned attorney, author, and a respected voice in American politics and good governance, has partnered with constitutional scholars, Bruce Fein and Louis Fisher, to assess the President's misconduct and whether it meets the Constitutional standard for "... Bribery, or other High Crimes and Misdemeanors."

I include in the RECORD his thinking and those of others in our nation, in the hopes that it will help the public further understand the significance of this vote.

ARTICLE OF IMPEACHMENT

(By Ralph Nader, Bruce Fein, and Louis Fisher)

ARTICLE OF IMPEACHMENT

Resolved, That Donald J. Trump, President of the United States, is impeached for bribery and high crimes and misdemeanors in violation of his constitutional oath of office and that the following article of impeachment be exhibited to the Senate:

Article of Impeachment Exhibited by the House of Representatives of the United States of America and of All the People of the United States of America, Against Donald J. Trump, President of the United States of America, in Maintenance and Support of its Impeachment Against Him for Bribery and High Crimes and Misdemeanors in Violation of his Constitutional Oath of Office To Preserve, Protect and Defend the Constitution of the United States.

ARTICLE 1

In his conduct of the office of President of the United States, Donald J. Trump, in violation of his constitutional duty faithfully to execute the office of the President of the United States, and, to the best of his ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitu-

tion of the United States, Article I, section 1, clause 6, and, contrary to his public trust, has systematically scorned the letter and spirit of the Constitution on a scale vastly beyond any previous occupant of the White House in doing the following:

1. CONTEMPT OF CONGRESS. President Trump has notoriously boasted, "Then I have Article II, where I have the right to do whatever I want as President." He has chronically acted in violation of the Constitution accordingly.

The informing or oversight powers of Congress are even more important than its legislative prerogatives. The United States Supreme Court has repeatedly affirmed the plenary authority of Congress to investigate the executive branch for abuses, irregularities, illegalities or the need for new laws. Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis famously lectured, sunshine is said to be the best of disinfectants; electric light the most efficient policeman. The House Judiciary Committee voted an article of impeachment against President Richard M. Nixon for defying a congressional subpoena that compromised the ability of Congress to investigate impeachable offenses.

President Trump has repeatedly and unconstitutionally systematically undermined the congressional oversight power, including the ongoing congressional impeachment inquiry of the President himself, by instructing numerous current and former White House staff and members of the executive branch to defy congressional subpoenas on an unprecedented scale far beyond any previous President. Without congressional authority, he has secretly deployed special forces abroad and employed secret guidelines for targeted killings, including American citizens, based on secret unsubstantiated information. He has unconstitutionally endeavored to block private persons or entities from responding to congressional requests or subpoenas for information, e.g., Deutsche Bank. He has refused to provide Congress information about nepotistic or other security clearances he granted in opposition to his own FBI security experts. He has refused to disclose his tax returns to the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee contrary to a 1924 law, 26 U.S.C. 6103(f).

The informing or oversight powers of Congress are even more bedrock than legislation. Without information, Congress cannot enact informed legislative bills, repeal inadequate laws, or prevent maladministration of good ones. The Supreme Court of the United States has repeatedly affirmed the authority of Congress to investigate the executive branch for abuses, irregularities, illegalities or the need for new laws. Transparency, not secrecy, is the coin of the realm.

Congress possesses plenary authority independent of the federal judiciary to determine whether presidential defiance or obstruction of a congressional subpoena warrants impeachment for destroying the rule of law in favor of raw presidential power. A court order is unnecessary. Under the Constitution, the Supreme Court held impeachment questions are assigned to the House and Senate to the exclusion of federal courts in *Nixon v. United States*, 506 U.S. 224 (1993).

2. ABUSE OF THE POWERS OF THE PRESIDENT AND ABUSE OF PUBLIC TRUST. President Abraham Lincoln famously declared that, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." The nation's motto is *E Pluribus Unum*. President Trump, however, has fostered combustible division and rancor among "We the people of the United States" by inciting violence and threatening civil war if removed from office. Unlike prior presidents, he has made presidential lies as routine as the rising and setting of the sun, confounding civil discourse,

truth and public trust. He has disrespected, belittled, and serially preyed upon women, mocked the disabled, incited violence against the mainstream media and critics, and encouraged and displayed bigotry towards minorities and minority Members of Congress, including intercession with Israel in serious violation of the Speech or Debate Clause, Article I, section 6, clause 1, to deny two Members visitor visas.

Mr. Trump has failed to superintend or check the chronic lawlessness of his subordinates, a dereliction of duty which James Madison characterized as an impeachable offense. In the very first Congress, Mr. Madison elaborated:

"I think it absolutely necessary that the President should have the power of removing his subordinates from office; it will make him, in a peculiar manner, responsible for their conduct, and subject him to impeachment himself, if he suffers them to perpetrate with impunity high crimes or misdemeanors against the United States, or neglects to superintend their conduct, so as to check their excesses."

George Washington when presiding over the constitutional convention instructed, "Let us raise a standard to which the wise and honest can repair." Mr. Trump has so disrespected that standard.

No other President has so consistently voiced extremist and inflammatory views across the board and so grossly neglected the duties of the Oval Office.

3. APPROPRIATIONS CLAUSE, REVENUE CLAUSE. Article I, section 9, clause 7 prohibits federal government expenditures "but in consequence of appropriations made by law." Congress has consistently voted much less money than President Trump requested to build an extensive, multibillion-dollar wall with Mexico. In violation of the Clause and the criminal prohibition of the Anti-Deficiency Act, President Trump has committed to spending billions of dollars far in excess of what Congress has appropriated for the wall. The congressional power of the purse is a cornerstone of the Constitution's separation of powers. James Madison in *Federalist 58* explained, "This power over the purse may... be regarded as the most complete and effectual weapon with which any constitution can arm the immediate representatives of the people, for obtaining redress of every grievance, and to carrying into effect every just and salutary measure."

Article I, section 7, clause 1 requires all revenue measures to originate in the House of Representatives. In violation of the Clause, President Trump has raised tens of billions of dollars by unilaterally imposing tariffs with limitless discretion under section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962. He has become a Foreign Trade Czar in imposing tariffs or quotas or granting exemptions from his trade restrictions in his unbridled discretion to assist political friends and punish political enemies. Literally trillions of dollars in international trade have been affected. Riches are made and livelihoods destroyed overnight with the capricious stroke of President Trump's pen.

4. EMOLUMENTS CLAUSE. Article I, section 9, clause 8 prohibits the President (and other federal officers), without the consent of Congress, from accepting any "present, emolument, office, or title, of any kind whatsoever, from any King, Prince, or foreign state." The President should be above suspicion. The clause aims to prohibit dual loyalties or its appearance because of financial conflicts of interests. President Trump has notoriously refused to place his assets in a blind trust. Instead, he continues to profit from opulent hotels heavily patronized by foreign governments. He has permitted his family to commercialize the White House.

H12198

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December 18, 2019

He has compromised the national interest to enrich family wealth on a scale unprecedented in the history of the presidency.

5. **TREATY CLAUSE.** Article II, section 2, clause 2 requires Senate ratification of treaties by two-thirds majorities. The text is silent as to whether treaty termination requires Senate ratification, and the Supreme Court held the issue was a nonjusticiable political question in *Goldwater v. Carter*, 441 U.S. 996 (1979). But the Treaty Clause purpose indicates Senate approval of treaty terminations. Alexander Hamilton explained in *Federalist 75* that the President would be an untrustworthy steward of the national interest in the conduct of international affairs because of the enormous temptation to betray the country to advance personal ambitions. That suspicion of presidential motives is equally implicated in treaty terminations and points to requiring Senate ratification. President Trump flouted the Treaty Clause in terminating the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) with Russia unilaterally. The treaty assigned the termination decision to the "United States." The President alone is not the United States under the Treaty Clause.

6. **DECLARE WAR CLAUSE.** Article I, section 8, clause 11 empowers Congress alone to take the nation from a state of peace to a state of war. That power is non-delegable. The Declare War Clause authors distrusted the President to preserve the peace because of the temptation to war to aggrandize executive power and earn a place in history. In violation of the Declare War Clause, President Trump has continued to wage or has initiated presidential wars in Libya, Somalia, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, and has used special forces offensively in several African nations. President Trump has claimed authority to initiate war against any nation or non-state actor in the world—not in self-defense on his say-so alone, including war against North Korea, Iran, or Venezuela.

7. **TAKE CARE CLAUSE; PRESENTMENT CLAUSE.** Article II, section 3 obligates the President to "take care that the laws be faithfully executed." In violation of that trust, President Donald J. Trump deliberately attempted to frustrate special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation of collaboration during the Trump 2016 campaign and Russia to influence the presidential election. Among other things, the President refused to answer specific questions relating to his presidential conduct; endeavored to fire the special counsel; dangled pardons for non-cooperating witnesses; and, urged Attorney General Jeff Sessions to reverse his recusal decision to better protect his presidency. In all these respects, the President was attempting to obstruct justice.

President Trump has also systematically declined to enforce statutory mandates of Congress by arbitrarily and capriciously revoking scores of agency rules ranging from immigration to the Consumer Financial Protection Board to the Environmental Protection Agency in violation of the Administrative Procedure Act or otherwise. He has routinely legislated by executive order in lieu of following constitutionally prescribed processes for legislation.

In violation of his constitutional duty to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, Mr. Trump has dismantled and disabled scores of preventive measures to save lives, avoid injuries or disease, help families, consumers, and workers, and detect, deter, and punish tens of billions of dollars of corporate fraud. He has disrupted climate disruption as a "Chinese hoax," compounded the climate crisis by overt actions that expand greenhouse gas emissions and pollution, and excluded or marginalized the influence of civil service scientists.

Article I, section 7, clause 2, as President George Washington explained, requires the President either to sign or veto a bill passed by Congress in toto. The President may not exercise a line-item veto, as the United States Supreme Court held in *Clinton v. New York*, 524 U.S. 417 (1998). President Trump, however, like several of his predecessors commonly exercises the equivalent of unconstitutional line-item vetoes through signing statements declaring his intent to leave unexecuted provisions he deems are unconstitutional without a court test. Presidential signing statements weaken legislative power by disarming Congress from bundling in a single bill provisions both liked and disliked by the President and forcing the White House to choose between all or none. During the administration of President George W. Bush, an American Bar Association Task Force issued a report condemning signing statements as unconstitutional sent to the President himself. ABA Task Force on Presidential Signing Statements and the Separation of Powers Doctrine, August 2006.

8. **DUE PROCESS CLAUSE.** The Fifth Amendment provides that no person shall "be deprived of life . . . without due process of law." In violation of due process, President Trump claims power, like his immediate two predecessors, to act as prosecutor, judge, jury, and executioner to kill American citizens or non-citizens alike, on or off a battlefield, whether or not engaged in hostilities, whether or not accused of crime, and whether or not posing an imminent threat of harm that would trigger a right of preemptive self-defense. This combination of powers are euphemistically referenced as "targeted killings," but they define tyranny.

9. **APPOINTMENTS CLAUSE.** President Trump has repeatedly appointed principal officers of the United States, including the National Security Advisor and Cabinet officials, who have not been confirmed by the Senate in violation of the Appointments Clause, Article II, section 2, clause 2. On a scale never practiced by prior presidents, Mr. Trump has filled as many as half of Cabinet posts with "Acting Secretaries" who have never been confirmed by the Senate.

10. **SOLICITING A FOREIGN CONTRIBUTION FOR THE 2020 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN AND BRIBERY.** President Trump has endeavored to corrupt the 2020 presidential campaign by soliciting the President of Ukraine to contribute something of value to diminish the popularity of potential rival Joe Biden, i.e., a Ukrainian investigation of Mr. Biden and his son Hunter relating to potential corrupt practices of Burisma, which compensated Hunter handsomely (\$50,000 per month). In so doing, Mr. Trump violated the criminal campaign finance prohibition set forth in 52 U.S.C. 30121.

President Trump solicited a bribe for himself in violation of 18 U.S.C. 201 in seeking something of personal value, i.e., discrediting Joe Biden's 2020 presidential campaign with the help of the President of Ukraine to influence Mr. Trump's official decision to release approximately \$400 million in military and related assistance.

11. **VIOLATING CITIZEN PRIVACY.** The Fourth Amendment protects the right to be let alone from government snooping, the most cherished right among civilized people as Justice Brandeis elaborated in *Olmstead v. United States*, 277 U.S. 439 (1928) (dissenting opinion). Government spying on Americans ordinarily requires a warrant issued by a neutral magistrate based on probable cause to believe crime is afoot. President Trump, however, routinely violates the Fourth Amendment with suspicionless surveillance of Americans for non-criminal, foreign intelligence purposes under Executive Order 12333 and aggressive

interpretations of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

12. **SUPPRESSION OF FREE SPEECH.** The major purpose of a free press protected by the First Amendment is to expose government lies or illegalities—to shine light on the dark side. Justice Hugo Black elaborated in *New York Times v. United States*, 403 U.S. 713 (1971) in protecting publication of the classified Pentagon Papers from suppression: "The Government's power to censor the press was abolished so that the press would remain forever free to censure the Government. The press was protected so that it could bare the secrets of government and inform the people. Only a free and unrestrained press can effectively expose deception in government. And paramount among the responsibilities of a free press is the duty to prevent any part of the government from deceiving the people and sending them off to distant lands to die of foreign fevers and foreign shot and shell."

President Trump is violating the First Amendment in stretching the Espionage Act to prosecute publication of leaked classified information that are instrumental to exposing government lies and deterring government wrongdoing or misadventures, including the outstanding indictment against Julian Assange for publishing information which was republished by the *New York Times* and *The Washington Post* with impunity. The United States Supreme Court upheld the First Amendment rights of the *New York Times* and *The Washington Post* to publish the classified Pentagon Papers, which accelerated the conclusion of the disastrous Vietnam War, in *New York Times v. United States*.

In all of this, Donald J. Trump, since the day of his inauguration, has conducted the office of the President contrary to his oath of office to destroy constitutional government to the great prejudice of the cause of law and justice and to the manifest injury of the people of the United States.

Wherefore Donald J. Trump warrants impeachment and trial, and removal from office.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, as we vote today, I think it is instructive that Americans reflect on how we got to this point. The impeachment of Donald J. Trump has largely been brought on by the President himself.

The President took two specific actions: he directly solicited a foreign government to gather information on his political opponent. He then further sought to promote a false narrative that it was Ukraine, and not Russia, who interfered with the elections in 2016. With the ability to correct the record, clear his name, or offer explanation for his actions, he chose instead to obstruct a co-equal branch of government from performing its Constitutional responsibilities of oversight and review. He did this by refusing testimony, ignoring Congressional subpoenas, and not providing Congress with any pertinent information or data.

Today we're putting Russia and other adversaries on notice, don't interfere with our elections. Russia tried to divide the country in 2016, but they only succeed if America turns away from the rule of law.

Some Republicans have excused the President's behavior by saying, "Donald Trump isn't a politician, he's a businessman. This is Trump being Trump, this how he's used to doing business."

That very well may be true, but in a constitutional democracy, no one, including Donald Trump, is above the law.

I realize there are people who feel strongly and differently than I do, but to do nothing, to

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take no vote, is in essence condoning this behavior that disregards our Constitution. Republicans may see today differently, but as we look forward, we must stand united as a Congress in defending our democracy.

For a democracy to work in a system of checks and balances, no one is above the law. The President takes an oath of allegiance to the United States Constitution; there are no exceptions for the art of the deal.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Madam Speaker, there have been quite a few comments from the other side about how this is partisan, and this is an attack, and we're coming after Donald Trump.

I don't like this President. I don't like his values, or his decision making, nor his policies or the words he chooses to use. But these articles are not about a man. They are about the ACTIONS of a man. They are about the ways in which someone elected to the highest office in this country abused that office, and violated the basic tenets of the constitutional balance of power.

I don't want him to serve two terms, but this is about that. This is about holding the President of the United States, whoever he may be, to the standards and expectations of that office.

I say that genuinely. I would take this same vote for any President who abused his office in that way. And any member of this body who fails to understand what this vote really means—making clear what we expect of the OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, not the person sitting in it—is deeply and horribly mistaken.

Anyone who fights for democratic values, who values the balance of power, who wants to ensure the underpinnings of the greatest democracy in the world remain strong for generations to come, will support these articles of impeachment as I intend to do.

Mr. RUIZ. Madam Speaker, as a citizen of the United States of America, the greatest experiment in democracy that our world has ever known, as the duly elected U.S. House Representative of my home communities of the Coachella Valley, San Geronimo Pass, and the San Jacinto Pass in California's 36th Congressional District, and as the father to two young daughters growing up in this great nation, I rise today in support of impeaching the President of the United States, Donald J. Trump.

By conditioning \$391 million in military aid to a foreign ally on an investigation into his political rival, Donald Trump abused the power of the presidency for personal political gain. He then obstructed Congress in its constitutionally mandated oversight role. In doing so, President Trump violated our Constitution, compromised our national security, and undermined the integrity of our democratic process.

This was a principled decision made with great reverence for the Constitution, in the best interest of our nation, and without partisan consideration. I was compelled by the overwhelming evidence and the sacred oath I took to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution—and by nature, our very democracy.

When Benjamin Franklin was leaving Independence Hall at the close of the Constitutional Convention in 1787, he was asked whether America would be a republic or a monarchy, and his response was, "A republic, if you can keep it."

By voting in favor of impeachment today, I am voting to keep it.

Benjamin Franklin and the Founding Fathers envisioned the tragic scenario we are wit-

nessing at this moment in history: The President of the United States abusing the power of the office with a foreign country for personal political gain.

They gave us a constitutional remedy.

They gave us this remedy because the Constitution is not a self-preserving document. It needs people who will protect and defend it.

History must reflect that there are people taking that oath of office seriously and fighting to keep our Republic intact; that there are people who are defending the Constitution and fighting for the integrity of our Democratic process; that there are people who say that any President—regardless of political party—who abuses the power of their high office for personal gain will be held accountable.

It is important for me, for my daughters, Sky and Sage, for my grandchildren, my great grandchildren, and future generations; it is important for future leaders, future Congresses, and for the historical record; it is important for the ideals of the Constitution and the core of our Republic that I solemnly cast my vote today in favor of impeaching President Donald Trump.

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 755, a resolution impeaching Donald John Trump, President of the United States, for high crimes and misdemeanors. Today is indeed a solemn day for the United States of America.

The two Articles of Impeachment, as written and passed by the House Judiciary Committee, outline the findings of the investigations done by several committees of jurisdiction, charged with the constitutionally-mandated task of finding out the truth.

The truth is the President abused his power of office by obstructing the impeachment inquiry; solicited the interference of the Ukraine Government in the 2020 U.S. presidential election in an attempt to undermine our elections; and posed a threat to national security for political gain.

Madam Speaker, I have listened to and spoken with my constituents in my district and throughout the state of Texas. The corrupt pattern of evidence is overwhelming. Therefore, I am voting in favor of H. Res. 755, a resolution impeaching Donald John Trump, President of the United States, for high crimes and misdemeanors.

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Madam Speaker, it is a fundamental ideal of our republic that every American receives justice under the law. As a Member of this body, we are required to uphold that ideal, and as a former judge, I was tasked with the same responsibility. What I have seen throughout this impeachment process is far from justice.

In fact, this process has lacked impartiality, respect for the United States Constitution, and fairness. When I was on the bench, I instructed every jury the same way. I told them that "what someone heard from another source other than what they directly observed is not evidence." Rumors and hearsay are not evidence under our laws, and it certainly shouldn't qualify as evidence in this chamber. The evidence presented by the Majority in this case is entirely hearsay and therefore, should be inadmissible. In fact, the only direct evidence presented to this body is the transcript of President Trump's telephone call with the Ukraine President.

The Constitution is clear—treason, bribery, high crimes and misdemeanors are impeach-

able offenses, and the evidence presented does not meet those standards. Impeachment is one of the most serious acts that Congress will undertake. It is not to be taken lightly or to be used as a political weapon against those you disagree with, but unfortunately, that is where we find ourselves today. For that reason, I will not support the articles of impeachment and I also ask my colleagues to reflect on one thing: in light of what you have observed about the process used to charge the President, are we upholding justice?

I think not.

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, I rise to discuss an issue of solemn, national importance. The impeachment of a president of the United States is not a step we take lightly, nor with anything but the seriousness it demands. But, we take it, because it is our duty to uphold our oath of office, the Constitution, and the trust that our constituents and the American people place in us. That is why I am voting for the articles of impeachment.

President Donald Trump's actions are a dangerous departure from his oath of office and his duty to uphold the Constitution. As with many of my colleagues, I was reluctant to call for impeachment because I feared it would further divide our country, be perceived as overturning the 2016 election, and go to the United States Senate where Republicans would acquit President Trump regardless of the evidence. But the President's unchecked actions gave the Congress no other choice.

Today, the House of Representatives is upholding its duty to protect the Constitution of the United States. Our founders set up a system of checks and balances, separation of powers, and rule of law so that no person would be above the law. That includes the President of the United States. The Constitutional recourse for "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors" is clear; impeachment. It is a heavy price—intended only for matters of grave consequence to our republic. President Trump's actions meet that high bar, and that is why I am voting in favor of the articles of impeachment.

The facts of the case against President Trump are indisputable. On July 25, 2019, President Trump called Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and asked him to "look into" 2020 Presidential candidate Vice President Joe Biden and his son—an investigation solely for his own personal and political gain. In the weeks leading up to that call, the President withheld Congressionally-appropriated foreign aid to Ukraine, as well as a meeting between the two countries' presidents in the White House, as leverage. The President's abuse of power has been corroborated before the Congress by brave public servants over the last few months.

Facing a Congressional investigation into these matters, President Trump "directed the unprecedented, categorical, and indiscriminate defiance of subpoenas issued by the House of Representatives pursuant to its 'sole Power of Impeachment.'" In doing so, President Trump obstructed Congress's Constitutionally-authorized investigation.

So, today, I will vote to uphold my responsibility, outlined in the oath I have taken and the Constitution. I will vote for the articles of impeachment.

Mr. PANETTA. Madam Speaker, I did not come to Congress to impeach the President. But, I swore an oath to protect our country

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and defend the constitution. That is why, today, I will vote to approve two articles of impeachment against this President for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress.

In order to arrive at that solemn and somber conclusion, I used many of the same skills that I acquired early on as a former prosecutor. By putting politics and emotions aside to focus on the underlying evidence and applying those facts to the articles of impeachment, I found it clear that the President subverted our national interest for his own personal and political interest. The President then repeatedly ignored and refused to cooperate with the numerous requests and subpoenas of the investigation by Congress. Moreover, the President proudly admitted this conduct and refuses to acknowledge that he did anything wrong.

I do not take pride in impeaching a sitting president of the United States. But as the U.S. Representative for the central coast of California, I am upholding my obligation under the United States Constitution and to protect the future of our democracy.

The impeachment of the President and his upcoming trial in the U.S. Senate will not stop us from getting things done. As I have proven during my limited time in Congress, I will continue to work on and pass legislation that reforms our immigration laws, especially for Dreamers and farmworkers, promotes our agriculture, combats the effects of climate change, improves our health care system, lowers prescription drug prices, changes the tax code to help the middle class and small businesses, defends equal rights, and protects our values and way of life on the Central Coast.

Mr. GOLDEN, Madam Speaker, when I took the oath of office in January, I entered Congress prepared to work with President Trump whenever possible and to stand up to him whenever necessary. In my first year, I have ranked among the top five of 235 House Democrats in voting with the president. In a deeply divided and partisan Congress, the opportunities for agreement have often felt limited, but I have sought in good faith to work with him as best I can.

Since January, I have received many phone calls and letters from constituents calling upon me to support efforts to impeach the president for a wide range of reasons. I have resisted those efforts and maintained that the impeachment of the President of the United States must be considered as a last resort, reserved only for the most serious crimes and constitutional abuses.

Earlier this year, upon the conclusion of Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation, I determined that there was no evidence that the president had committed an impeachable offense, and as a result I opposed calls for his impeachment. In my view, the Special Counsel's report identified a pattern of conduct beneath the office of the presidency, specifically: poor judgement, efforts to exert undue influence over an investigation, and attempts to obstruct justice. However, in reviewing the available facts, I did not find sufficient information to support impeachment principally because the Special Counsel did not find adequate evidence that the president or his campaign team were involved in a conspiracy to collude or coordinate with Russian efforts to interfere with U.S. elections. It was my personal judgement that the president's efforts to impede the investigation did not meet the

threshold for launching impeachment proceedings.

What mattered most in my assessment of the Special Counsel's report was whether or not the Trump campaign coordinated with Russia to interfere in our elections—actions that, if proven, would have crossed a clear red line. This concern was rooted in the history of our nation, for there is no doubt that the Founders were fearful of foreign influence in our domestic affairs. In *Federalist No. 68*, Alexander Hamilton wrote:

"Nothing was more to be desired than that every practicable obstacle should be opposed to cabal, intrigue, and corruption. These most deadly adversaries of republican government might naturally have been expected to make their approaches from more than one quarter, but chiefly from the desire in foreign powers to gain an improper ascendancy in our councils [emphasis added]. How could they better gratify this, than by raising a creature of their own to the chief magistracy of the Union?"

Our Framers also understood that impeachment may be necessary to protect American elections. During the Constitutional Convention, James Madison argued that waiting for an election to vote a president out of office might not be a sufficient safeguard, because the president "might betray his trust to foreign powers." Similarly, in debating the need to include a procedure for impeachment in the Constitution, the Framers conceived of how a president might abuse his power in order to win an election. George Mason asked the Constitutional Convention, "Shall the man who has practiced corruption, and by that means procured his appointment in the first instance, be suffered to escape punishment by repeating his guilt?"

I have argued previously that to the extent that my constituents consider the president's actions, most of them believe that the future of our country's leadership and direction should be determined at the ballot box in 2020. I continue to believe that sentiment, but in order for my constituents to voice their opinions on the direction of the country, the security of the 2020 presidential election must be guaranteed, and the integrity of the election must be without question. That is why I find the president's most recent actions with regard to Ukraine and the upcoming election deeply troubling and unacceptable.

In evaluating the president's actions, I have consulted the statements of the Founders and of members of Congress who spoke during previous impeachment hearings. I have studied the late law professor Charles Black's monograph *Impeachment: A Handbook*, written at the height of Watergate. I have considered carefully the depositions of key witnesses, watched hours of the testimony provided in public hearings, and carefully listened to the questions and statements of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. The length of my process has frustrated some of my constituents, but on a matter of such gravity, I have felt a responsibility to take the time necessary to gather all available information before making a decision.

Here is what we know: in September, the White House released a call summary showing that on July 25, 2019, just one day after the Special Counsel presented his findings about the 2016 election to Congress, President Trump solicited the Government of Ukraine to publicly announce investigations

into a political opponent, former Vice President Joe Biden. The president requested this investigation despite the fact that officials in both the United States and Ukraine have rejected the accusations as baseless.

The president's intent in the July 25 phone call is clear. He specifically references both the former vice president and his son, Hunter Biden. We also know from depositions taken as part of the House impeachment inquiry that the president's personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, was concurrently demanding that Ukrainian officials publicly announce investigations into Burisma, the company where Hunter Biden served as a board member, before the White House would agree to arrange a meeting between President Trump and the new Ukrainian president. Key members of the Trump Administration's diplomatic corps testified under oath that this head of state meeting was contingent upon the announcement of these politically-motivated investigations.

The House investigation clearly unearthed a pattern of evidence that demonstrates the corrupt intent on the part of the president, his personal lawyer, and members of his administration to leverage the powers of the presidency to damage a political opponent and strengthen the president's reelection prospects. Given that the sought-after investigation was solicited from a foreign government, the president's actions are a realization of the Framers' greatest fears: foreign corruption of our electoral process, and a president willing to leverage the powers of his office to benefit his own reelection. This action crossed a clear red line, and in my view, there is no doubt that this is an impeachable act. For this reason, I will vote for Article I of the House resolution to impeach President Trump for an abuse of power.

I did not reach this conclusion lightly. Although I find that there is indisputable evidence that the president solicited the interference of a foreign government in the 2020 U.S. presidential election, I believe that the burden of proof for part of the first article, that the president withheld military assistance to Ukraine in order to secure the investigation of Vice President Biden, will be harder to meet in a Senate trial. While I believe it is reasonable to conclude there is sufficient evidence to support the other charges in Article I and justify sending an indictment to the Senate for trial, I also regret that the House did not package the charge regarding the military aid as a separate article, rather than combining it with the president's direct solicitation of a foreign investigation into his political rival.

I have advocated for this change to Article I to House leadership, in part because I believe it would provide for clearer debate in the Senate and among the general public. Why exactly the Trump Administration withheld military aid from Ukraine is a question on which reasonable minds—looking at the same set of facts—may reach different conclusions. But there is no such room for disagreement on one stark fact: the President of the United States asked a foreign government to aid in his reelection by soliciting an investigation of his political opponent based upon trumped-up charges. Our Founders feared exactly this situation, a president willing to illegitimately wield the powers of his office against his political opponents in order to secure his reelection. As North Carolina's William Davie remarked at the 1787 Constitutional Convention, "If he be

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not impeachable whilst in office, he will spare no efforts, or means whatever to get himself reelected."

Article II of the resolution presents a separate charge, that the president "without lawful cause or excuse," obstructed the congressional inquiry into his actions. While I do not dispute that the White House has been provocative in its defiance and sweeping in its claims of executive privilege, I also believe there are legitimate and unresolved constitutional questions about the limits of executive privilege, and that before pursuing impeachment for this charge, the House has an obligation to exhaust all other available options.

It is important to note that the House has not attempted to enforce subpoenas for key witnesses to the charges before the president, including those issued to Mick Mulvaney, John Eisenberg, and Russell Vought. The House has also failed to issue subpoenas to other key witnesses, like John Bolton and Rick Perry. In fact, because of a political decision to wrap up impeachment proceedings as quickly as possible, the House recently withdrew a subpoena for Charles Kupperman, a senior aide to John Bolton, and House counsel asked a federal court to dismiss a lawsuit that would clarify Mr. Kupperman's obligation to testify.

At the heart of this matter is a debate about the limits of the president's executive privilege, especially in the face of subpoenas issued by congressional committees conducting an impeachment inquiry. Professor Black has argued that executive privilege has a stronger claim in the earlier stages of the impeachment process, but that by the time of a Senate trial, it should be clearer what specific information is necessary for Congress to conclude its proceedings.

I believe that the House must exercise as much restraint as possible in order to avoid setting a dangerous precedent for the future. On the one hand, each of the two political parties has an interest in protecting the executive privilege of the White House; there are some communications that should remain confidential, or at the very least not be released publicly in order to protect our national security. On the other hand, the White House has made broad and in my view excessive claims regarding executive privilege, declaring as early as April of this year that it would contest "all the subpoenas" and arguing that Congress is powerless to force the White House to comply.

This tension is precisely why our system of government provides for a forum in which disputes between the executive and the legislature over the scope of their respective privileges and powers can be resolved. That forum is the judicial branch. The House can—and in other contexts has—gone to the courts to enforce committee subpoenas. Before yielding our awesome power to impeach a sitting president, we first ought to exhaust available judicial remedies, or—at the very least—give the courts a chance. If the president were to defy a court order to produce documents or to give testimony in an impeachment inquiry, or if he were to encourage his subordinates to do the same, then a charge of obstruction would be appropriate. But while the president's resistance toward our investigative efforts has been frustrating, it has not yet, in my view, reached the threshold of "high crime or misdemeanor" that the Constitution demands. For

that reason, I will vote against Article II of the House resolution regarding obstruction of Congress.

To my constituents: please know that I am deeply dismayed by the circumstances surrounding this inquiry, likely impeachment, and coming trial of the president. Indeed, my concerns about our politics and the health of our democracy have only grown over the course of this process. The divisiveness of this impeachment inquiry has been terrible for our country, just as the Framers knew it would be. I also believe, however, that the president's efforts to solicit a foreign government's involvement in our upcoming election to undermine a political opponent represents a clear and imminent threat to our democracy that cannot go unchecked. I see it as my duty to vote in support of Article I in order to send a clear message to the president, to the country, and to the world that foreign interference in American elections is not acceptable, not welcomed, and will not be tolerated. In the end, I believe the failure of Congress to act in a bipartisan fashion to send this message may represent the greatest threat of all to the health of our democracy.

Earlier this year, I expressed my concern that a partisan impeachment would further deepen the political divisions in this country, and that the best recourse would be to rely on our electoral process to litigate our differences. But in this current moment, when the subject of the president's actions has been to corrupt that very process, relying on the next election cannot be the solution. As I square those concerns with our current moment, I take solace in the words of a previous congressman from Maine's Second District who also confronted an impeachment vote during his first term in office. Concerned with the divisive impact of impeachment on the country, then-Congressman William Cohen observed:

It has been said that impeachment proceedings will tear this country apart. To say that it will tear the country apart is a proposition I cannot accept. I think what would tear the country apart would be to turn our backs on the facts and our responsibilities to ascertain them. That in my opinion would do far more to start the unraveling of the fabrics of this country and the Constitution than would a strong reaffirmation of that great document.

In the face of the evidence before me today, I believe Cohen's words still ring true—but only if we commit ourselves not to become mired in this current sad chapter of deep partisanship in American history. We must turn our eyes to the future and look for ways to address the needs of the country and our constituents. We have made progress in the past few days with the passage of important legislation, like the National Defense Authorization Act and the announcement of a budget deal that keeps government open, accomplishes important healthcare reforms, secures our borders, and funds our military. There remains much more potential in the year ahead, if only we are able to set aside our differences and work together toward common ground for the good of the country.

Ms. CRAIG. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD an open letter to my constituents:

This is a somber time in our country as the House this week weighs articles of impeachment against our President. It's a vote that no Member should ever want to take, and I

certainly did not. I ran for Congress to work to lower the price of prescription drugs, to fight for education funding and to help our family farmers. And as your representative that is what I've been focused on. I'm particularly proud that over two-thirds of my nearly 340 bills are bipartisan and that I've developed strong relationships across the aisle that are leading to important legislative accomplishments.

When I was sworn into office this past January, I swore an oath to protect and defend the Constitution of our great nation. That is why in mid-September I called for an open and transparent process to determine whether the President's actions warrant articles, and if they should receive a full trial in the Senate.

On Friday morning, the House Judiciary Committee voted to send the resolution on Articles of Impeachment to the House Floor. You deserve to hear from me directly in advance of my vote now that the Committee work is complete.

After reviewing the public testimony from non-partisan public servants and officials appointed to their roles by the President himself—as well as the final House Intelligence Committee report—I have decided that this week I will vote yes on both Articles of Impeachment.

No elected leader is above the law.

It is clear from the testimony and the report delivered to Congress that the President attempted to coerce a foreign government into investigating his political rival by withholding Congressionally-appropriated military assistance to a foreign ally. This is a clear abuse of power by a sitting U.S. President for his own personal gain. It is also clear that the President obstructed Congress by refusing to produce documents and blocking testimony during the impeachment inquiry, which is against the law.

My values would require the same vote if this were a Democratic President. It is about protecting our democratic values, about right and wrong, and about upholding my oath to the Constitution and the rule of law.

Gratefully yours,
Rep. Angie Craig
MN-02
December 15, 2019.

Mr. HAGEDORN. Madam Speaker, many members of this body have publicly voiced support for impeachment since before this President was sworn into office—some even skipping the Inauguration, a time-honored American tradition, because they viewed him as an illegitimate President.

For a significant number of my colleagues, this will not be the first—and possibly not even the last time they vote to impeach President Trump. Several have openly admitted they are concerned if they don't vote to impeach the President, he will be reelected.

Even the highest-ranking member of this body publicly stated that this process has been two and a half years in the making. The Speaker admitted this just months after she told the American people that impeachment would need to be compelling, overwhelming and bipartisan. Yet, the only thing bipartisan about this impeachment is the opposition to it.

Here are the facts:

Both President Trump and President Zelensky say there was no pressure.

The call transcript shows no conditionality—or "quid pro quo"—between aid and an investigation.

The Ukrainians were not aware that aid was withheld when Trump and Zelensky spoke. Ukraine did not open an investigation, and still received aid and a meeting with President Trump.

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The sad truth is that this has been an entirely political process from the very beginning, and an unwarranted attempt to remove our duly elected President from office. I will vote "no" and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote against this divisive impeachment.

I include in the Record a letter from President Trump to Speaker Pelosi.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, December 17, 2019.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: I write to express my strongest and most powerful protest against the partisan impeachment crusade being pursued by the Democrats in the House of Representatives. This impeachment represents an unprecedented and unconstitutional abuse of power by Democrat Lawmakers, unequaled in nearly two and a half centuries of American legislative history.

The Articles of Impeachment introduced by the House Judiciary Committee are not recognizable under any standard of Constitutional theory, interpretation, or jurisprudence. They include no crimes, no misdemeanors, and no offenses whatsoever. You have cheapened the importance of the very ugly word, impeachment!

By proceeding with your invalid impeachment, you are violating your oaths of office, you are breaking your allegiance to the Constitution, and you are declaring open war on American Democracy. You dare to invoke the Founding Fathers in pursuit of this election-nullification scheme—yet your spiteful actions display unfettered contempt for America's founding and your egregious conduct threatens to destroy that which our Founders pledged their very lives to build. Even worse than offending the Founding Fathers, you are offending Americans of faith by continually saying "I pray for the President," when you know this statement is not true, unless it is meant in a negative sense. It is a terrible thing you are doing, but you will have to live with it, not I!

Your first claim, "Abuse of Power," is a completely disingenuous, meritless, and baseless invention of your imagination. You know that I had a totally innocent conversation with the President of Ukraine. I then had a second conversation that has been misquoted, mischaracterized, and fraudulently misrepresented. Fortunately, there was a transcript of the conversation taken, and you know from the transcript (which was immediately made available) that the paragraph in question was perfect. I said to President Zelenskyy: "I would like you to do us a favor, though, because our country has been through a lot and Ukraine knows a lot about it." I said do us a favor, not me, and our country, not a campaign. I then mentioned the Attorney General of the United States. Every time I talk with a foreign leader, I put America's interests first, just as I did with President Zelenskyy.

You are turning a policy disagreement between two branches of government into an impeachable offense—it is no more legitimate than the Executive Branch charging members of Congress with crimes for the lawful exercise of legislative power.

You know full well that Vice President Biden used his office and \$1 billion dollars of U.S. aid money to coerce Ukraine into firing the prosecutor who was digging into the company paying his son millions of dollars. You know this because Biden bragged about it on video. Biden openly stated: "I said, 'I'm telling you, you're not getting the billion dollars' . . . I looked at them and said: 'I'm leaving in six hours. If the prosecutor is not

fired, you're not getting the money.' Well, son of a bitch. He got fired." Even Joe Biden admitted just days ago in an interview with NPR that it "looked bad." Now you are trying to impeach me by falsely accusing me of doing what Joe Biden has admitted he actually did.

President Zelenskyy has repeatedly declared that I did nothing wrong, and that there was "No Pressure." He further emphasized that it was a "good phone call," that "I don't feel pressure," and explicitly stressed that "nobody pushed me." The Ukrainian Foreign Minister stated very clearly: "I have never seen a direct link between investigations and security assistance." He also said there was "No Pressure." Senator Ron Johnson of Wisconsin, a supporter of Ukraine who met privately with President Zelenskyy, has said: "At no time during this meeting . . . was there any mention by Zelenskyy or any Ukrainian that they were feeling pressure to do anything in return for the military aid."

Many meetings have been held between representatives of Ukraine and our country. Never once did Ukraine complain about pressure being applied—not once! Ambassador Sandland testified that I told him: "No quid pro quo. I want nothing. I want nothing. I want President Zelenskyy to do the right thing, do what he can on."

The second claim, so-called "Obstruction of Congress," is preposterous and dangerous. House Democrats are trying to impeach the duly elected President of the United States for asserting Constitutionally based privileges that have been asserted on a bipartisan basis by administrations of both political parties throughout our Nation's history. Under that standard, every American president would have been impeached many times over. As liberal law professor Jonathan Turley warned when addressing Congressional Democrats: "I can't emphasize this enough . . . if you impeach a president, if you make a high crime and misdemeanor out of going to the courts, it is an abuse of power. It's your abuse of power. You're doing precisely what you're criticizing the President for doing."

Everyone, you included, knows what is really happening. Your chosen candidate lost the election in 2016, in an Electoral College landslide (306-227), and you and your party have never recovered from this defeat. You have developed a full-fledged case of what many in the media call Trump Derangement Syndrome and sadly, you will never get over it! You are unwilling and unable to accept the verdict issued at the ballot box during the great Election of 2016. So you have spent three straight years attempting to overturn the will of the American people and nullify their votes. You view democracy as your enemy!

Speaker Pelosi, you admitted just last week at a public forum that your party's impeachment effort has been going on for "two and a half years," long before you ever heard about a phone call with Ukraine. Nineteen minutes after I took the oath of office, the Washington Post published a story headlined, "The Campaign to Impeach President Trump Has Begun." Less than three months after my inauguration, Representative Maxine Waters stated, "I'm going to fight every day until he's impeached." House Democrats introduced the first impeachment resolution against me within months of my inauguration, for what will be regarded as one of our country's best decisions, the firing of James Comey (see Inspector General Reports)—who the world now knows is one of the dirtiest cops our Nation has ever seen. A ranting and raving Congresswoman, Rashida Tlaib, declared just hours after she was sworn into office, "We're gonna go in there and we're gonna impeach the motherf***r." Rep-

resentative Al Green said in May, "I'm concerned that if we don't impeach this president, he will get re-elected." Again, you and your allies said, and did, all of these things long before you ever heard of President Zelenskyy or anything related to Ukraine. As you know very well, this impeachment drive has nothing to do with Ukraine, or the totally appropriate conversation I had with its new president. It only has to do with your attempt to undo the election of 2016 and steal the election of 2020!

Congressman Adam Schiff cheated and lied all the way up to the present day, even going so far as to fraudulently make up, out of thin air, my conversation with President Zelenskyy of Ukraine and read this fantasy language to Congress as though it were said by me. His shameless lies and deceptions, dating all the way back to the Russia Hoax, is one of the main reasons we are here today.

You and your party are desperate to distract from America's extraordinary economy, incredible jobs boom, record stock market, soaring confidence, and flourishing citizens. Your party simply cannot compete with our record: 7 million new jobs; the lowest-ever unemployment for African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans; a rebuilt military; a completely reformed VA with Choice and Accountability for our great veterans; more than 170 new federal judges and two Supreme Court Justices; historic tax and regulation cuts; the elimination of the individual mandate; the first decline in prescription drug prices in half a century; the first new branch of the United States Military since 1947, the Space Force; strong protection of the Second Amendment; criminal justice reform; a defeated ISIS caliphate and the killing of the world's number one terrorist leader, al-Baghdadi; the replacement of the disastrous NAFTA trade deal with the wonderful USMCA (Mexico and Canada); a breakthrough Phase One trade deal with China; massive new trade deals with Japan and South Korea; withdrawal from the terrible Iran Nuclear Deal; cancellation of the unfair and costly Paris Climate Accord; becoming the world's top energy producer; recognition of Israel's capital, opening the American Embassy in Jerusalem; and recognizing Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights; a colossal reduction in illegal border crossings, the ending of Catch-and-Release, and the building of the Southern Border Wall—and that is just the beginning, there is so much more. You cannot defend your extreme policies—open borders, mass migration, high crime, crippling taxes, socialized healthcare, destruction of American energy, late-term taxpayer-funded abortion, elimination of the Second Amendment, radical far-left theories of law and justice, and constant partisan obstruction of both common sense and common good.

There is nothing I would rather do than stop referring to your party as the Do-Nothing Democrats. Unfortunately, I don't know that you will ever give me a chance to do so.

After three years of unfair and unwarranted investigations, 45 million dollars spent, 18 angry Democrat prosecutors, the entire force of the FBI, headed by leadership now proven to be totally incompetent and corrupt, you have found NOTHING! Few people in high position could have endured or passed this test. You do not know, nor do you care, the great damage and hurt you have inflicted upon wonderful and loving members of my family. You conducted a fake investigation upon the democratically elected President of the United States, and you are doing it yet again.

There are not many people who could have taken the punishment inflicted during this period of time, and yet done so much for the

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success of America and its citizens. But instead of putting our country first, you have decided to disgrace our country still further. You completely failed with the Mueller report because there was nothing to find, so you decided to take the next hoax that came along, the phone call with Ukraine—even though it was a perfect call. And by the way, when I speak to foreign countries, there are many people, with permission, listening to the call on both sides of the conversation.

You are the ones interfering in America's elections. You are the ones subverting America's Democracy. You are the ones obstructing Justice. You are the ones bringing pain and suffering to our Republic for your own selfish personal, political, and partisan gain.

Before the Impeachment Hoax, it was the Russian Witch Hunt. Against all evidence, and regardless of the truth, you and your deputies claimed that my campaign colluded with the Russians—a grave, malicious, and slanderous lie, a falsehood like no other. You forced our Nation through turmoil and torment over a wholly fabricated story, illegally purchased from a foreign spy by Hillary Clinton and the DNC in order to assault our democracy. Yet, when the monstrous lie was debunked and this Democrat conspiracy dissolved into dust, you did not apologize. You did not recant. You did not ask to be forgiven. You showed no remorse, no capacity for self-reflection. Instead, you pursued your next libelous and vicious crusade—you engineered an attempt to frame and defame an innocent person. All of this was motivated by personal political calculation. Your Speakership and your party are held hostage by your most deranged and radical representatives of the far left. Each one of your members lives in fear of a socialist primary challenger—this is what is driving Impeachment. Look at Congressman Nadler's challenger. Look at yourself and others. Do not take our country down with your party.

If you truly cared about freedom and liberty for our Nation, then you would be devoting your vast investigative resources to exposing the full truth concerning the FBI's horrifying abuses of power before, during, and after the 2016 election—including the use of spies against my campaign, the submission of false evidence to a FISA court, and the concealment of exculpatory evidence in order to frame the innocent. The FBI has great and honorable people, but the leadership was inept and corrupt. I would think that you would personally be appalled by these revelations, because in your press conference the day you announced Impeachment, you tied the impeachment effort directly to the completely discredited Russia Hoax, declaring twice that "all roads lead to Putin," when you know that is an abject lie. I have been far tougher on Russia than President Obama ever even thought to be.

Any member of Congress who votes in support of impeachment—against every shred of truth, fact, evidence, and legal principle—is showing how deeply they revile the voters and how truly they detest America's Constitutional order. Our Founders feared the tribalization of partisan politics, and you are bringing their worst fears to life.

Worse still, I have been deprived of basic Constitutional Due Process from the beginning of this impeachment scam right up until the present. I have been denied the most fundamental rights afforded by the Constitution, including the right to present evidence, to have my own counsel present, to confront accusers, and to call and cross-examine witnesses, like the so-called whistleblower who started this entire hoax with a false report of the phone call that bears no relationship to the actual phone call that was made. Once I presented the transcribed call, which surprised and shocked the

frustrated (they never thought that such evidence would be presented), the so-called whistleblower, and the second whistleblower, disappeared because they got caught, their report was a fraud, and they were no longer going to be made available to us. In other words, once the phone call was made public, your whole plot blew up, but that didn't stop you from continuing.

More due process was afforded to those accused in the Salem Witch Trials.

You and others on your committees have long said impeachment must be bipartisan—it is not. You said it was very divisive—it certainly is, even far more than you ever thought possible—and it will only get worse!

This is nothing more than an illegal, partisan attempted coup that will, based on recent sentiment, badly fail at the voting booth. You are not just after me, as President, you are after the entire Republican Party. But because of this colossal injustice, our party is more united than it has ever been before. History will judge you harshly as you proceed with this impeachment charade. Your legacy will be that of turning the House of Representatives from a revered legislative body into a Star Chamber of partisan persecution.

Perhaps most insulting of all is your false display of solemnity. You apparently have so little respect for the American People that you expect them to believe that you are approaching this impeachment solemnly, reservedly, and reluctantly. No intelligent person believes what you are saying. Since the moment I won the election, the Democrat Party has been possessed by Impeachment Fever. There is no reticence. This is not a somber affair. You are making a mockery of impeachment and you are scarcely concealing your hatred of me, of the Republican Party, and tens of millions of patriotic Americans. The voters are wise, and they are seeing straight through this empty, hollow, and dangerous game you are playing.

I have no doubt the American people will hold you and the Democrats fully responsible in the upcoming 2020 election. They will not soon forgive your perversion of justice and abuse of power.

There is far too much that needs to be done to improve the lives of our citizens. It is time for you and the highly partisan Democrats in Congress to immediately cease this impeachment fantasy and get back to work for the American People. While I have no expectation that you will do so, I write this letter to you for the purpose of history and to put my thoughts on a permanent and indelible record.

One hundred years from now, when people look back at this affair, I want them to understand it, and learn from it, so that it can never happen to another President again.

Sincerely yours,

DONALD J. TRUMP,

President of the United States of America.

Mr. POSEY, Madam Speaker, I rise to oppose the articles of impeachment that have been produced by this flawed process, which was based on hearsay and testimony largely collected from a closed-door, one-sided investigation.

In fact, the only witness we heard from who had direct knowledge of the conversation in question, testified that President Trump did not want a quid pro quo and confirmed that the aid to Ukraine was released without the launching of any investigation that the President's detractors say he was seeking.

The two articles of impeachment in the resolution—abuse of power and obstruction of Congress—are broad and cite no specific crimes that the President committed. The

House Democrats are basing the entire impeachment on hearsay testimonies grounded on absolutely no evidence of a crime.

However, last week we had a look at some real wrongdoing. We found out from the Justice Department's Inspector General that the investigation into whether President Trump colluded with the Russians was based on fraudulent information filed with the secret court. The FBI was found to have withheld exculpatory evidence and senior FBI leaders were found to have manipulated facts in order to support this false collusion narrative, justify their investigation, and expand it. This happened on multiple occasions.

While the Mueller investigation found no collusion, some Members of Congress, like House Impeachment Leader ADAM SCHIFF, knowingly promoted this falsehood and used similar tactics to engineer this impeachment inquiry. This is unacceptable.

For the above reason, I voted to censure Chairman ADAM SCHIFF and will vote against these articles of impeachment.

We know this impeachment is a sham. They know this impeachment is a sham. They know that we know it is a sham.

We all know this shameful impeachment began the moment the President was elected, long before he ever had a single telephone call with any foreign government. We've heard the numerous quotations by those on the other side that validate that fact. And yet the other side persists in attempting to overturn the results of the legitimate election of President Donald J. Trump, because he dares to drain a swamp to which they are beholden.

When the President calls for an investigation of corruption, the other side calls it 'digging for dirt.' When they dig for dirt, they call it an 'investigation'.

This is a sad day for America. This impeachment is the worst case of partisan politics in the history of our Republic.

Mrs. DINGELL, Madam Speaker, no one enters Congress hoping to impeach the president. But when duty demands it, we have no other choice. Our founders included in the Constitution a provision for impeachment, a provision to be used only in the face of the gravest threats to our democratic republic.

Deciding how to vote cannot be accurately portrayed in tweets or sound bites, so I welcome the opportunity to explain my thoughts.

Unlike many others in the Democratic Party, I was, at first, hesitant about impeachment. As one of the few who predicted that Donald Trump could win the election, I made clear that I would work with him if he would help the hard-working men and women of my district in Michigan.

I worked with his team on lowering drug prices, improving trade policies, addressing the opioid crisis and updating major conservation efforts. We made progress in some areas.

I have also opposed many of this administration's positions, including threatening to take away protections for people living with pre-existing medical conditions, withdrawing from the Paris climate agreement, instituting a travel ban affecting Muslim-majority countries and tearing families apart at the border.

These policies were wrong, but they were not impeachable offenses. Our democracy supports dissenting opinions, and I respect the office of the presidency.

Pressure began early this year for me to call for impeachment. The billionaire Tom Steyer

ran advertisements in *The Detroit News* and *The Detroit Free Press* and on news websites and social media calling for impeachment. People in my district had strong opinions everywhere I went, from the grocery store and farmers markets to church and my bagel place.

At the time, my constituents were focused on the Mueller report into Russian interference in the 2016 election, which they hoped would provide a case for impeachment. But it wasn't clear. What the report did reveal—a finding that was often overlooked in the focus on the Trump campaign's contacts with Russians—is that Moscow is trying to divide our country.

Then, in October, came reports that Mr. Trump and his administration withheld congressionally approved military aid to Ukraine while asking for a foreign government to investigate one of his political rivals. An inspector general appointed by Mr. Trump found that there was a credible, urgent and potentially immediate threat to our national security.

No matter the party affiliation of the person occupying the White House or the party of the majority in Congress, our founders built our Constitution on a system of three equal branches of government, with very clear oversight responsibilities delegated to the Congress. The whistle-blower report required Congress to investigate the facts and follow the issue.

News outlets seem to assume that House Democrats and Republicans have been as obsessed with impeachment as they are, and that every single Democrat had their mind made up from Day 1. But the truth is that many of us on both sides have remained focused on kitchen-table issues that matter to everyone.

While the House Intelligence and Judiciary Committees undertook the job of gathering the facts, House leaders and other committees worked to lower prescription drug prices, protect the environment, restore voting rights to citizens and devise trade deals that level the playing field.

A vote as serious as impeaching the president of the United States deserves thoughtful, reflective and deliberate attention. Each day, after attending my own committee hearings and markups, meetings and events with constituents, I would come home to start my own studies on the impeachment inquiry.

I read testimonies from firsthand witnesses, parsed the majority and dissenting opinions from the committees' reports and listened to the voices on both sides. I spent weeks reading the Constitution, constitutional scholars, the *Federalist Papers* and papers from both the Nixon and Clinton impeachment processes.

By the end, I was convinced: The facts showed that President Trump and his administration put politics over country by asking a foreign government to investigate a political rival while withholding military aid that affects our national security.

Further evidence showed a clear obstruction of Congress. Blocking key witnesses from the administration from testifying and even intimidating sitting witnesses sets a dangerous precedent.

If we don't address this abuse of power, we abdicate our constitutional and moral responsibility. Failing to address it would also condone these actions as acceptable for future administrations.

Did President Trump's actions rise to the level of a threat to our democracy? Yes. Future generations and historians will judge us if we did not address these dangers. I will cast my vote to protect our Constitution, our democratic republic and the future of our country.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Madam Speaker, in 1998, I voted for three of the four counts of impeachment brought against President Clinton. Those votes were some of the most difficult I have cast during my 25 years in Congress. Impeachment is an extreme remedy, which, in effect, alters a decision made by the American people through an election. It was clear, however, that President Clinton had lied under oath in a judicial proceeding, a felony crime for which other Americans are routinely prosecuted and convicted. In my view, dismissing such a crime because the lies involved private rather than public actions or because the perjurer was the President of the United States would have undermined the rule of law and presented a danger to our constitutional system of government. Therefore, I voted for three of the counts.

The count of impeachment that I voted against in 1998 involved "abuse of power." It was essentially a repeat of the perjury recited in other counts and a failure to provide information to Congress. It was also one of two counts that failed to receive a majority of the votes on the Floor of the House.

In contrast to 1998, the votes I make today are not difficult at all. After three years of investigating this President, House Democrats center their case for impeachment on one phone call between President Trump and the President of Ukraine, a transcript of which has been released.

I believe that aspects of that phone call, particularly discussing an investigation of a political opponent, were inappropriate for a president. I recognize that ignoring potentially corrupt behavior because of political prominence could lead to another set of problems. Nonetheless, under the circumstances, I believe that it would have been best if the President had avoided such topics.

Inappropriate does not mean impeachable. The Constitution sets a high standard for impeachable conduct: "Treason, Bribery, other high Crimes and Misdemeanors." (Article II, Section 4) A potentially inappropriate conversation does not begin to approach that standard, as the counts brought before us today demonstrate.

Count one alleges "abuse of power," the same phrase rejected by the House in the Clinton impeachment. The allegations relate to the phone call, an investigation that was never conducted, and a temporary delay in military aid being released. In spite of a last-minute attempt in the Judiciary Committee's report to allege some form of bribery, the evidence and the law do not support the charge, and the Committee made no serious attempt to prove it. Instead, we are left with a nebulous, subjective phrase that can be used to cover any political or stylistic difference.

Count two alleges "obstruction of Congress." I find it remarkable that an impeachment process which, in contrast to those prior, has been totally partisan with no attempt at a jointly-decided bipartisan process, would attempt to impeach a president for resisting such partisanship. In addition, I believe that it is a mistake to essentially criminalize the inherent tensions between the legislative and executive branches of government.

To describe these counts as "weak" overstates them. A partisan process, designed from the beginning to achieve a desired result, brings to the Floor two counts that do not begin to meet the constitutional standard for impeachment, even if all of the facts alleged are assumed true. It is a misuse—one might say "abuse"—of the Constitution's impeachment power.

One final concern: the partisan process used in this case degrades established boundaries of political competition that have helped this nation survive intense political differences for over two hundred years. As a result, I fear that partisan impeachment efforts may well become just another tool in the political arsenal, expected to be pursued by whichever party loses a presidential election.

The damage done to our constitutional processes and to our institutions by this hyper-partisan, flawed process is greater than any alleged harm done by the President's phone call. I hope and trust that the American people in their wisdom will see that appropriate boundaries and constitutional balance are restored.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, impeaching a President is one of the most solemn and consequential decisions the United States Congress can make. It is not an action I or my fellow House colleagues take lightly. Impeachment exists to protect our democracy. As Alexander Hamilton wrote in the *Federalist Papers*, the impeachment clause in the Constitution exists to address "the misconduct of public men," which involves "the abuse or violation of some public trust."

The investigations and hearings conducted by the House Intelligence and Judiciary Committees provide overwhelming evidence that President Trump abused his power and endangered our national security when he coerced Ukraine into investigating his likely rival in the 2020 election by withholding \$391 million in critical military aid and a White House meeting from the Ukrainian government. Withholding this military assistance to Ukraine as it enters the fifth year of its deadly war against Russia endangers Ukraine's sovereignty and safety as well as the United States' national security interests.

President Trump has also issued a blanket order prohibiting all executive office personnel from testifying in Congressional impeachment hearings, responding to subpoenas and turning over documents. Therefore, he has obstructed the legitimate and Constitutional obligation Congress has to conduct an impeachment inquiry when there is evidence of wrongdoing by the President.

No one is above the law. The President's actions leave me no choice. President Trump has violated his oath to "faithfully execute the Office of the President of the United States," and to, "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies foreign and domestic." Now I will uphold my Oath of Office to preserve and protect our Constitution and my promise to my constituents to carefully analyze all issues before me. I will vote in favor of both articles of impeachment against President Donald John Trump.

Ms. McCOLLUM. Madam Speaker, the articles of impeachment introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives fulfill an obligation incumbent upon every Member of Congress to defend the Constitution, protect our national

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security, and ensure our democracy is not corrupted by a foreign power. For every Member of Congress, holding the President of the United States accountable to the Constitution and protecting our most fundamental democratic values is not a political decision based on loyalty or partisan affiliation. In fact, it is an inherent duty upon which we have sworn a sacred oath.

The sole person responsible for precipitating this impeachment process is President Donald J. Trump. President Trump's willful, flagrant, and corrupt misconduct is a betrayal of the public trust. At this historic and sober moment, the American people understand that as a nation of laws there can be no person, not even the President of the United States, who is above the law. Let these articles of impeachment also serve as a clear and unambiguous message to all future presidents: Congress, as a co-equal branch of government, will never tolerate or appease an abusive, corrupt executive.

With the power granted to the U.S. House under Article I, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution ("The House of Representatives . . . shall have the sole Power of Impeachment"), I intend to vote in favor of the resolution to impeach President Donald J. Trump for high crimes and misdemeanors.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, this is the fourth impeachment proceeding against a president of the United States, and the most serious.

President Trump committed numerous crimes. He conditioned two official acts, hundreds of millions of dollars in military aid and an Oval Office meeting, on getting help for his campaign in return. When his scheme was publicly exposed, he did everything possible to obstruct the investigation.

Congress voted to grant hundreds of millions of dollars in military aid to our ally Ukraine because it is both morally right and in our national interest to stand with them in their fight to preserve their independence against Russian aggression. I was one of the members of Congress who advocated and voted for this military aid. It was never intended to become a bargaining chip for the President to use to get foreign help for his re-election campaign.

The factual evidence is clear and convincing. It was reinforced by the testimonies of every single fact witness, all of whom are career, nonpartisan public servants or Trump appointees.

So, the matter before us, ultimately, is not a question of fact, for the evidence is undisputed. Nor is it a question of law, as the Constitution is clear. The heart of the matter is this: will Members of this House have the courage to choose fidelity to the Constitution over loyalty to political party?

The Constitution has endured for more than two centuries, not just because of the brilliance of our founders, but because of the commitment of generations of Americans to uphold it. For the sake of our Constitution, and the sake of our country, for Americans today and tomorrow, I urge all Members to have the courage to vote yes.

Mr. VISLOSKY. I rise today in support of two articles of impeachment—one regarding abuse of power and one regarding obstruction of Congress—against President Trump.

I decided to support the President's impeachment after a judicious consid-

eration of the facts established by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI) and the House Committee on the Judiciary, as well as reflecting upon my constitutional responsibilities as a Member of Congress. I would note that the constitutional remedy for high crimes and misdemeanors—such as abuse of power—is impeachment. Regrettably, the President's severe misconduct with respect to Ukraine showed a complete disregard for our constitution, our democratic system of government, and the security of our nation and our allies. The President left the House with little choice but to faithfully discharge its duty.

As the Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, I believe that it is unconscionable that an American leader would use nearly \$400 million in military aid appropriated by Congress—and signed into law by the President himself—as leverage for personal gain.

There are fundamental reasons why U.S. law provided these desperately needed funds to Ukraine. I would emphasize that, in 2014, Russia invaded Ukraine and illegally annexed the Ukrainian territory of Crimea while Russian-backed separatist forces seized control of key cities in eastern Ukraine. The fighting in eastern Ukraine continues to this day and has killed more than 13,000 Ukrainians while forcibly displacing more than two million individuals.

Additionally, the impeachment reports issued by the HPSCI and the House Committee on the Judiciary present an irrefutable case that the President's behavior constituted an ongoing threat to a free and fair Presidential election in 2020.

Further, I believe that the President's refusal to comply with the impeachment inquiry is representative of his broader contempt for Congress and its constitutional role as a separate and coequal branch of government. Congress must continue to work diligently to protect and fully exert its complete range of constitutional prerogatives and maintain the balance of power that has existed for 231 years.

Finally, I would highlight that the administration's complete repudiation of constitutionally-proscribed legislative authorities stands in stark contrast to the courage and patriotism demonstrated by the whistleblower who filed a formal complaint with the Intelligence Community's Inspector General, as well as the public servants who testified before the House. These individuals deserve our utmost respect and gratitude.

As the Senate moves forward with a trial to determine whether to convict the President of impeachable offenses, he assured that I will continue to work hard to address the pressing needs of our nation's citizens, from creating more opportunities for good-paying jobs to decreasing the cost of prescription drugs.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 767, the previous question is ordered on the resolution, as amended.

The question of adoption of the resolution, as amended, shall be divided between the two articles.

The question is on the adoption of Article I.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 230, nays 197, answered "present" 1, not voting 3, as follows:

[Roll No. 695]

YEAS—230

Adams	Finkenauer	McBath
Aguiar	Fletcher	McCollum
Allred	Foster	McEeachin
Amodei	Frankel	McGovern
Axne	Fudge	McNerney
Barragán	Gallagher	Mohr
Bass	Garamendi	Meng
Beatty	García (IL)	Moore
Bera	García (TX)	Morelle
Beyer	Golden	Moulton
Blumen (GA)	Gonzalez	Macarini-Powell
Blumenauer	Gonzalez (TX)	Murphy (FL)
Blunt Rochester	Gottlieb	Nadler
Bonamici	Green, Al (TX)	Napolitano
Boyle, Brendan F.	Griffith	Nesbitt
Brown	Haaland	Neguse
Brown (MD)	Harder (CA)	Norcross
Brownley (CA)	Hastings	O'Halleran
Bustos	Hayes	Ocasio-Cortez
Butterfield	Hicks	Omaha
Carbajal	Higgin (NY)	Pallone
Cardenas	Himes	Panetta
Cassidy (IN)	Horn, Kendra S.	Pappas
Cartwright	Johnson	Payne
Caso	Houlihan	Phillips
Casten (IL)	Hoyer	Pelosi
Castor (FL)	Huffman	Perlmutter
Castro (TX)	Jackson Lee	Peters
Chen, Judy	Jarvis	Pittenger
Cicilline	Jeffries	Poole
Clayton	Johnson (GA)	Porter
Clark (MA)	Johnson (TX)	Pringle
Clarke (NY)	Kaptur	Price (NC)
Clay	Kasling	Quigley
Cleaver	Kelly (IL)	Raskin
Clyburn	Kennedy	Rice (NY)
Cohen	Khanna	Richmond
Connolly	Kildee	Rose (NY)
Cooper	Kilmer	Rouder
Correa	Kim	Roybal-Allard
Costa	Kind	Rubio
Courtney	Kirkpatrick	Ruppersberger
Cox (CA)	Kristianoworth	Rush
Craig	Kuster (NH)	Ryan
Crist	Lamb	Sánchez
Crow	Langvin	Sarbanes
Cuellar	Larson (WA)	Scanlon
Cunningham	Larson (CT)	Shah
Danahy	Lawrence	Shah
Davis (CA)	Lawson (FL)	Schiff
Davis, Danny K.	Lee (CA)	Schneider
Dean	Lee (TX)	Schroeder
DeFazio	Levin (CA)	Schrier
DeGette	Levin (MI)	Scott (VA)
DeLauro	Lewis	Scott, David
DelBene	Liu, Ted	Sewell (AL)
Delgado	Lipinski	Shalala
Demings	Loebach	Sherman
DeSaulnier	Loftgren	Sherrill
Deutch	Lowenthal	Sires
Dingell	Lowe	Slack
Doggett	Lujan	Smith (WA)
Doyle, Michael	Luria	Soto
Engel	Lynch	Spanberger
Escobar	Malinowski	Spier
Eshoo	Maloney	Stanton
Espallat	Malone, Sean	Stevens
Evans	Matai	Swell (CA)
	McAdams	Takano

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

December 18, 2019

H12206

Thompson (CA) Trone
Thompson (MS) Underwood
Titus Vargus
Tlaib Veasey
Tonko Vela
Torres (CA) Velázquez
Torres Small Vislosky
(NM) Wasserman
Trahan Schultz

NAYS—197

Abraham Granger
Aderholt Graves (GA)
Allen Graves (LA)
Amodei Graves (MO)
Armstrong Green (TN)
Arrington Griffith
Babin Grothman
Bacon Guest
Bald Rischenthaler
Balderson Hagelorn
Banks Harris
Barr Hartzel
Bergman Herr, Kevin
Biggs Herrera Beutler
Bilirakis Hice (GA)
Bluhm (NC) Higuins (LA)
Bluhm (UT) Hill (AB)
Boat Holding
Brady Hollingsworth
Brooks (AL) Hudson
Brooks (IN) Huizenga
Buchanan Hurd (TX)
Buck Johnson (LA)
Bucshon Johnson (OH)
Budd Johnson (SD)
Burchett Jordan
Burgess Joyce (OH)
Byrne Joyce (PA)
Calvert Katko
Carter (GA) Keller
Carter (TX) Kelly (MS)
Chabot Kelly (PA)
Cheney King (IA)
Cline King (NY)
Cloud Kintzinger
Cole Kustoff (TN)
Collins (GA) LaHood
Comer LaMalfa
Conaway Lamborn
Cook Latta
Crawford Lesko
Crenshaw Long
Curtis Loudermilk
Davidson (OH) Lacas
Davis, Rodney Lautkemeyer
DesJarlais Marchant
Diaz-Balart Marshall
Duncan Masie
Dunn Mast
Emmer McCarth
Estes McCaul
Ferguson McClintock
Fitzpatrick McHenry
Fleischmann McKinley
Flores Meadows
Fortenberry Meuser
Foxx (NC) Miller
Fulcher Mitchell
Gast Moolenaar
Gallagher Mooney (WV)
Glanforte Mullin
Gibbs Murphy (NC)
Gohmert Newhouse
Gonzalez (OH) Norman
Gooden Nunes
Gosar Olson

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Gabbard

NOT VOTING—3

Hunter Serrano Shimkus

□ 2032

Mr. CLOUD changed his vote from "yes" to "nay."

So Article I was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the adoption of Article II.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE
Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.
The SPEAKER. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 229, noes 198, answered "present" 1, not voting 3, as follows:

[Roll No. 696]

AYES—229

Adams Garcia (TX)
Aguilar Gomez
Allred Gonzalez (TX)
Amash Gottheimer
Axne Green, Al (TX)
Barragán Grijalva
Bass Pappas
Beatty Pasorell
Bera Harder (CA)
Bonamici Hastings
Boyer Hayes
Boyle, Brendan Heck
F. Himes
Brindisi Horn, Kendra S.
Brown (MD) Houlihan
Browley (CA) Hoyer
Bustos Jackson Lee
Butterfield Jayapal
Carbajal Jeffries
Cardenas Johnson (GA)
Carson (IN) Johnson (TX)
Cartwright Kaptar
Case Keating
Casten (IL) Kelly (IL)
Castor (FL) Kennedy
Castro (TX) Khan
Chu, Judy Kildee
Cicilaine Kilmer
Cienfuegos Kim
Clark (MA) Kind
Clarke (NY) Kintzpatrick
Clay Krishnamoorthi
Cleaver Kuster (NH)
Clyburn Lamb
Cohen Langevin
Connolly Larsen (WA)
Cooper Larson (CT)
Correa Lawrence
Costa Lew
Courtney Lee (CA)
Cox (CA) Lee (NV)
Craig Levin (CA)
Crist Lewis
Crow Lewis
Cueiller Liou, Ted
Cunningham Lipinski
Davids (KS) Loebeack
Davis (CA) Lofgren
Davis (CA) Lowenthal
Dingell S Swalwell (CA)
Dingell Stanton
Doggett Stevens
Doyle, Michael Suozzi
Engel Swalwell (CA)
Escobar Takano
Eshoo Luria
Evans Thompson (CA)
Evans Thompson (MS)
Finkenaue Titus
Fletcher Tlaib
Foster Tonko
Frankel Torres (CA)
Fudge Nadler
Gallego Waxton
Garamendi Wild
Garcia (IL) Neguse
Norcross Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—198

Abraham Babin
Aderholt Bacon
Allen Armstrong
Arrington Bald

Balderson Griffith
Banks Grothman
Barr Guest
Bergman Guthrie
Biggs Hagelorn
Bilirakis Harrie
Bluhm (NC) Hartzel
Bluhm (UT) Herr, Kevin
Boat Herrera Beutler
Brady Hice (GA)
Brooks (AL) Higuins (LA)
Brooks (IN) Hill (AR)
Buchanan Holding
Buck Hollingsworth
Bucshon Hudson
Budd Huizenga
Burchett Hurd (TX)
Burgess Johnson (LA)
Byrne Johnson (OH)
Calvert Johnson (SD)
Carter (GA) Jordan
Carter (TX) Joyce (OH)
Chabot Joyce (PA)
Cheney Katko
Cline Keller
Cloud Kelly (MS)
Cole Kelly (PA)
Collins (GA) King (IA)
Comer King (NY)
Conaway Kintzinger
Crawford Kustoff (TN)
Crenshaw LaHood
Curtis Lamborn
Davidson (OH) Latta
Davis, Rodney Lesko
DesJarlais Long
Diaz-Balart Loudermilk
Duncan Lucas
Dunn Lautkemeyer
Emmer Marchant
Estes Marshall
Ferguson Masie
Fitzpatrick Mast
Flores McCarthy
Fleischmann McCaul
Flores McClinton
Foxx (NC) McHenry
Fulcher McKinley
Gast Gartz
Gallagher Gallagher
Glanforte Gianforte
Gibbs Gibbs
Gohmert Gohmert
Golden Golden
Gonzalez (OH) Gonzalez (OH)
Gooden Gooden
Gosar Gosar
Granger Granger
Graves (GA) Graves (GA)
Graves (LA) Olson
Graves (MO) Palazzo
Green (TN) Palmer

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Gabbard

NOT VOTING—3

Hunter Serrano Shimkus

□ 2050

So Article II was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider Article I was laid on the table.

A motion to reconsider Article II was laid on the table.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Cheryl L. Johnson, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker on Tuesday, December 17, 2019:

H.R. 5363. An act to reauthorize mandatory funding programs for historically Black colleges and universities and other minority-serving institutions, and for other purposes.