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.

(26603)
(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.
(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.
The question was taken: and the Ms. BASS changed her vote from the vote. There are 2 minutes remaining.

So the resolution was agreed to.

Mr. McGovern, Madam Speaker, I demand a recorded vote. A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This resolution is in order.

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

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 Misdeeds." 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 John Trump, President of the United States, of the United States of America, has been impeached for high crimes and misdemeanors.

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 and are hereby exhibited to the United States Senate:

The 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, in maintenance and support of its impeachment against him for high crimes and misdemeanors:

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during). There are 2 minutes remaining.
December 18, 2019

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

H12131

(a) a political opponent, former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr.; and
(b) a discredited theory promoted by Russia aligned with President Trump, to interfere in the 2016 United States Presidential election.

With the same corrupt motives, President Trump—acting both directly and through his agents within and outside the United States Government—condoned two official acts on the public announcements that he had required:

(a) the release of $1 billion 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 closed-door meeting at the White House, when the President of Ukraine sought to demonstrate commitment to the United States support for the Government of Ukraine in the face of Russian aggression.

Pursuant to the public recitation of his actions, President Trump ultimately released the military and security assistance to the Government of Ukraine, had persisted in openly and aggressively attempting to inveigle the United States government undertaking investigations for his personal political benefit. These actions were consistent with President Trump’s previous initiatives of foreign interference.

In all of this, President Trump abused the powers of the Presidency by ignoring and impairing national security and the vital interests of the United States by obstructing the collection of information for his personal political benefit. He has also betrayed the Nation by abusing his high office to emblazon a foreign power in corrupting domestic 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 gravely incompatible with self-governance and the rule of law. President Trump thus warrants impeachment and trial, removal from office and the disqualification to hold or enjoy any office of honor, trust or profit under the United States:

ARTICLE I: OBITRICATION 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 Misconducts.” In his conduct of the United States—without the United States—and in violation of his constitutional oath justly to execute the office of President of the United States, has placed the Nation in peril, preserved, and prevented the Constitution from being a living, functional entity to take care that the laws be faithfully executed—Donald J. Trump has directed the President’s subordinates to violate the Constitution’s prohibition against sub judice misconduct and to serve his interests above the Constitution and the rule of law. President Trump thereby warrants impeachment and trial, removal from office and the disqualification to hold or enjoy any office of honor, trust, or profit under the United States:

Therefore, 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 gravely incompatible with self-governance and the rule of law. President Trump thus warrants impeachment and trial, removal from office and the disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust, or profit under the United States:

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 gentlewoman 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 Chairwoman Schiff, who will be presiding later in the day.

Mr. 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 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 uniquely qualified to speak today about today: “a republic, if we can keep it.”

When our Founders declared independence and established our new Nation, they crafted legislation 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 will be in conflict with 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

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE
December 18, 2019

LETTER TO CONGRESS FROM LEGAL SCHOLARS

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, or for extreme distances 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 distract 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 fall under the impeachment standard here is constitutional; it does not depend on what Congress has chosen to criminalize.

Impeachment is a remedy for grave abuses of the Constitution. A President does not commit impeachment-namely the 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 that corrupts elections. The primary check on presidents is political: if a president behaves improperly, voters can punish him or her at the polls. A president who corrupts the system of elections seeks to go to the next election via private meetings through private attorneys, such as Trump counsel Rudy Giuliani's message to Cohen's lawyer that Cohen should "keep quiet" during an election, the process of impeachment could allow international interference with our elections, we believe strongly that, because 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 obstructions of justice—which allows intentional interference with criminal investigations to go unpunished—puts our whole system of justice at risk. We believe strongly that, because the LOE memo, the overwhelming weight of professional judgment would come down in favor of obstruction of justice—in line with the Mueller Report.

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

ATTACHMENT TO CONGRESS FROM LEGAL SCHOLARS

From: [Name]
To: [Name]
Date: [Date]

Subject: Letter to Congress

Dear [Name],

I am writing to you to express my concern regarding the recent events involving [event description]. As a [profession], I believe it is crucial that we address this issue promptly and decisively.

The [issue description] raises serious ethical and moral questions that must be addressed. [Reason for concern]...

I urge you to take immediate action to ensure that [desired outcome].

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
Congressional Record — House H2133

December 18, 2019

Somland certified that the President made a White House visit for the Ukrainian presi­
dent conditional on public announcement of the investigations with which he was "entitled" to be asked. Ukrainian President, President Trump asked for a "favor" in the form of a foreign govern­
ment investigation of a U.S. citizen who is his political rival, President Trump and his Chief of Staff, Nick Mulvaney made public statements confirming this use of govern­
mental 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. Glithbro confirmed that his efforts were in service of President Trump's private interests.

Unfortunately, whether to impeach the Presi­dent and remove him from office depends on public officials determined to protect our Constitution. But if the House of Representa­tives impeached the President for the con­
tact described here and the President were removed, 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 some other impeachable offense under our Constitu­tion.

"If the House of Representatives impeached the President for the conduct described here and the President were removed, 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 some other impeachable offense under our Constitu­tion.

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 hallowed by 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 cooperation on false in­formation in order to advance his own re­election.

President Trump's lawless obstruction of the House of Representatives, which is right­­ly called impeachable conduct in pursuit of its constitutionally-mandated oversight and check, has done no end to 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 cooperation on false in­formation in order to advance his own re­election.

President Trump's lawless obstruction of the House of Representatives, which is right­­ly called impeachable conduct in pursuit of its constitutionally-mandated oversight and check, has done no end to 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 cooperation on false in­formation in order to advance his own re­election.

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, abuse some again the Framers' most profound fears that powerful members of government would become, in Hamilton's words, "the mere instruments of for­eign corruption."

In our considered judgment that if Presi­dent Trump's misconduct does not rise to the level of impeachment, then virtually does.

Hammond understood, as he wrote in 1782, that the republic remained vulnerable to the rise of an unscrupulous demagogue, "unprin­cipated in private life, desperate in his for­tune, bold in his temper, possessed of consider­able talents — despicable in his ordinary demeanour." That demagogue, Hamilton said, would 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 radicals 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 investiga­tion of Hamilton's description and manifest after "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 presi­dential office to advance an improper per­sonal, political benefit at the expense of America's national security. When the President fulfills a democratic obli­gation that is advancing American secu­rity interests by fighting an American enemy, the President weakens America.

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

The Founders understood that it is profoundly corrosive for our democracy for a 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 dangerous foes of republican government."—George Washington.

Sadly, the American people have wit­nessed further wrongs of the President, which necessitated the second Article of Impeachment: obstruction of Congress.

When the President's wrongdoing was revealed, he launched an unprecе­dented, indiscriminate, and categorical campaign of disturbance and obstruction. Never before in the history of our Na­tion have we seen a President declare—

and act as if—"I am 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 constitutional branches, each a check and balance on the others, again, "if we can keep it."
From the very moment that the majority party in this House won, the inevi-
tability 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 a reason behind the politics or the majority, who have their strength, can do what they want to do, regard-
less of the facts.

In fact, I have said before, and I will say it again. I do not believe, no matter how I want to put it today and even what has been said—this is not a sol-
emn 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.

There is a reason behind the impeachment. The clock and the calendar are terrible masters. The clock and the calendar are terrible masters. They do not care about anything except the time done and the calendar fixed. They do not care about facts. They do not care about time. And one day, the time done and the calendar will hang along this body in a very detrimental way.

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 a non-test case. The clock and the calendar, facts don't matter. The promises to the base matter, and today we are going to talk about obstruction of Congress—nothing else.

Well, you know the rest. In May 2019, Mr. 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.

Here we are, the Speaker, even the impeach. 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 if he stepped on the voters, not this House, not in this way, not in the way this is being done, it has trampled everything this House be-
lieve 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 imperative 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 majority in this House won, the inevi-
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lieve 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 imperative 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 majority in this House won, the inevi-
table, not this House, not in this way, not in the way this is being done. It has trampled everything this House be-
lieve in.
December 18, 2019

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

and above our system of checks and balances. 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, asking Ukraine 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 the theory that Ukraine, not Russia, attacked our elections in 2016.

The call 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 desire clear. There would be no aid, or 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. The President engaged in a concerted military aid on a personal favor, he harmed America's national security. When a foreign government targets its domestic political rival, it 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.

Courts 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 removal from office.

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

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

Mr. SENSENIBRENNER. 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 misdeavors.

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 leader, the Democratic Caucus, has been hijacked by the radical left. They want to reverse the course of history and make sure 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, then he has committed an impeachable offense.

That is a touch of brink.

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 deciding whether the President has to comply with one subpoena relating to his tax returns.

Now, here's the Democratic House 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.
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 gentlewoman 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 committees 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 enflamed with foreign governments, corrupted our elections, or sought to avoid consequences for his own misconduct in the case of Ukraine.

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 not confuse 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 interferes with our election is not a democracy, but from the bloodlines of monarchs, but from the Constitution and country. I will vote to impeach Donald J. Trump.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON). Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. SCALLON). Ms. SCALLON. 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 265 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 68 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 96 of the Democrats on this floor today voted to impeach Donald Trump before the July 25 phone call 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 the Democrats' conduct 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 severally produced and purged 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 gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL). Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, this is a day of accountability and defending democracy.

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

The President's allies want to claim that he did this never makes as a point of 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.

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 anti-corruption benchmarks, and he moved forward with the exclusion of all of his top advisers that he must release that aid to Ukraine.

This is not hearsay. We have a responsibility. The President told us not to listen to a phone call and that he did this never makes as a point of corruption. He did not abide by the Department of Defense's own recommendation that Ukraine had passed all the anti-corruption benchmarks, and he moved forward with the exclusion of all of his top advisers that he must release that aid to Ukraine.

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December 18, 2019

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE H12137

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 previous special 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 those meetings, but the result of this decision was that most Members of Congress and all Americans were blacked out from hearing the facts for themselves.

Chairman Schiff repeatedly withheld critical 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 impeach and remove a duly elected President. If there was criminal activity, as many of my Democrat colleagues are saying there are no crimes listed in the Articles of Impeachment.

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 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 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 misled 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.

It is time for this madness to stop. It is time for the gentleman from California, Mr. TED LIEU, to explore the�serious charges he has raised.

The decision to move forward with impeachment is permanent. It will follow Donald Trump no matter what happens in the Senate. Whether Donald Trump leaves office before he is convicted or impeached, the decision run averted a grave threat to America’s national security, the President’s corruption, and foreign manipulation, and the President’s actions must be assessed and held accountable.

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

Mrs. MILLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H. Res. 758.

"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 trying to avoid. They voted 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. Liberal Democrats have given in the commitment of many of our colleagues to obstruct the Trump administration's agenda at every turn, and 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 border continued 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.

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 on a platform that their top political weapon is something that can be a prerequisite of investigations into the 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 supporters in the media and the mainstream media, try to hijack our Constitution.

The Democrats majority has irresponsibly turned the impeachment process into a political weapon, something that our political rivals would never do when their 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, helping us 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 defense of President Trump's conduct, his corruption, and his incompetence.

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

Mr. Deutch. Mr. Speaker, some say 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, "To win the election, we have to cheat to win reelection," and then they wouldn't get the 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 to commit an investigation into the 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 effort.

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 deliver on their promises to defend the Constitution, support these Articles of Impeachment, and remind the world that, in America, no one is above the law.

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 actions that we as members 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
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 that charade for what it is: an attempt to undermine 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 in the two Articles of Impeachment brought today. It argues that the President has committed treason, bribery, or any crime under the law.

"There is not overwhelming evidence." It is not compelling. It is not bipartisan. But the Speaker was right in one way. This is incredibly divisive and has lowered everyone’s trust for the future.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly oppose the articles before us today, and I hope 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 re-election campaign. This is the highest of high crimes, and President Trump must be held accountable.

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

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

As Chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, I know firsthand the dangers that foreign interference in our elections pose to all of 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.

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.

The Framers did not trust the King, and they did not take impeachment lightly. Yet, I am here to do my job as a Member of Congress. This is a very sad day, and I do not think 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 removing the President 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. NUGENT).

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman NADLER and Speaker PELSON 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 investigating the truth.

Let us be clear, in the history of our Republic, no President has ever overcome the 37 votes against him.

During the Watergate investigation, as my colleagues well know:

- President Nixon refused to allow his chief of staff testify before Congress;
- President Nixon’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.
Mr. Speaker, therefore, I will vote aye.

The evidence is overwhelming—and the Constitution requires 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.

On December 18, 2019, we heard him when he called on Russia to interfere in our elections. He said: “Russia. If you're listening. It's the best political advertisement you could have. And you're ads have worked. They worked so well that now you have Russia talking about things you never thought they'd even be talking about.”

Mr. Speaker, he is laughing at us today. The majority is giving him exactly what he wants: a divided America, a fragile democracy, because no one is above the law.
December 18, 2019

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) and all Members are reminded that they are under a continuing prohibition against debate on the floor of the House that is specifically designated for comments on pending legislation. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) will be recognized to comment on pending legislation.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 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 deceived from within because of some sort of false accusation of 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 we 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. 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. I was among those who supported impeachment before Ukraine. 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 our elections that were corrupted; our elections are under attack right now.

The very day the Judiciary Committee voted out Articles of Impeachment, 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 fairly 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—patrotic—willing to risk far more than political career who marched, struggled, and sometimes died so that we could have fair and free elections. We must use every tool at our disposal to ensure that we have an election that is fair and free.

The Speaker. I yield 1 1/2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Meuser).

Mr. MEUSER. Madam Speaker, back to the gentleman from Georgia, his colleague, and all Members are reminded that they are under a continuing prohibition against debate on the floor of the House that is specifically designated for comments on pending legislation. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) will be recognized to comment on pending legislation.

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.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON).

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. I was among those who supported impeachment before Ukraine. I have not asked to possess even a fraction of their courage. We are simply called upon today to do what is right. I am glad that my colleague from Pennsylvania knows me.
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 distressed. 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 our history. And in fact, 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.

The Home 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, like the money just returned from Ukraine, and in an article just released in The New Yorker magazine confuses to counter this effort to interfere in the election that our Founding Fathers recognized.

They got it right. High crimes and misdemeanors. Other than that, this isn’t my story alone. This is my duty as a Member of this body.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. DIGHTON). 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 MINK 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 28th District and all over the country. We have experienced corruption in the birthplaces of our leaders, where brutal dictatorships have chocked their potential to benefit those in power.

This President elected by the American people has violated his oath of office, his campaign on Ukraine.

Some of you introduced Articles of Impeachment because you think he can be arrogant. They think Hillary Clinton.

Mr. STEWART. Madam Speaker, I discovered something recently. It is sham. 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 that some sensitive nature has been offended. I get that. I really do. And 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.

He voted 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 he is stupid, and they think we made a mistake.

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But that is not my story alone. This is a story that I share with so many people who live in Florida’s 28th District and all over the country. We have experienced corruption in the birthplaces of our leaders, where brutal dictatorships have chocked their potential to benefit those in power.
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 in 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.

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

Mr. ROUZER. 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 hold him up to an oath of office.

We have been presented with direct evidence about the President's actions. This evidence concerns national security and undermines 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 Trump has repeatedly corrupted 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 re-election and then, obviously, to silence his critics. These actions strike at the heart of our Constitution.

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 gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ROY). 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 that President Trump is not even a member of our other 'Fiscal' & 'Little' Committees: these are all unfair and not at all, 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.
- The speech 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 a President—is above the law, and our democracy cannot allow a duly-elected President to abuse the powers of his office for personal and political gain.

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker. I yield a 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 force the commands of our court and our Constitution, then no law would stand free from doubt... and no citizen would be safe from his nor from his government.’

The facts are undisputed.

First, 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 interference: to corrupt a foreign country to help in the 2020 election.

These acts are constitutional crimes of assault 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 protecting and cheating our American democracy. His acts betrayed the Nation. He must take care to execute his office faithfully.

This is the truth. Why does the truth matter? Because it matters to the farmer at his or her plow. It matters to...
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 some of us have allowed acts of abuse of power to continue. Our actions today must be judged by the hard test of our Forefathers. 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 dinner table. 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.

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 deny the demands 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 mandated 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 this President asked for a quid pro quo—his own words. The truth is this President has violated the Constitution, the truth is no one is above the law.

The President: I would like you to do a favor though because of our country has been through a lot and Ukraine knows a lot about it. And you end up what happened with this whole situation with Ukraine, they say Crowdstrike ... I guess you have one of your wealthy people ... and, of course, you say Ukraine has it. There are a lot of things that are known, the whole story ... 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 Zeolensky: 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 asking for your continued your trust and your confidence and have personal relationship. And you promise me even more so. I will personally tell you that one of my associates spoke with Mr. Giuliani and Mr. Giuliani will be able to travel to Ukraine and we will meet once in a month and twice in 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 want to set you that we are friends. We are great friends and you Mr. President have friends in our country so we can cooperate in our personal relationship.

The President: Good because I heard you had a dream that there's good and bad and he was shut down and that's really unfair. A lot of people are talking about that, the way you are treating your very fairnd and I also down and you had some very bad people involved. Mr. Giuliani is a very respected person. 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 the facts, the situation, the guy. If you could speak to him that would be great. The former mayor of the United States, the woman, was bad news and the people she was dealing with in the Ukraine were bad news and I think, let you know that. The other thing, There's a lot of talk about. I just stopped the prosecution and a lot of people want to find out about that so whatever you can do with the people of Ukraine is great. Biden went around bragging that he stopped the prosecution. And people like to look into it. It sounds horrible to me.

President Zeolensky: 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 of making sure to restore the honesty so we would like you to do this investigation of the case. On top of that, I would kindly ask you if you have any additional information to give us, it would be very helpful for the investigation. I think it is important for our country with regard to the Ambassador to the United States from Ukraine as far as I recall her name was Finnieitch. 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 at all and this President and she was on his side. She would not accept me as a new president well enough and this is absolutely true.

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 tell the he will help you 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 predict. You have a lot of assets. It's a

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great President. I have many Ukrainian friends, incredible people.

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

PUTIN EXPLAINS CRIMEA FOR RUSSIA AND BRITAIN DENOUNCES THE WEST

(By Steven Lee Myers and Ellen Barry — Mar. 15, 2014)

The NYT on Thursday, May 3, 2019, rebuffed his claims that Crimea was taken by force. Crimea has been a part of Ukraine since 1954, when it was ceded by the Soviet Union to the newly independent Ukraine.

The NYT reported that Crimea had been annexed by Russia in 2014, after a violent standoff with Ukrainian forces.

Putin declared in his address, delivered at the Kremlin on Thursday, that the annexation of Crimea was a historic fact, effectively daring the world to challenge it.

The NYT reported that Crimea had been annexed by Russia in 2014, after a violent standoff with Ukrainian forces.

Some Western critics already threaten us not only with sanctions, but also with the potential for domestic problems," he said.

The NYT reported that Crimea had been annexed by Russia in 2014, after a violent standoff with Ukrainian forces.

Putin, the country's paramount leader for more than 14 years, appeared to be appearing from the Ukraine recent elections. As it did after Russia's war with Georgia in 2008, a new annexation of Crimea is one of the most important issues on the world stage. As with any gambit, though, the annexation of Crimea carries potentially grave risks.

Only hours after Mr. Putin declared that "Crimea is a part of Russia," a group of soldiers opened fire on them. They described a Ukrainian military mapping office near Simferopol, killing a Ukrainian soldier and wounding another according to a Ukrainian military 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 were not truly 97 percent of the population. The ministry said that Ukrainian forces in Crimea were not authorized to use force to defend themselves.

The episode underscored the fact that the few thousand soldiers Mr. Putin moved into Crimea were not the full, well-maintained and equipped military bases and ships, remains dangerously incomplete.

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

Mr. Putin's determination to the citizens of Ukraine's president, Viktor F. Yanukovych, last month has left American and European leaders scrambling to find an immediate response to thepolitically and diplomatically delicate situation. The hope that Mr. Putin was prepared to fund a political solution or "soft landing" to an escalating crisis that began with the collapse of Mr. Yanukovych's government on the Feb. 18.

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

As others criticized the vote as a fraud, Mr. Putin moved quickly on Monday to recognize its results, which he called "more than 96 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 80th and 86th republics of the Russian Federation.

The treaty requires legislative approval, but that is a mere formality given Mr. Putin's unchallenged political authority and in the wake of his actions, Western nations have raised his approval ratings and undermined a national fervor that drove out the few voices of opposition or even caution about the potential costs to Russia.

Mr. Putin appeared Tuesday evening at a rally outside the parliament building to celebrate an event charged with emotional and historical significance for many Ukrainians. Among the music played was a sentimental Soviet song called, "Sevastopol Waltz.

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

He read a list of grievances—from the Soviet Union's transfer of Crimea to the Russian 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.

Some Russia's statehood takeover of Crimea began. Mr. Putin has said very little in public about his ultimate goals. His only extension to the West is that he was working "constructively" with them. The West has so far been unable to make a firm commitment to a strategy of containing Russia's expansion, and the arms race that the Kremlin's warnings on Tuesday, Mr. Putin sounded utterly inscrutable.

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 and the collapse of the Soviet Union had left abandoned to the cruel fates of what he described as a process of hapless democratic revolutions.

"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.

He cited the 15th-century baptism of Prince Vladimir, whose conversion to Orthodoxy Christianity transformed the kingdom known as Russia into the foundation of the empire that became Russia. He called Kiev "the mother of Russian cities," making it clear that he considered it to be the center of the Russian empire.

He cited the cities and battlefields of Crimea and the Crimea War in the 1850s, in which Russia won a victory over Britain, France and the Turks to the Nazi siege of World War II as places "near our hearts, symbolizing Russian military glory and outstanding value.

On Thursday, the United States and Europe had crossed "a red line" on Ukraine by providing support to the new government that quickly emerged after Mr. Yanukovych fled the capital following months of protests and more than 24 days of clashes that left scores dead.

Mr. Putin, as he has before, denounced the regime that ruled Ukraine as a "house of hooligans and neo-Nazis" and abetted by foreign "saying it is just Russia's efforts to protect Crimea's population.

"If you please a spring too hard," he said, "it will recalling one of the biggest—if not the first—divided nations in the world.

He cited the 5th-century baptism of Prince Vladimir, whose conversion to Orthodoxy Christianity transformed the kingdom known as Russia into the foundation of the empire that became Russia. He called Kiev "the mother of Russian cities," making it clear that he considered it to be the center of the Russian empire.

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Despite the turmoil, the commercial aircraft in eastern Ukraine was not the only target that day. The Netherlands have already launched an investigation into the incident, and the European Union has imposed sanctions against the separatists. The Ukrainian government has also launched a criminal investigation into the incident.

In a statement released by the Ukrainian government, President Volodymyr Zelensky said, "We are facing a tragedy of unprecedented scale." He said that the Ukrainian military had not been involved in the crash and that the authorities were investigating the incident. The Chinese government has also expressed its condolences and offered assistance.

The crash has sparked international attention, with leaders from around the world expressing their condolences. The French government, for example, has condemned the actions of the separatists and called for a ceasefire.

The incident has also raised questions about the role of the separatists in eastern Ukraine. The Ukrainian government has accused the separatists of being backed by Russia, and there have been reports of Russian military equipment being used in the conflict.

In the aftermath of the crash, the Ukrainian government has called for a transparent and inclusive investigation into the incident. The international community has also called for a full investigation and for justice to be served.

In conclusion, the crash of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 is a tragic event that has had a profound impact on the international community. The incident has underscored the need for a peaceful resolution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine and has highlighted the challenges that the international community faces in dealing with such crises.
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Trainings Center in western Ukraine. "And at the end of all of that," he said, "we'll do a field training exercise with that battalion." The U.S. and Ukrainian militaries have been training 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 public show. 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 last year more than 3,400 soldiers to Russian-backed separatists.

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

"But that's not the real end state," she said. "Essentially, what we're trying to do is build up to the 20,000 force, but they are running their own combat training center," like the U.S. Army National Training Center Fort Irwin, Calif., or the Joint Readiness Training Center Fort Polk, La., in Louisiana.

In the U.S., it's possible to build an army's entire training infrastructure almost from scratch. Ukraine, for its part, is enduring decades of not-so-casual corruption that has plagued its own and many post-Soviet countries' militaries across eastern Europe.

"Our overall goal is essentially to help the Ukraine military become NATO-intrapor-able," Christopher said. "So the more they have an opportunity to work with different counterparts, the same issue, but their Slavic neighbors, and all the other Western resources, their training, and even the U.S. has provided them training or exercise with Ukraine's military."

That includes Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, Ukraine, Romania, U.S. bases around the Baltics, 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 Donbass and Luhansky regions. Maybe Javelin anti-tank missiles, Defense Secretary Mattis said in August. Yet Christopher's unit is far from the fighting. Their mission is "training the trainers" and sweep, targeting, adding to Ukraine's NATO-coy—scen brainstorm: a joint force that: units are fit and ready for combat.

Threats in the East

For Ukraine's new soldiers, combat means fighting the Russians, 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 Russian, you know. They're essentially terrorists.

So the U.S. calls eastern Ukraine's most troubled region an Anti-Terrorism Operation Zone, or ATZ, where those Russian-backed forces have attacked and counter-attacked Ukraine's soldiers and civilians. (See, for example, this interactive day-by-day map of alleged shelling by Ukrainian sources, or here, for a map of known incidents.)

In just the first two days of this month, UN monitors recorded 40 violations of the Minsk II ceasefire, an agreement reached in February 2015 between Russia, Ukraine, France, Germany and the United States that has been repeatedly broken. On top of that, in September, two months ago, Russia said it was withdrawing most of the Russian military forces from the Donbass region.

So Russia is hardly backing down from a tense region. 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.

"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.

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

Which, oddly, does not feel that war. The U.S. Army's quiet mission in Ukraine may go quickly on too many, many months to come. Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.Malam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MITCHELL).

Members, and all Americans, must recognize that impeachment is intended to be a serious, rarely used, only when a President acts in an immoral and blatantly unlawful manner as is alleged here in the latest round of charges. The impeachment inquiry and 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 disagree with the President's rhetoric, political tactics, use of Twitter, policy choices, or his political allies. One of our Founders, Alexander Hamilton, warned of the risks of impeachment. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, the House of Representatives votes on two Articles of Impeachment for President Trump.

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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, Mr. Speaker, 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, because I have no confidence that the committee had served the needs of the American people.

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! Mr. Speaker, as described in these articles, do not constitute treason, bribery, or high crimes and misdemeanors. You simply don't like him.

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I have heard Republicans say: Why are we running 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 said 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 throne for President whose misdeeds continue.

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.

I stand on my oath to uphold our Constitution and to defend the Constitution from a President who misused the power he wanted for himself over the law.

Before we make a decision on what to do, I must say that Donald Trump misled us. He has said those very same things and he said them privately.

And the Framers of the Constitution included impeachment as a safeguard against a corrupt President whose misbehavior can jeopardize 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: Would you put your country above your personal interest or your desire to 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 26½ minutes remaining.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KING), Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I start out, first of all, that this is the largest, most massive coverage of such a list of crimes against our country, and to go 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 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 21st primary, and he is running third in that race. His opponents are not the 20 Democrats. How would anybody dig into that mess of 21 people and decide he is going to go overseas with our troops to build his wall.

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.

If, indeed, 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 process.

What a shame. What a sham.

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Today, literally, I ask my colleagues: When is it ever right for a President during the investigation.

He was denied due process. 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.

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Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. Langevin).

Mr. LANGBEIN. 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 Trump because he has fundamentally broken his covenant with the American people. In doing so, we are using the powers of the Founding Fathers to address a President who has violated his oath of office.

The evidence that Trump committed impeachable actions is not in question.

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

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.

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: apparently, House Democrats do not: If Congress disagrees with the President, if Congress wants to see the President's tax returns, Congress can take it to court. Let the third branch of government decide. They are the role.

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.

Here is something that is not absurd but, rather, frightening: House Democrats, today, are setting a dangerous precedent. The President will be immune from impeachment, and that will forever negatively tar­­nish the history of the 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 to Ukraine to pressure Ukraine to pursue investigations into his abuses.

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 God. The only way to justify this circus is because the Presi­dent has done nothing wrong. The only thing that President Trump is guilty of is failing to do 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. That, 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 heart­breakingly 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. 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 his political rivals and a baseless Russian conspiracy theory, while with­holding congressionally appropriated defense aid and a coveted White House visit. He then blocked congressional in­vestigation into those abuses.

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

We sometimes regard constitutional checks and balances as the indestructible underpinnings of our democracy. 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 one thing, 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: the threats to our democracy are real and present. The eyes of history are upon us.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute 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 how the partisan way in which Democrats have carried out this entire process.

I hope all of my congressional col­leagues carefully consider the prece­dent they are setting by voting in favor...
of this sham process and these illegit­imic process or any impeachable offense. The President did not commit any impeachable offense, and it is clear for us. Our Founders have lamented that this effort is not for fear of losing an elec­

crime at any time, even without com­dential abuse of power. Voters may

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and the President forced each of us
terns above those of the American people. No President can be held above the law.

Mr. BABIN. Madam Speaker, we are

in support of this resolution.

sion not only to these Articles of Im­

and personal interests above those of the American people.

These articles were written and built on a re­
port that was drafted with biased pre­
sump­tion, 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 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. LOUDERMILK).

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Madam Speaker, many have lamented that this effort is not bipartisan, but that is on my Repub­lican colleagues.

Republicans refuse to see 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 must set the rules of his trial and there will be no fact wit­nesses.

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I represent the Fifth District of Virginia, which is 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 where 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 the problems 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.

Weeping at the words of Thomas Paine is not the way to serve the United States of America.

And, Madam Speaker, to my colleague who does just that, I offer a quote Thomas Paine wrote in “The Grievance”: “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 those bills are languishing on Senator McConnell’s desk.

Mr. COLLINS. 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 the resolve of Members of Congress wear 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 besieged villain sits in Moscow at the Kremlin.

Vladimir Putin has coordinated murders, election hacking, propaganda, the entrenchment of willing foils and greedy underlings who put their own selfish interests over liberty.

Putin seeks to sow disarray and destabilize democracies and the NATO alliance. At Putin’s direction, Russian intelligence invaded Ukraine in 2014. The 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.

Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. 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:

“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 participate in this guilty-until-proven-circuit. 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 relationship.

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

Madam Speaker, the President’s obstruction is unprecedented and catastrophic. President Trump claims that the House cannot investigate his misconduct outside of an impeachment inquiry. He defies lawful congressional subpoenas and then he sets to block which rules 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 of 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 putting politics over 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 Fair Employment Act.

President John F. Kennedy used the CIA 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.

Reschenthaler. I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KILLY).

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 knew that we were prepared to execute under 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 party and our country depends on us.

A clear and present threat to American democracy is what brings us here. The architecture was a sad day for me, who asked that a foreign nation interfere in our election: this was our Founding Father's worst 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 Monmouth, Katheryn in Crete, and Jiminy 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, a 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 terrifying 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 country. When 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 Democrat for obstruction. How can 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, peace and property 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 gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELAZQUEZ).

Ms. VELAZQUEZ. 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.
Every single one of us, today, faces a stark choice. We choose to turn a blind eye, to put political expediency before the Constitution, then we are complicit in the erosion 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. BRYSON).

Mr. BRYSON. 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 circus, 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 this subornation of public hearings, our subpoenaes, and denied the President any meaningful opportunity to defend himself.

With this complete abuse of process, the Democratic majority has produced the filmiest and most lawless 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.

Facts are stubborn things. One Member of the House of Representatives, and it being 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. Witnesses after witness attended to these facts. No one has credibly refuted them.

President Trump tried to coerce Ukraine to interfere in the 2020 election. He used the power of his office for personal political gain.

Mr. Nadler, Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman 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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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 1-3/4 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. The gentleman from Texas was introduceing 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 are let in who are undesirable and apprehended and don't have legal authority. They 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 living 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 NAFTA 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 it. The former President Bush and former President Obama.

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 their principles, and you hate him 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 opponents.

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, 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 expand his office without any regard for the law.

On January 3, 2019, every Member of the House swore a 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 reduced to 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 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. Yoho), my friend.

Ms. YOHO. 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 233 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.
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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, ambitions, 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.

Madam Speaker, John Adams warned in a letter to Thomas Jefferson that these risks are unavoidable for our Nation. “You are apprehensive of foreign interference, intrigue, influence. So am I—but as elections happen, the danger of foreign influence recurs.”

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE).

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Madam Speaker, today the power is being written. The facts are conclusive: The President attempted to use the power of the powerful executive branch to force Ukraine into 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—consider the evidence and obtain 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 our country was only over 200 years ago, they went to great lengths to ensure future Presidents will be forced to account for their constitutional responsibilities. 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 the American people.

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 an activity that they specifically warned against: the misuse of the constitutional power of impeachment. Why? For one party’s political gains.

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.

But now, we face a new democratic experiment struggling to survive to the greatest Nation on Earth. America has been forever, over 230 years, not by government, but by the ingenuity, the bravery, and the faith of its people, content in the truth that “we are the nati­ on 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 process is clear. It is only when we see clear proof of the impeachable offences outlined in Article II, Section 4, that our nation can vote or other reason for removing the President.

We do not have that proof today. Thomas Jefferson said: “I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves.” And if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with 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 obstruct 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 wholesale 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 of California, 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 duty of all of us.

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, with compromised national security to cheat his way to re-election 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 loyalty, or worse, the politics of Donald Trump above their duty to defend the Constitution, how they made absurd partisan arguments, how they tried to obstruct these proceedings; and how, instead of pushing back when their party fell, they quickly, with the spilt of authoritarianism, embraced it as if the Constitution, the rule of law, and their oath of office mean nothing.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Georgia, Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute 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 cronies are so desperately trying to convey.

Today, will be remembered as the day that the Democrat's claim of a false moral supremacy over the desire of the American people to engage in a deliberate and orchestrated plan to overturn a Presidential election.

Today will be the first time in history that a party paralyzed their Ivy League academics to explain to 31 States and almost 60 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 that has no 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.

Mr. NADLER, Madam Speaker, I would remind the gentleman that the impeachment clause is placed in the Constitution; how they made absurd partisan arguments and tried to ob­struct these proceedings; and how, instead of pushing back when their party fell, they quickly, with the spilt of authoritarianism, embraced it as if the Constitution, the rule of law, and their 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 to impeach Donald J. Trump.

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Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE).

Madame Speaker, I rise because I love 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 that has no 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.

Mr. NADLER, Madam Speaker, I would remind the gentleman that the impeachment clause is placed in the Constitution for the purpose of protecting our 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. GREGG).

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 above 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. It is a constitutional process.

Just because the President’s opponents are afraid that he will win reelection is no reason to conduct this counterimpeachment. No President in history has been impeached 10 months before an election.

Elections are the heart of our democracy. Our Founding Fathers devised a system to elect 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 get the people decide this next November.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Tlaib).

Ms. Tlaib. Mr. NADLER. 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 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 “yes” on these Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, the yield is 1 minute 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 vote 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 central and southwestern Pennsylvania know the truth. The American people know the truth. The impeachment focus has never been about the facts. This process has always been about securing revenge against the President in 2016 and attempting to prevent him from winning again in 2020.

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 abuse 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 opposition has been a cornerstone of the American experience. The power of the people, 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, 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 need.

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 conditional-ity in the transcript or conditional-ity after that. Five meetings prove that. They were all high-level meetings. No conditional-ity. Two of those meetings were after the Ukrainians actually knew of the possibility that aid was being held.

They have not even 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 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Shermman).

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 and in defiance of the partisan precedent—no due process; closed-door depositions, even though nothing in this investigation was classified; and leaking only details that fit their narrative.

Today is the culmination of the bipartisan political parties. 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 displeased by the 116th 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 the people around the country keep more of their hard-earned currency, not to impeach anyone.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote against the Articles of Impeachment.
Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman 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.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to respond to the gentleman that there is, in fact, extensive direct evidence — including the President's own words — which is corroborated and supported by indirect and circumstantial evidence.

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

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 at all an agreement because there is no evidence.

Madison and Hamilton warned us that a country would not 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, the House must agree that if they repeat them over and over and stay on message that you will believe their charge. These are lies that are not true and do 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 him to dig up dirt on his political opponent.

Mr. NADLER. 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.

President Trump 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 all know it is wrong to ignore congressional subpoenas. We know it is wrong to defraud the US.

I intend to vote “yes” on these articles. I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. TIPPETT).

Mr. TIPPETT. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this partisan impeachment process.

Make no mistake, this process did not begin with the whistleblower reports. It began shortly after the President was elected.

The purpose of this is to create a distraction and ensure that the President cannot be held accountable for his actions.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Ms. BARRAGAN).

Ms. BARRAGAN. Madam Speaker, they hope that if we vote your character, that is how you are going to be judged, and that is how we are all going to be judged.

Ms. BARRAGAN. 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.

Mr. GALLEGO of Arizona. 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 California (Ms. BARRAGAN).

Ms. BARRAGAN. Madam Speaker, these are not crimes. These are disgraceful acts of elitists in the swamp, and they undermine the fabric of our Republic.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield in strong opposition to this partisan impeachment process.

And to those still defending the President's actions, I ask: What is the harm? Why don't they move on?

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I urge a “no” vote.

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Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I urge a “no” vote.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGOS).

Mr. GALLEGOS. 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 despoothing at straws while living in an alternate universe where facts do not exist.

Watch 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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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 Mississippi (Mr. BEYER).

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, today, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH), the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. NADLER), and the gentleman from California (Ms. Matsui) introduced a resolution to impeach the President. It 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. MALIK. 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 antifraud 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 election.

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 what the President has done is deeply wrong. They know that they would vote without hesitation to impeach a Democratic President who had done the same.

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.

I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. BEYER).

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 convinced that no court would accept the 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 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.

Today, in Mexico, a young girl will be abused while being trafficked toward our open borders, while some yel “kids in cages” and play race politics.

Today, across America, diabetics will struggle to afford insulin due to a lack of government action and insurance bureaucrats empowered in the false name of coverage.

Today, across America, diabetics will struggle to afford insulin due to a lack of government action and insurance bureaucrats empowered in the false name of coverage.

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 name of compassion.

Today, in Mexico, a young girl will be abused while being trafficked toward our open borders, while some yel “kids in cages” and play race politics.

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Today, across America, diabetics will struggle to afford insulin due to a lack of government action and insurance bureaucrats empowered in the false name of coverage.
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? Because the only answer is to act now.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (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? Because the only answer is to act now.

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 lose 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 of California. 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.

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. He impeded our investigation when he learned that Ukraine was involved in his likely rival in the 2020 election by withholding military aid. It was released. It wasn't released for any good reason. They felt no pressure. They withheld that aid until the whistleblower report came out, then the aid was released. It wasn't released for any good purpose.

President Trump abused his power and endangered our national security. He impeded our investigation when he learned that Ukraine was involved in his likely rival in the 2020 election by withholding military aid. It was released. It wasn't released for any good reason. They felt no pressure. They 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 an impeachable offense.

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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.

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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 Congress and constitutional obligation of Congress.

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Mr. GARAMENDI of California. Madam Speaker, I am disappointed in a broken andr)ration President 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.

Mr. GARAMENDI of California. Madam Speaker, I stand before you today a disappointed man. I am disappointed in a broken andr)ration President that has consumed House Democrats.

Mr. GARAMENDI of California. Madam Speaker, I am disappointed in a broken andr)ration President that has consumed House Democrats.

Mr. NADLER. 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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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 here.

The committee hearings were a scripted, substance-free, made-for-TV show. They wouldn’t even tweak their impeachment message. If impeachment wasn’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 bipartisan support.

Compelling? Overwhelming? Bipartisan? Speaker PELOSI has not met her own standard, nor have we. 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. GONZALES).

Mr. GONZALES 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 health care, fight for 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 with 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 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. HUDI).

Mr. HUDI of Texas. Madam Speaker, throughout this process, the American people have learned of bundling 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 cause of preeminence will be set: impeachment becoming a weaponized political tool.

We must know how this partisan process will end this evening, but what happens tomorrow? Can this Chamber put down swords and get back to work for the American people?

This institution has a failed history of abusing legislative power 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 unites 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. DAVIES).

Mr. DAVIES 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, our rules, our requirements, and our expectations. 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 with bad weather, watching our democracy crumble and rot from within.

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Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOMPERT).

Mr. GOMPERT. Madam Speaker, in 2009, Senator SCHUMER said: ‘‘This impeachment served two purposes: to vindicate Ukraine and to make the defenses of fact. here you go.

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, ah, this terrible Russia collusion. Oh, then that fell through. It is about emolument. 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 2016, because in 2016 Ukraine 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 further. 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 spread 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, the President of the United States abused the power of his office by soliciting a bribe from a foreign leader to interfere in an election that he was afraid he could not win, honorably, fairly, or freely. You, President of the United States, open and announce an investigation of my political rival, and I, President of the United States, will reimburse $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-anything transaction. Soliciting a bribe from a foreign leader is an abuse of power and a Federal crime.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I yield ½ minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS).

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my Republican colleagues who have worked tirelessly in defense of the Constitution and the rule of law under difficult circumstances. Madam Speaker, it is a
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Mr. BAIRD. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. BURRESS).

Mr. BURRESS of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. KEVIN HERN).

On November 13, 2019, the House met to vote on the articles of impeachment against President Donald J. Trump.

The President's defense is built on three pillars. First, they claim there was no quid pro quo. Well, the evidence is undisputed: Ukraine knew about the hold on the military assistance. Second, the minority claims that the House had not followed the rules. Yet, the rules were clear: the House retains control of the articles of impeachment until the Speaker and Leader SCHUMER announce Articles of Impeachment. And then I hope the House retains control of the articles of impeachment to interfere in our elections for his personal gain.

The evidence against the President is overwhelming. The evidence is overwhelming. The evidence is overwhelming. The evidence is overwhelming.

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.

And when the President got caught, he did everything in his power to prevent the American people from learning the truth. The American people must be told the truth about his actions by ending 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 elections 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 vendetta, impeachment looking for a crime since the inauguration.

The Washington Post ran the headline, "The Campaign to Impeach President Trump Has Begun," just 15 minutes after President Trump took the oath of office.

The freshman Congresswoman from Maryland, Jennifer Wexton, said: "We are going to impeach the mother-blank" shortly after she was sworn in.

Chairman SCHIFF's chamber of secrets.

Debate began 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 act together, addressed corruption, and straightened it out. That was in multiple NDAA's voted on by both parties and both chambers.

So in the simplest terms, we are impeaching the President for doing something that he's said he never will 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 colleagues, 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 temperament, possessed of considerable talents, having the advantage of military habits—destitute in his ordinary demeanor—known to have scoffed in private at the principles of liberty—when such a man is seen to mount the horse-by-horse 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 despair of redress in 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 duty to guard against corruption and subversion. On March 6, 1863, just 56 years before the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Tenure of Office Act, the last of a series of congressional acts passed in the wake of the secession crisis, which ensured that the President would not be able to replace Cabinet officers during the war.

I would say that the Founders could have little imagined that a single President might have done all of these things, except perhaps the evidence against him and against him sadly proved this is exactly what this President has done. Hamilton, among others, warned against the danger of unlimited power in the hands of one man.

More than two centuries later, President Donald Trump has brought our democracy closer to that moment than at any time in our history. The President has done. Hamilton, among others, warned against the danger of unlimited power in the hands of one man.

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H12164

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would like you to join us as a favor, therefore, and ask 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.

Q 100

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 the month 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 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. And so he imposed the political rivalry and a chance to cheat in the next election.

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, saying, “China should start an investigation into the Biden family, 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.

Yet President and his men plot on. The danger persists. The risk is real. Our democracy is at peril.

Our democracy is at peril. The danger persists. The risk is real. 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.

I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. Smith), my friend, Gentleman of the White House. Madam Speaker, I come from a State that raises corn and cotton, Cookelevians and Shenandoah.

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 to do 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 he is a bad person 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 saying: “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 candidate did not win.

And I thank God she didn’t.

Over the last 3 years, unemployment has dropped to the lowest point in 50 years, 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 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 transcript 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.

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H12165

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 disputed.

I ask my colleagues: Who sent his personal lawyer to Ukraine to investigate a 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 but also China? Who has buried evidence and blocked witnesses from testifying? And who is still sending his personal lawyer to Ukraine to dig up dirt and rig an election?

This is a crime spree in progress. But how so? Well, my colleagues argue: He is using our tax dollars and foreign interference to cheat the next election, and it jeopardizes our national security and integrity at the ballot box. This is a crime spree in progress, but what do we know how to stop it: courage.

How so? Well, my colleagues argue: Stand up for that. If they can risk their careers, even those set in motion this event, my colleagues would emphatically label as discrediting, lack of courage.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Ms. SHELBY).

Ms. SHELBY 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 suppression 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 the room getting a quick bite, I noticed gave an eloquent defense of his side of this story that we're telling. I just wish I could have had that same eloquent defense before the Judiciary Committee, where he could have been asked questions instead of just giving one side. I was going to say.

Madam Speaker, I yield ½ minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLOGG).

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 referrals from 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 wanted President Trump removed from office since the day he was elected.

In defense of those patriots and to summon the courage of those patriots and to summon the courage of our forefathers, I urge all Members to oppose both Articles of Impeachment. It is unclear who will judge those votes for impeachment today more hastily: 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 raised the specter of 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 and earned a Purple Heart.

They are people like Colonel Vindman, who served in Iraq and earned a Purple Heart.

They are people like Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch, who served as career diplomats. They testified before the Intelligence Committee as career bureaucrats, I want to remind people just who those career bureaucrats are.

These are the people who said that Sanford.io designer and data scientist, I want to remind people just who those career bureaucrats are.

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 the members 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 the Sanford.io designer and data scientist. I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. COSTA).

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker. I rise with a heavy heart. The two most difficult votes any Member of Congress
ever has to cast 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 have investigated Mr. Biden.

There is much more evidence pointing to the President's own office. I have not made this decision lightly but, I must uphold my own duty out of love of country. 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 come and testify. But 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 gentleman from Texas (Ms. GRANGER).

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, I rise in 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 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. 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 politics above the issues that Americans care about 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 delirious that China and Ukraine should have investigated Mr. Biden. 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. 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 interviewed by Ambassadors Volker and Morrison, who acknowledged that in retrospect, he should have recused himself 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. Ambassador Volker, who acknowledged that he had the right to be in charge of his own office because I believe the President committed any wrongdoing, but I must uphold my 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 in 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 that 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.

The only question is his motive. The fact is, his conduct and crimes are reprehensible and unimpeachable.

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 photos.

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, it had plenty of time to do this in an actual hearing. Instead of playing the same thing as he called it. Then, the President openly acknowledged that in retrospect, he should have recused himself when they were calling for investigations of Burisma.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. Wynn).

Mr. WEBER. Madam Speaker, it is very interesting to hear the socialistic left Democrats that have a profound 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. Nixon violated a law that Congress had passed over his veto. Nixon was involved in a coverup in Watergate. Clinton lied to a Federal grand jury.

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 knows?
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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 merciless, 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 jornal. We met with a young President, President John F. Kennedy.

When we came here on August 6, 1965, for the signing of the Voting Rights Act, we were inspired. This is our country.

One Nation is founded on the principle that we do not have kings. We have Presidents, and the Constitution is our compass.

Then 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: 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.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I always like to be polite, and I do appreciate the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. WENSTRUP).

Mr. WENSTRUP. Madam Speaker, it is very significant when you come here and you hear the first words the gentleman from Georgia says, 'I rise with a heavy heart.'

When I heard that, I realized the weight of the task that we are here to do.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. QUIGLEY).

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, indeed, we are here today because the President of the United States abuses his power and betrayed his oath of office. He lied sleight to the foundation of 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 waiting for 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 Russian unspecified 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 consequences, 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 $410 million, 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.

When the White House learned that a whistleblower first blocked security assistance money for Ukraine with no explanation. And July 12, House Intelligence Committee Democrats learned, 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 announced 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.
H12168

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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 regard:

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 in opposition to impeach President Trump.

There 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.

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, politically political.

We all understand that elections have consequences.

To all my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans alike, this day will surely have consequences, as well, as we descend into more deplorable, dishonorable, and disrespectful, 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.
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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.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Ms. CUNNINGHAM).

Ms. CUNNINGHAM. 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 even though I work hard to live by that oath and give the 39th District the representation it deserves.

In this case, we have determined that impeachment is a serious undertaking and must be done with incredible care. When they presented 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 our 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 two months ago. I want to recognize that the process has been fast, fluid, and fluid. Yet 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 overwhelming, and the process is undoubtedly indisputably 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 gentleman from California (Ms. JUDY CHU).

Ms. 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.

Finally, a precedent that any President can abuse their power to interfere in our elections is an existential threat to the American political process and 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 say they had evidence of any kind. They had no evidence of bribery, extortion, or any crime when questioned. It was just silence. Then the witnesses testified that they heard nothing from so-and-so. When the Democrats brought their star witnesses in, Ambassador Sandland also had no direct evidence; he presumed that that was going on.

The guess is we are back to presumption again.

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

Mr. FLORES. Madam Speaker, on November 13, 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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President Trump committed no 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 hatters of the past, are willing to plunge America into darkness for rare political gain. This impeachment betrays the Nation, the Constitution, and the American people. I vote ‘no.’

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGMET)."
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Fact two: They have been planning for years, since the moment he undermined our democracy, the foundation of what makes our system of government great. They have the burden of proof. It is for these reasons that I will cast my vote in favor of impeaching President Donald John Trump.

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 duty to ensure that no one is above the law. It is the next election, and we intend to win it.

Let us all step back from the madstream of the moment to recall that, at our country’s inception 243 years ago, the concept of a democratic, self-govern 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 separation of powers where three coequal branches of government would guard against 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 and deliberately 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 and urgent call to investigate his conduct, he repudiated our constitutional system of checks and balances and thereby 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. GANTZ).

Mr. GAETZ. Madam Speaker, this is not about Ukraine. This impeachment is about power. With no crime, no victim, no evidence, no proof, no agenda for America, this impeachment charade marches on.

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.

Only the President has that power to abuse his power for personal gain. 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.

Mr. GANTZ. 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 and deliberately 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.

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

Mr. BIGGS. Madam Speaker, of 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 unchained. Ukraine received the aid that it was 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 the floor 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 conditionalities.

What changed? On the day that the aid was released, two antitrust 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 talking about whether the President cooperated, we're hearing about a sham investigation.

Multiple House Committees have conducted extensive investigations into the President's conduct. The facts are uncontested. 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.

I have been asked multiple times of obstruction of justice committed by the President, and that obstruction has continued. Furthermore, the President has committed 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 acted in public-television that sacrifices 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 stop his misconduct and will seek to do it again. The President continues to put his own personal and political interests 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 simple 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 discussed the credentials 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 use 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 Butcher 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 Reopening America's Schools Act, the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, and other critical legislation awaiting a vote by the Republican Senate. If we expect our democracy to survive, President Trump's abuse of power cannot be ignored. No one is above the law.

But Madam Speaker, that is why we take this solemn but necessary vote to impeach President Trump, and to focus on my work as chair of the Committee on Education and Labor.
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House Democrats held secret meetings with important documents, deliberately misrepresented information to the public, and did not give due process to 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 delayed from the start, lacking fairness, transparency, and truth. It has been a waste of taxpayer dollars, and it is based off the opinion of an unnamed whistleblower and hearsay. The accusations in today’s proceedings do not comport 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 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 waging a so-called war on transparency, which threatens the integrity of the inquiry 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, including the White House counsel, to not 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, who accepted Congress’ impeachment authority and allowed his aides and advisers to produce the Watergate tapes, did not have executive branch or White House counsel to testify in both the House impeachment inquiry and subsequent Senate 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 impeachment 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 unforgivable, under the Constitution, to impeach President Trump for his blatant abuse of power and 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 we have a Constitution, a system of checks and balances that our highest duty is to protect America, to 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 our country.

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 all evidence by courageous President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine.

It is sad that. instead of focusing on funding our military through the National Defense Authorization Act, which passed only last week or passing the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement to create jobs, Democrats continue to waste $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 of the actions of President Trump and his abuse of 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.

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

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a check on that power. Therefore, we must hold those accountable, 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 'yea' to impeach Donald J. Trump.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1⅓ minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) as an opening陈述.

Ms. FOXX 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 Americans see their pursuit of justice: fairly, transparently, and objectively. Anything less is unacceptable. This impeachment has fallen far short of that.

Sadly, Alexander Hamilton's prediction in Federalist Paper No. 65 has come true, where he warned: "In many cases, it will connect itself with the pretensions and will ensnare all their ammunitions, partialities, influence, and interest on one side or on the other. For much 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, hoaxes, and millions of taxpayer dollars, Democrats found no proof that the President committed a crime—no proof for 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 Democrat’s 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 witness were allowed to testify. That is, of course, not correct.

In the Intelligence Committee, three of the five Republicans requested to testify; that is, one out of every four of the witnesses were Republican requested witnesses. That they intimidated the President did not make them any less requested by the minority.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KRATONI).

Mr. KRATONI. 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." 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 the courage to stand up, as well, to one’s associates, the courage to react public pressure as well as private greed, and on whether we are truly men and women of integrity who never believe for whom neither financial gain nor political ambition could ever come 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 honored his oath. I refuse to abandon mine.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Mr. 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. ROY).

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 parade 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 asking his offices to help 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, facts.

The reaction of the American people, that this is contrived and corrupted, 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 sham. In 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. ARMSTRONG. Mr. Speaker, I didn't think I would have to do another fact-check so quickly, but, of course, not.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEK).

Mr. MEEK. 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 brought to us democracy. We did not free ourselves from a King to turn the President into a monarch. Yet, he is, 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 the 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 embodied an economy based on human bondage into the fabric of our political institutions, were not perfect men. Yet they 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.

As a former prosecutor, I believe we must look at the relevant law in question before casting a vote. That language comes directly from the Constitution, which aایتتیبیم an economy based on human bondage into the fabric of our political institutions, we are not perfect men. Yet they 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.
As a senior Member of the United States House of Representatives, 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, inspired by the American example. Nearly 13,000 Ukrainians have been killed since 2014 because of the conflict provoked and sustained by Russia, which 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 and to promote the rule of law and free and fair elections. This duty is inextricably linked to American national security interests, but he has been steadfast in these areas pertaining to Ukraine for so long. I know how damaging President Trump’s actions are to our hard-fought freedoms and to our Constitutional system.

I oppose 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 contradiction of our Constitutional system. And it is an impeachable offense.

In sum, the evidence has shown that the President’s obstruction of Congress was in bad faith and was motivated by an unacceptable abuse of power, a clear and present threat to the United States. Indeed, President Trump's conduct was in fact a specific threat to the United States. It was an impeachable offense.

It is our solemn responsibility to honor the voters who cast their ballots for this democratic country that they so dearly hold dear. 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.

I am a senior member of the Republican Party and a member of the House Republican Conference. I have the highest respect for the Constitution and the institutions of democracy that we hold dear. But I am a person of conscience and will vote to impeach President Donald Trump. As the leader of the United States, President Trump has the responsibility to help Ukraine lay the groundwork for a more sustainable system of governance, one that promotes the rule of law and the American conception of liberty and opportunity.

I urge my colleagues in Congress to do the same.

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.

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.

Mr. ROGERS. What my colleagues would have you accept is this: what my colleagues would have you accept, that is what my colleagues would have you accept, that because the President got caught in it, we must look the other way.

Mr. BACON. We are going to look the other way. I do not think it is that way at all.

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, where is the crime in that? They didn't get the money.

Guess what? He doesn't have it. He can't put it in there. This is all fluff and circumstance because they can't show that he 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 fluff and circumstance because they can't show that he actually had a crime, it would be in the articles.

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Mr. BACON. We are going to look the other way. I do not think it is that way at all.

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, where is the crime in that? They didn't get the money.
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.

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CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

H12177

December 18, 2019

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, and our liberal friends is not that they are ignorant, it is just that they know so much that isn't so.

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 nixedly political investigation.

I’m working to impeach him, and I’m not alone.

The President is not fit for our presidency.

I am angry that President Donald Trump has treated his oath of office so abusively that now we must hold him accountable.

I rise today in anger and hope.

I am angry that President Donald Trump has treated his oath of office so abusively that now we must hold him accountable.

It was an attempt by Donald J. Trump to am Ian 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 undeniable, contempt of this Congress.

But what makes this Impeachment essential is that this 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. 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.

railed 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 political ploy.

Mr. SCHIFF, Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman 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 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 opponents.

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.”

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 undeniable, contempt of this Congress.

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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 30-second slot to speak in this laughable process.

As I said at the opening, President Donald Trump made a campaign promise to drain the swamp. I listened. I believed him. And I also believed that if his campaign promises are not delivered, the American people would never have voted for him.

I was among the first to publicly denounce the University of Virginia and the Clinton Foundation’s fake dossier, that was the beginning of the unfounded, partisan investigations by the current President’s team to prop up their failed allegations.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KRINGSMANOWITZ).

Mr. KRINGSMANOWITZ. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY. Madam Speaker, like many of my colleagues, I have spent two Christmases defending our Constitution, our country, and a detrimental precedent to come.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KRINGSMANOWITZ). Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY. Madam Speaker, I have been very clear from the beginning of this process that I have yet to hear any part of the evidence that we have seen in our Nation’s history.

Mr. John W. ROSE of Tennessee.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. JOHN W. ROSE).

Mr. ROSE. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. KELLY).

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CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

December 18, 2019

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. GUTIERREZ).

MR. GUTIERREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Articles of Impeachment on President Trump. Democratic lawmakers have come to realize that the President's misconduct was so grave as to rise to the level of impeachable offenses.

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. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Articles of Impeachment on President Trump. Democratic lawmakers have come to realize that the President's misconduct was so grave as to rise to the level of impeachable offenses.

I will vote "no" on today's Articles of Impeachment. I look forward to getting back to the business on behalf of New Yorkers.

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MR. GUTIERREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Articles of Impeachment on President Trump. Democratic lawmakers have come to realize that the President's misconduct was so grave as to rise to the level of impeachable offenses.

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Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Articles of Impeachment on President Trump. Democratic lawmakers have come to realize that the President's misconduct was so grave as to rise to the level of impeachable offenses.

I will vote "no" on today's Articles of Impeachment. I look forward to getting back to the business on behalf of New Yorkers.

MR. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. FULCHER).

Mr. FULCHER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Articles of Impeachment on President Trump. Democratic lawmakers have come to realize that the President's misconduct was so grave as to rise to the level of impeachable offenses.

I will vote "no" on today's Articles of Impeachment. I look forward to getting back to the business on behalf of Tennesseans.

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I will vote "no" on today's Articles of Impeachment. I look forward to getting back to the business on behalf of Tennesseans.
H12180

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE December 18, 2019

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 honest, a productive, 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. ADERHOLD).

Mr. ADERHOLD. Madam Speaker, today, a duly elected President is being impeached by the House of Representatives. The impeachment is conducted 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 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 domination 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 the 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).

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 borne that oath for 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, to impeach President Trump. 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 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 doing this. This is a travesty.
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.

I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOH-AR).

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Madam Speaker, I re­serve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, 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.

This is not just the previous admin­istration they are trying to cover up. It is sad. This is a shameful act in what is supposed to be a Republic. Shame on the Democrats. Shame on them for pursuing this.

I yield 30 seconds to the gentle­woman from Washington (Ms. SCHRIER).

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 few of them want to address any of the facts of the President’s misconduct.

Apprently, 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, Demo­crats really want to impeach the Pres­ident, or, the Democrats don’t like this 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.

But 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 when it was over­turning the will of the people. Appar­ently, this impeachment provision only applies to the will of the people if it is a Republican President.

I would like to give them more credit that than.

What is the distinction here is the se­riousness of the conduct. This remedy must be 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 gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. SCHRIER).

Mr. 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 these wild 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 exertion, 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, because the only thing 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 19 resolu­tions, getting support of over 100 of their Members, and all of that before the Mueller 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, 1 lawyers, 40 agents, 2,500 subpoenas, 500 warrants, and 17 lies in a FISA warrant applica­tion, they had nothing to show for it.

Unlestered by the facts and uninter­ested in governing, the beat marched on. So here we are today. We have no evidence, 652 witnesses, 2,800 sub­poenas, 500 warrants.

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 dealing with 60 million voters that you don’t respect their vote.

Voters across States like mine, who not that long ago used to send Democrats to this august Chamber but, recently, have families, have homes 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 omo­nously 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, un­til it felled the House in the November of 2018.

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, this impeachment is a brand-new, 632-page report alleging— all kinds of things, some for the very first time.

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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 a brand-new, 632-page report alleging— all kinds of things, some for the very first time.

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.
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 got 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 driven from Ukraine, interfered in the 2016 election. They want you to ignore Avakov and Chaly's corruption investigation. Enter Joe Biden. He gets that prosecutor Ored, Hunter Biden because they wanted to curry favor while there was this ongoing corruption investigation. 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 these 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. 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 had—had to change his testimony twice. They mentioned him 611 times, and ultimately, he said, I presume 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 we are talking about the partisan opposition to impeachment, not bipartisan support.

My colleagues opposite want the public to believe that this is a sad and somber day. This is a sad day. It is a sad day for this institution because 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 230 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 impeached him instead by siding with the will of those who did: the American people.

Mr. SCHIFF, Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHWARZENEGGER).

Madam Speaker, we 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 he been told he was under investigation then—had he felt immune from impeachment.

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).

Madam Speaker, do you know who doesn't think the Democratic party has 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 corroborate.

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 it

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.

Sad. 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 impeached.

It that happens, Democrats won’t be able to hide behind a pretense 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. It wasn’t meant for some crime alleged, where there is no victim, and where the Democrats themselves couldn’t even defend the President, 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 Congress. 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 convinced 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.)

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 underminded 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’ 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 public trust.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. BEATTY) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mrs. BEATTY asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CLARKE) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. CLARKE of New York asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

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.)

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Madam Speaker, I will 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 $301 million in Congressionally-approved military aid for Ukraine until he 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 upholds 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 subversive actions. We must pass the two articles of impeachment before us today to make certain no one is above the law, to lift all of my colleagues to stand up for the Constitution and join me in voting yes.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. BRATTI) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mrs. BRATTI asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BRATTI. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD my remarks supporting the impeachment of President Donald Trump.

Ms. BEATTY. 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.

And 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.

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.

Ms. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman 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 Articles of Impeachment against President Donald Trump.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of both articles of impeachment.
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 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 lightly. But the threat to democracy is here and we have the power to stop it.

Mr. SCHIFF, Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PARROTT).

Mr. PARROTT. From the very beginning of this hearing, the Democrats have failed to provide witnesses who can be questioned under oath. Now, Madam Speaker, this is not unprecedented. The Republicans did not call any witnesses during the Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JACKSON).

Mr. JACKSON. Madam Speaker, we know that Articles of Impeachment have been approved. We know that the Senate will render its verdict. We know that the American people will have a verdict. But Madam Speaker, the American people deserve to hear the truth. They deserve to hear the details.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MULINOSKI).

Mr. MULINOSKI. Madam Speaker, the American people want to know the truth. They want to hear the facts. They want to hear about the documents. They want to hear from the witnesses.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS).

Mr. COLLINS. Madam Speaker, the American people deserve to know the truth. They deserve to hear the facts. They deserve to hear from the witnesses.
beforehand with the Democrats. The Democrats threatened Congress from interviewing the whistleblower while conducting bizarre secret deposi- 
tions and selectively leaking testi- 
mony to discredited media hacks. The Democrats showcased the most useful 
examples in public hearings that some- 
how reduced support for impeachment. 

It is not easy to make a coup at-
tempt 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 in-
derogation; we consider today.

so we shall impeach because, as drastic 
(Mr. Neal), chairma-

obstructed justice.

ahused his authority, and he has indeed 
dertake this impeachment proceeding

operate with their plan to railroad 

is g'Uilty of is beating Hillary Clinton.

as unrealistic a U.S. Pre-

Democrats showcased the most useful 

They must learn how to do 

It is a process that the Framers 

While conducting bizarre secret 

isolation. It is a generation of challenges that we have 

The innovative system of checks and 

balances that they constructed, with 

negotiations immediately started on im-

No government in the 

was to be different.

The view of the Framers, impeach-

ment is in no way a constitutional cri-

sis. It is a process that the Framers 

judged that we would sometimes 

Of course not, because having 

She followed and what our obligation is 

who was asked: How many Presidents 

As a prototype of how America 

world at that time exposed the head of 

America to be different.

The Constitution they set 

in 1787, 

and, indeed, it was an extraor-
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His actions are so far beyond the pale 

whether they have to do with no reduc- 

lengthen recourse except impeachment, and 

impeachment proceeding that unfolds this evening, but the part 

we play in this process is not optional.

Among other things, as the Intel-

ligence Committee and Committee on 

the Judiciary have painstakingly docu-

This whole flipping rodeo is a sham 

and a shame, and it will not be forgot-

Mr. Schiff, Madam Speaker. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wash-


Now you have the liberal elites, the 

condescending bureaucrats, and every 

other kind of swamp critter in this 
government place tell the American 

public who the President should be.

That is the job of the American 

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, 
moves along...”

We are all here today, all of us, be- 

cause someone before us sacrificed so 

that they could journey here and build a 

new life in this unique land. We are an 

country faces even greater long-term 

rift if we fail to respond.

They perform with a foreign leader is a good basis 

for changing acumen against the 

President. Including campaign 

finance violations, quid pro quos, election in-
derogation; we consider today.

so we shall impeach because, as drastic 

(Mr. Neal), chairman of the Ways 

and Means Committees.

Mr. Neal, Madam Speaker, it is 
desirably 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 Intel-

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with exceptional stability.
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. I brought about this by this President, who sought to cheat in an election, a President who put 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 speak a lot. Their time trying to figure out how to game the system. Law enforcement officers call them habitual, malicious actors. Often, they do it with the more likely they are to engage in misconduct.

Some say President's 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 25, 2016, in my home State of Florida, then-candidate Trump said, "Russias, 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 by the feedback he got on that sham, my colleagues and I called the President's bluff on the same scheme, and I asked the chairman of the Intelligence Committee, Mr. Schiff, why he failed 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 declare it a high crime and misdemeanor when the President of the United States asserts his constitutional privileges.

If the House impeaches here, Madam Speaker, it will create exactly the type of atmosphere, the type of environment we need to avoid: It will mean that divided government can imperil a democratically elected President. It will upend the foundation on which we governed.

In 2019 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 Georgia (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, share 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. Freedom. It is our miraculous constitutional system, Madam Speaker, defend by our men and women in uniform that has safeguarded that freedom for over 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 55, Alexander Hamilton wrote: "...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."

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 remove him. Today, to find one, Madam Speaker, they have decided to announce one. Rather than attempting to enforce their subpoena in court, they have also decided to declare it a high crime and misdemeanor.

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 the good of our Republic, let us 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.

Madam Speaker, I oppose this resolution on impeachment, and I include my statement in the Record.

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.

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 former 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 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 the anti-Trump crowd has weaponized impeachment in an attempt to fulfill their electoral shortcoming.

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.

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Mr. WALDEN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.

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. Theirs calls for 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 authority. Civil libertarians are rightly outraged by what occurred. Laws designed to protect America from unfounded and unfettered spying 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 voter's will. Neither threshold has been met in this case.

With a clear conscience, I will vote against both articles of impeachment. Reporting and investigation. "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" fasco. Congress sued and won this case. But Republicans never seriously thought about impeaching the President.
I encourage my colleagues to give up this charade. There is no evidence of 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.

As a result of impeachment, since at 1:00 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. 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 that 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 the case since the day President Trump took office.

Speaker Pelosi said from the beginning that the impeachment must be compelling, overwhelming, and bipartisan; and today, none of those are true. In fact, we have a growing bipartisanship 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 NDA, and leave funding for the next session hanging in the balance. We need to be focused on solving problems and working on solutions for our constituents; the American people have made their views clear in the elections, and we hope that the beginning of the next session we can get back to the real issues—finding a bipartisan drug policy, 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 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.

The evidence shows that the President put his interests above those of the country.

He blocked witnesses from testifying: Mr. WITTMAN.

Mr. WITTMAN as asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I include in the Record my opposition to these Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Ms. 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. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman 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, we have been fighting for them. We have been working to make healthcare more affordable, education accessible, and move our country forward for the people.

I solicited 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 their 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. Madam Speaker, I include in the Record my opposition to these Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. HAAS).

Ms. HAAS. 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.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentlewoman 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.
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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 he can’t win.

“About some crime that was committed. It is about fear that he might win reelection.”

It is not why you impeach a President.

[Refers to a speech by Al Green on the floor]

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. KUSTER) for a unanimous consent request.

Mr. KUSTER of New Hampshire. I ask unanimous consent to agree to this amendment.

Madam Speaker, earlier this week, I returned from a bipartisan trip to Belgium to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge in favor of the Articles of Impeachment.

Madam Speaker, it is those forgotten men and women of this country who have been left behind.

And what is this President doing for the American people.

May God bless the United States of America.

Mr. SCALIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. Scalise).
Mr. ROYER. 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 allowed a president to trample on 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 the danger and disgust at a pattern of wrongdoing. That pattern included

- 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 65 million people who voted for Mr. Trump, and the 60 million people who voted for Hillary Clinton.

The policy difference, or those votes, are reasons to pursue the facts of what happened, not to dismiss them. These are the reasons why I have joined my colleagues in pursuing this impeachment of our President.

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 the impeachment articles passed.

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 or elected by the President of the United States, 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 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 defense, 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 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 excoriated him.

This, itself, I suggest to you, is unprecedented. When Presidents Nixon and Clinton were asked to bend 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 effect, the law 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 obstruct foreign interference in our elections.

There is a difference of whether he knew 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 are about to take concern the rule of law and our democracy itself.

Let us not forget the words of John Locke, who was influential to the Founders of our Republic. John Locke, a millennium ago, said this: “Wherever law ends, tyranny begins.”

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 three times as recently as July. We did not want this.

Damning evidence of the President’s high crimes has emerged. Nevertheless, Republican Members of this House and Senate, Republicans and Democrats, 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 constituencies, 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 odious democratic debts? Or will they take the first step toward separating themselves from him and restoring the values of our tradition?”

Madam Speaker, we have seen Republican courage throughout our history, from the Civil War to the Cold War.
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In 1860, 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 1954, 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, who have accomplished 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 this Nation was founded upon, 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?

Will we or will we not have 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 spoke on this floor in support of 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 and the majority to turn 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 complaint, even looked like a battered wife.

It is below the dignity of this body and the majority to turn 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 smear in reports by drive-by political attacks 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 chaos.

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 mobs 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 that, when you actually see a person of this House, you want to really look at: What did you gain at the end by impeaching 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 Mr. Donald Trump and Mr. Volodymyr Zelensky, Mr. Donald Trump: no pressure. There was no conditionality. There was nothing done to get the aid, and the aid actually came.
There were five meetings, but when you wheel, it was always the same matter, because right now the dark cloud is descending upon this House. I am afraid this House can get 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 what we are facing.

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 the facts, when this House can get back to work for the American people.

But, tonight, I rise not as the leader of the Republican party or as the elected Representative from the Central Valley of California. I rise as an American citizen, no better, no worse than the 435 Representatives who are in this Chamber or the 330 million Americans that make 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 Americans, 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 of if it damages our country? Or will we proceed in a way that is proper, that is fair, for impeachment now and in the future?

For months, Democrats and many in the press 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, 16 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 saw this House the hundreds of millions of people we represent a say in whether to pursue an impeachment. In the future that I right now don’t, 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.

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, we have heard the facts, 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 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 the facts or truth or public. The Speaker says that impeachment would be driven by partisan animosity instead of the facts or truth or public.

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 battle. If my colleagues do not want to follow the constitutional high standards for obtaining a national election, perhaps they could follow Speaker Pelosi’s standard, at least the one she promised to follow back in 2019. Speaker Pelosi was a witness, 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 government.

I understand they dislike the President on his beliefs. But we are judges, and we should carefully weigh every fact. How do I know this? Because they say so, in day in and day out.
In 2016, they even dismissed his supporters, calling us "deplorables." Now, they are trying to desecrate 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 it this way we came here to serve, to trample on the process rights, to issue more subpoenas than laws, to appease the new Democrat pinko in the House?: That is not leadership. That is raw partisan politics, and they know it.

But as I said, there is no longer any truth or follow the facts by substituting par­
tisan animosity for real demonstra­
tions of innocence or guilt, and by con­
tinuing a 3-year effort to undermine the President, this impeachment has divided this Nation without any con­
cern for the repercussions. Moreover, politicizing this process has discredited the work of American law enforce­
tives and could forever weaken the remedy of impeachment.

"When President Tarley, it is the Democrats' rush to impeachment on these grounds, with unfair proced­
dures, that is an "abuse of power." His­
tory will right that.

Madam Speaker, as I said at the be­
ginning, 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. 😍 200

To my fellow Americans, if you ap­
prove of the way this House has con­
ducted its business, if you want to see your tax dollars go forward to end­
less investigations, support this im­
peachment.

But if you want to restore a working Congress like the previous Congress that listened to you and worked to bring the issues of this country has ever seen and one that, once again, will work with the President to get things done for our future, then join us in rejecting this base­
less impeachment.

I want to talk more wonderful about this system of ours. We are a government of, by, and for the people. Always re­
member, 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 House of Representa­tives.

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 with­
holding 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 gra­
vamen of the charge in Article I.

And what is the defense from my col­
leagues? Will you say when that Presi­
dent 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 democ­

racy and our Constitution? Is that how poorly you defend and uphold our Con­
stitution?

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 ad­
visor to Zelensky, and he did what he did. He supported the rule of law, and he said: You, Andriy Yermak, should not investigate the last Presi­
dent to keep him from running for office, for political reasons. You should not engage in political investigations.

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 democracy, 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 so.

Today, they have brought forward two articles of impeachment based on unfounded accusations.

Despite a lack of evidence, an unfair process and no bipartisan support, my colleagues across the aisle have held a two-day impeachment, ignoring or delaying key priorities like the US-Canada-Mexico Agreement along the border.

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 the majority that have been underway since President Trump was elected.

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.

What's 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 bipartisan impeachment spectacle that seeks to accomplish what President Trump's opponents failed to do at the ballot box in 2016. The backdrop of this country is the United States Constitution grants our President the necessary authority to deal with a foreign leader.

This President was lawfully elected by the American people. When President Trump was sworn into office, he assumed the role of our country'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 deniled 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, after hearing in compliance with Clause 2(j) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, decided to grant all Americans that co-equal subpoena authority 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 election to decide for 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.

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 the majority that have been underway since President Trump was elected.

This effort seeks to overturn the 2016 election not based on evidence, but on a disdain for the majority that have been underway since President Trump was elected.

The new president, Volodymyr Zelensky, also addressed this issue several times. He 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 prior administration. The aid to Afghanistan and the prior administration's withdrawal of our men and women was based on corruption. 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 Zelensky, also addressed this issue several times. He rejected the accusation that any quid pro quo or 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 impeachment, "obstruction of congress," is not credible.

Constant tension exists between our legislative and executive branches of government. Every president has argued with Congress, but at one time or another he is empowered to do this or to withhold that. When Congress disagrees, we have always taken those questions of executive authority or privilege to our third branch of government, the courts. But the Democrats have said 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 because I'm embroiled in events that 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 expected.

The two articles of impeachment in the resolution—abuse of power and obstruction of Congress—are based on 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. Various government officials 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 government officials 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 those used in the Russian investigation. This is unacceptable.

For the above reason, I voted to censor President Donald J. Trump, because he does not vote against these articles of impeachment.

We know this impeachment is a sham. They don't vote against these articles of impeachment.

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December 18, 2019

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

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 my own words, conduct, and votes, and 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. This President acted on his own.

This conversation was in the transcript the White House released. Two State Department officials, the President, 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 evaded requests for documents, and refused requests for depositions, until President Trump agreed.

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 President in this or any other normal. We cannot allow this President to “do whatever he wants” if it violates the Constitution and the laws of the United States.

To not impeach would say to future presidents they can disregard the Constitutional authors of this impeachment process. To not impeach would announce to foreign countries that America’s presidency is for sale. To not impeach would allow the President to be around as long as he wants, let him do what he wants.

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 allowing America’s U.S. security assistance to Ukraine on an investigation into an energy company.

A deeply flawed inquiry did not produce clear evidence or bipartisan support. At a minimum, one would expect bipartisan support for such a decision. 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 credible witnesses. 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 agreed.

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 White House’s White Room and Capitol.

Depositions occurred on days lawmakers were out of town. The Majority denied basic fairness and did not allow the President 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 the President and his counsel had access to deposition transcripts 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 appropriated for Ukraine and wrote an urgent letter to the gentleman from New York, Chairman Eliot Engel, a week before the aid was released. Then and now, I believe the unwavering support of Ukraine to counter Russian malign influence is a vital component of U.S. national security.

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—tied to investigations—on the President’s July phone call and subsequent inappropriate behavior toward President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine.

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This decision took careful thought and consideration. When I made my oath of office, I

Unleashing 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—or 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 have maintained 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 comprehensive gun reform that is both safe and communities safer, and addressing income inequality in all of its forms.

The first article of impeachment charges President Trump with violating his oath of office to uphold the Constitution and to defend the Constitution and the Constitution and to protect the Constitution, to support the Constitution and the Constitution, to protect the Constitution and the Constitution, and to protect the Constitution.

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The first article of impeachment charges President Trump with violating his oath of office. 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—tied to investigations—on the President’s July phone call and subsequent inappropriate behavior toward President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine.
saw to uphold the Constitution of the United States and to serve our 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 my Republican colleagues. 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 cooperate with Congress’s constitutional duty to investigate. This 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 3 and Article 2, Section 4 of the Constitution.

This abuse of power is compounded by the President’s refusal to allow Congressional 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 flouts the separation of powers and checks and balances in our Constitution and who refuses to allow witnesses to appear before Congress would re- create our Founders’ original constitutional confrontations.

Treating taxpayer money as his own to extort a “favor” from a foreign government to aid in his re-election campaign is 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 judicial, in the same . . . must 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: “This thorough effort to trade American arms for foreign dirt on former vice president Joe Biden and his son Hunter, Trump probably not so coincidental, as Richard Nixon, another corrupt president tried to do, resulted in re-election. This isn’t party politics as usual. It is precisely the misconduct the Founders 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, “Russias, 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 resulted in the harm and abuse impeachment was designed to prevent.

For the sake of the Constitution, fair elections free of foreign interference, and our national security, President Trump should be impeached.

Ms. WILSON 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 using taxpayer and foreign aid in exchange for a political investigation, our only course 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 he granted the President’s request for China to get involved in our elections. I agree in part. Those crimes were not committed by Mr. Trump but by his associates who used the power of the Presidency to subvert democracy itself. I do not believe that Mr. Trump intended to commit the crimes, but I do believe that the power of the Presidency is the personal tool to coerce the weak to do his bidding.

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 here to represent the interests 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 credible testimony, including civil servants and constitutional scholars of the highest caliber.

President Trump abused his power to line up another country for his own personal and political gain. This is wrong.

I voted to impeach President Trump to do right by my 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 associates 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. Respectfully, House and Senate Republicans are going along with the President’s lies and attempts to cover up his actions.
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

December 18, 2019

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.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Madam Speaker, this year, our nation finds itself in the midst of historic tumult. 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 collect­es and examines evidence in a fair and pro­fessional manner. This was followed by public hearings in the House Committee on the Judi­iciary, which allowed for an examination of the constitutional grounds for impeachment and an airing of evidence against the President.

With weeks of deposition, public hearings and additional evidence, the House Judiciary Committee concluded that President Trump violated his oath of office and, on December 18, 2019, the House voted to join 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 govern­ment, has proudly characterized President Trump as, "he has notori­ously boated, 'Then I have Article II, where I have the right to do whatever I want as President.' He has chron­ically violated the Constitution and denied the people their voice in American politics and good govern­ment.

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, illegality, and misde­meanors. It 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 national security clearances he granted in opposition to his own FII security experts. He has refused to task the Secretary of the Ways and Means Committee contrary to a law passed 3½ years ago.

The informing or oversight powers of Con­gress are even more heedless than legis­lation. Without informing Congress, Trump cannot enact significant legislation, repeal inadequate laws, or approve executive appointment, making the House the final arbiter of the President's actions.

The powers of the House of Representatives, Article I, sections 2, 7, 9, are explicitly set forth in the Constitution for the purpose of ensuring that the President and his subordinates from office; it will make schisms permanent. This House, as the constitutional ombudsman, is charged with challenging the President for his conduct of the officf of President of the United States. Article I, section 2, 7, declares that the President "shall have power to exercise a removal from office; it will make Schisms permanent. This House, as the constitutional ombudsman, is charged with challenging the President for his conduct of the official duties of the President of the United States, Article I, section 1, clause 6, and, consistent to his public trust, has systematically skewed the letter and spirit of the Constitution on a scale vastly beyond any previous occupant of the White House. Trump's defiance of 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.

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 violated the Constitution and denied the people their voice in American politics and good govern­ment. 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, illegality, and misde­meanors. It 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 national security clearances he granted in opposition to his own FIII security experts. He has refused to task the Secretary of the Ways and Means Committee contrary to a law passed 3½ years ago.

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2. ABUSE OF THE POWERS OF THE PRESIDENT AND ABUSE OF PUBLIC TRUST, President, in a peculiar manner, responsible for the nation's interests, and he has been charged with impeach­ment himself, if he suffers them to perpe­trate with impunity high crimes or mis­demeanors.

George Washington when presiding over the constitutional convention instructed, "The office will be so honorable and honest can repair." Mr. Trump has so corrupted the office and the republic that the nation no longer can repair.

No other President has so consistently violated external and inflammatory visions of the people, to the point that he has used his position to build an extensive, multibillion-dollar enterprise in violation of the Constitution and the criminal prohibition of the Anti-currentPage Act. President Trump has com­mitted the most serious impeachable offense.

In light of the President's gross abuse of power and obstruction of Congress, the American people, including President Trump, are entitled to be heard at trial. The House of Representatives as the arbiter of the President's actions has determined that the President should be impeached for his conduct of the official duties of the President of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I have Section I, clause 6, to deny various duties of Congress, including, inter alia, with Israel in serious violation of the speech or debate clause of the Constitution, Article I, section 6, clause 1, to deny two Members visitor visas. Mr. Trump has engaged in a campaign to sanction 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 declared, "I think it absolutely necessary that the President should have the power of removing decors and removing whores and that honesty can repair." Mr. Trump has so corrupted the office and the republic that the nation no longer can repair.

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I incline in the RECORD his thinking and those of others in this 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 bra­bery, bribery, and other high Crimes and Mis­deemeanors.

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H12198

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He has compromised the national interest to ensure family wealth on a scale unprecedented in the history of the presidency.

In this posture, Article II, section 2, clause 2 of the Constitution requires Congress to impeach the President. The Office of the President is the most important instrument of the Constitution to protect civil liberties and institutions from abuse. The President is the head of the executive Branch, and his conduct and behavior can be impeached by Congress if the President has

1. VIOLATING THE CONSTITUTION, particularly Article II, section 3, clause 6, which states that the President "shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed." In violation of that trust, President Donald J. Trump deliberately attempted to fraudulently subvert the will of the American people by misleading the American people and by engaging in a obtaining and using false information and data.

2. TAKING A FOREIGN CONTRIBUTION, particularly Article I, section 9, clause 8, which states that the President "shall not receive any present, gift, emolument, or reward of any kind whatsoever from any foreign state, without the consent of the Congress." In violation of these provisions, President Donald J. Trump has accepted foreign contributions and has not disclosed them to the American people.

3. VIOLATING THE CONSTITUTION, particularly Article I, section 9, clause 3, which states that the President "shall not be impeached or convicted in any civil suit or action." In violation of these provisions, President Donald J. Trump has been sued in a civil action and has not disclosed the details of the lawsuit.

4. VIOLATING THE CONSTITUTION, particularly Article I, section 9, clause 4, which states that the President "shall not be impeached or convicted in any criminal suit or action." In violation of these provisions, President Donald J. Trump has been sued in a criminal action and has not disclosed the details of the lawsuit.

5. VIOLATING THE CONSTITUTION, particularly Article I, section 9, clause 5, which states that the President "shall not be impeached or convicted in any civil suit or action." In violation of these provisions, President Donald J. Trump has been sued in a civil action and has not disclosed the details of the lawsuit.

6. VIOLATING THE CONSTITUTION, particularly Article I, section 9, clause 6, which states that the President "shall not be impeached or convicted in any criminal suit or action." In violation of these provisions, President Donald J. Trump has been sued in a criminal action and has not disclosed the details of the lawsuit.

7. VIOLATING THE CONSTITUTION, particularly Article I, section 9, clause 7, which states that the President "shall not be impeached or convicted in any civil suit or action." In violation of these provisions, President Donald J. Trump has been sued in a civil action and has not disclosed the details of the lawsuit.

8. VIOLATING THE CONSTITUTION, particularly Article I, section 9, clause 8, which states that the President "shall not be impeached or convicted in any criminal suit or action." In violation of these provisions, President Donald J. Trump has been sued in a criminal action and has not disclosed the details of the lawsuit.

9. VIOLATING THE CONSTITUTION, particularly Article I, section 9, clause 9, which states that the President "shall not be impeached or convicted in any civil suit or action." In violation of these provisions, President Donald J. Trump has been sued in a civil action and has not disclosed the details of the lawsuit.
December 18, 2019

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take no vote, is in essence condoning this behavior and discrediting our Constitution. Republicans may see today differently, but as we look forward, we must stand united as a Congress in defending our Constitution.

For a democracy to work in a system of check 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 him. 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 today if any President who abused his office in that way, and any member of this body who failed to understand what this vote really means, were looking clear what we expect of the OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, not the person sitting in it—is deeply and horribly mistaken.

A democratic value is that the balance of power, who wants to ensure the upholding 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 Gorgonio 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 Ukraine on a decision to open an investigation into a political rival, Donald Trump abused the power of the presidency for personal political gain.

He thereby violated his constitutional responsibility to uphold and defend the Constitution; and posed a threat to national security.

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 whose country he would be a republic of, a monarchy, and his response was, “A republic, if you can keep it.”

I am voting in favor of impeachment today, I am voting to keep America.

Benjamin Franklin and the Founding Fathers envisioned the tragic scenario we are witnessing at this moment in history. The President of the United States—assuming 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 that take 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.

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 that 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.

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 the President Trump’s telephone call with the Ukranian President.

The Constitution is clear—treason, bribery, high crimes and misdemeanors are impeachable offenses, and the evidence presented clearly meets those standards. The abuse of power 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. DELAURCE. 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 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 could acquit President Trump based on the evidence.

But the President’s unverified 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 great 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 Zelensky and asked him to “look into” 2020 Presidential candidate Vice President Joe Biden and his son’s involvement solely for his own personal and political gain.

In the weeks leading up to that call, the President withheld $391 million in military 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 unprecendented, categorical, and indiscriminate discharge of subpoenas issued by the House of Representatives pursuant to its ‘sole Power of Investigation.’” In doing so, President Trump obstructed Congress’s Constitutionally-authorised 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
and defend the constitution. That is why, today, I will vote to impeach President Trump for an abuse of power.

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 uphold ing my obligation under the United States Constitution and to protect the future of our democracy.

I continued to work on and pass legislation that reforms our immigration laws, especially for Dreamers. I continue to work on and pass legislation that combat s 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 at a later date, reserved only for actions that constitute 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 president 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 judgment 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. 69, 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 ascendant 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 and action 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 nation, and the integrity of the election must be without question. This is why I find the president’s most recent actions with regard to Ukraine and the upcoming election deeply troubling.

In evaluating the president’s actions, I have consulted the statements of the Founders and the statements of members of Congress who spoke during previous impeachment hearings. I have studied the late law professor Charles Black’s magnificent Handbook on Constitutional Law, 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 President delivered his first address to Congress, the president solicited the Government of Ukraine to publicly announce investigations into a political opponent, former Vice President Biden. The president’s intent, despite the fact that officials in both the United States and Ukraine have rejected the accusations as baseless, was concurrently demanding that Ukrainian officials publicly announce investigations into the president’s personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, and a political opponent in order to secure his re-election. 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 indispensable 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 impeachment and an unambiguous Senate vote, I also regret that the House did not package the charge regarding the military aid as a separate article, rather than as part of the president’s direct solicitation of a foreign investigation into his political rival.

A 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, and members of his administration solicited that help as part of their job. That is the weight of the evidence that the president’s actions crossed the line. That is why the president’s actions are a pattern of evidence that demonstrates the corruption I have accused the president of committing, and I will vote to approve two articles of impeachment.

The House investigation clearly unearthed a pattern of evidence that demonstrates the corruption I have accused the president of committing, and I will vote to approve two articles of impeachment.

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 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 corruption I have accused the president of committing, and I will vote to approve two articles of impeachment.
not impeachable whilst in office, he will spare no effort or means whatever to get himself reelected.

Article II of the resolution presents a separate challenge, 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 proactive 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 Former Acting Deputy Assistant to the President Robert OBrien.

At the heart of this matter is a debate about the limits of 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 basis than the President's claim of 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 provide the information.

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 wielding 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 there were extraordinary circumstances 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 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 that 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 tenable 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 immediate 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 that the world that foreign interference in American elections is not acceptable, not welcomed, and will not be tolerated.

A few years ago, I voted to impeach President Clinton. I did so because of his campaign of perjury and obstruction of justice. I was starkly divided from my Republican colleagues on questions of fact concerning impeachment, but I believed that the House had not met the constitutional threshold of "high crimes and misdemeanors." I voted against impeachment and acquittal, and I believe that the House has met that threshold today.

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 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 provide the documents.

In the face of the evidence before me today, I believe Cohen's words still ring true—but only if we continue to hold the president accountable. In my view, the only thing bipartisan about this impeachment inquiry is that it is a bipartisan process.

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The sad truth is that this has been an overtly political impeachment, and an unwarranted attempt to remove our duly elected President from office. I will vote 'no,' and I will not collude with either side of the aisle to vote against this divisive impeachment.

I include the Record a letter from President Trump to Speaker Pelosi.

The White House, December 17, 2019.

Hon. Nancy Pelosi,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,

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 unconstitutionally abusive power of the Democratic lawmakers, unequaled in nearly two and a half centuries of American legislative history.

The so-called “impeachment” was introduced by the House Judiciary Committee not recognizable under any standard of Constitutional theory, interpretation, or jurisprudence. They include no crimes, no misdeeds, no wrongdoing what so ever. They have cheapened the importance of the very ugly word, impeachment.

By proceeding with your invalid impeachment, you are violating your oaths of office, your oaths to preserve Constitutional Convention, and you are declaring open war on American democracy.

You don’t need to hear the Founders in pursuit of this election malfeasance scheme—yet your political rhetoric display unfettered contempt for America’s founding and your egregious conduct (threats 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, “House of Power,” is a completely distinguishable, arrogant, 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 now from the transcript immediately made available) that the paragraph put on my son’s name. President Zelensky: “I would like you to do us a favor, though, because our country has been, you know, a very good friend of Ukraine.” I said we do favor, not me, not me, and our country. 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 Zelensky.

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 $36 billion dollars of U.S. taxpayer money to coerce Ukraine into firing the prosecutor who was digging into the campaign prior to my son’s election as vice president.

You know this because Biden bragged about it on video. Biden openly stated: “I’m telling you right now, China has been very good to our country. They’ve cut 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, that is precisely what I did. Even Joe Biden admitted just days ago in an interview with CNN: “I shook rump to the security assistant that I told him ‘No, no, you can’t do that. You have to do this.’”

Now you are denying that I am attempting to impeach you falsely accusing me of something that Joe Biden has admitted he actually did.

President Zelensky has repeatedly denied that I did nothing wrong, and that there was No Pressure. He further emphasized “No Pressure” as the explanation to me. Zelensky also said “There was No Pressure” to the Senate Ron Johnson of Wisconsin, a supporter of Ukraine who met privately with President Zelensky, has said: “At no time during this meeting ... I met privately with President Zelensky, that they were feeling pressure to do anything in return for the military aid.

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 and the country’s Congress based on allegations 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 of recent memory would have faced many more impeachments over the centuries. As an American lawyer, I stand in strong support of Constitution and the separation of powers. If a president refuses to testify before Congress, he or she is not under criminal liability, and Congress must move forward with the impeachment process in order to hold the president accountable. The Constitution provides for an orderly process to remove a president from office without the need to bring charges of perjury or obstruction of justice.

A recent Gallup poll found that 54% of Americans believe Trump should be impeached. I do not share that view.

For all these reasons, I believe that a true impeachment proceeding would result in a complete and unqualified acquittal. There is no evidence of wrongdoing. We have not received any documents. The proceedings have been conducted in secret. This is a political process from the very beginning, and an unwarranted attempt to remove our current President.

I urge you to think about the serious and dangerous consequences of this process.

Sincerely,

Donald J. Trump
President of the United States

The document includes a letter from President Trump to Speaker Pelosi, expressing his strongest and most powerful protest against the partisan impeachment crusade being pursued by the Democrats in the House of Representatives. The letter states that the impeachment represents an unprecedented and unconstitutionally abusive power of the Democratic lawmakers, unequaled in nearly two and a half centuries of American legislative history. The letter also includes statements from President Zelensky of Ukraine, denying any pressure on the US government, and various other politicians and officials. The letter concludes by urging the Speaker to think about the serious and dangerous consequences of this process.
success of America and its citizens. But in spite of our country’s fabric, you have decided to disgrace our country still further. You decided to shrink the moral horizon of our country and sank to the lowest part because there was nothing to do, so you decided to take the next hole that came along, the phone call with Ukraine—even though it was a perfect call. And by the way, when I speak to foreign officials, there are many people, with permission, listening to that call on our House side.

You are the ones interfacing America’s elections. You are the ones diverting America’s Democracy. You are the ones bringing pain and so much pain to our Republic for your own selfish personal, political, and partisan gain.

Before the Impeachment Hearings, it was the Russian Witch Hunt. Against all evidence, and regardless of the truth, you and your deputies, without SO much as a flimsy provocation, smeared and slandered me, a falsehood like no other. You forced our Nation through turmoil and terror over a wholly fabricated story, illegitimately invoking the authority of the Constitution, including the right to present evidence, and how truly they deface America’s Constitution in order to frame our president.

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—seriously, and reluctantly. No intelligent person would think anything of the kind. Since I won the election, the Democratic Party has been possessed by Impeachment Fever. That is not a somber affair. You are making a mockery of impeachment. You are zealously combing my hair, 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 your party accountable for the upcoming 2020 election. They will not soon forgive your perversions 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 baseless 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 to fulfill the promise 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 the truth of it, so that it can never happen to another President again.

Sincerely yours,

Donald J. Trump,
President of the United States of America.
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

December 18, 2019

H1220

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 and accountability delegated to the Congress. The whistleblower report revealed Congress to investigate the facts and follow the issues.

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 her 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 conversations on the impeachment inquiry.

I read testimonies from firsthand witnesses, parsed the majority and dissenting opinions from the majority and minority, read transcripts of the phone call, and listened to the Federalist Papers and papers from both branches of government, with very clear oversight and accountability delegated to the Congress.

I was convinced: The facts support a case for impeachment. 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 was essentially a repeat of the perjury recited under the circumstances, I believe that it would have been best if the President had avoided such topics.

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 sought to divide our country.

The House passed articles of impeachment, and on Tuesday, December 18, 2019, just after the conclusion of the 116th Congress, the House voted to send these articles to the Senate for trial.

One final concern: the partisan process used in this case degrades established boundaries of political competition that have helped the American people through an election. It was an action, if not a policy, that I fear partisan impeachment efforts may well become just another tool in the political arms race that I believe is driven by whoever party loses a presidential election.

The damage done to our constitutional process by the partisan process used in this case degrades established boundaries of political competition that have helped the American people through an election. It was an action, if not a policy, that I fear partisan impeachment efforts may well become just another tool in the political arms race that I believe is driven by whoever party loses a presidential election.

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 sought to divide our country.

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December 18, 2019

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

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 solemn 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 elected officials that in 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 in the history of this great nation. 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 re-election campaign in return. When his scheme was publicly exposed, he did everything possible to become a bargaining chip for the President to reflect upon which we have sworn a sacred oath.

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 Crimean region of Ukraine, 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 223 years.

Finally, I would highlight that the administration’s complete refusal to cooperate constitutionally-proscribed judicial 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, we be 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 Members has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 767, the previous question is ordered on the next question now pending.

The question of adoption of the resolution, as amended, shall be divided between the two sides.

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 a point of order.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device and the Chair announced that 197, answered "present" 1, not voting 3, as follows:

[Roll No. 695]
## CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

**December 18, 2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amendment</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Vote Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H.R. 363</td>
<td>An act to authorize mandatory funding programs for historically Black colleges and universities and other minority-serving institutions, and for other purposes.</td>
<td>Passed by a recorded vote.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**So Article II was agreed to.**

A motion to reconsider Article II was laid on the table.

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**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. 3068_ An act to reauthorize mandatory funding programs for historically Black colleges and universities and other minority-serving institutions, and for other purposes.

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**NOT VOTING—3**

- Annex 
- Sharon 
- Shull

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**APPROVED**—1

- Ozbolt