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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(III)
Articles of Impeachment Against
Donald John Trump

[House Resolution 755, One Hundred Sixteenth Congress, First Session]

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
December 18, 2019.

RESOLUTION

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

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

ARTICLE I: ABUSE OF POWER

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

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

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

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

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

(B) a discredited theory promoted by Russia alleging that Ukraine—rather than Russia—interfered in the 2016 United States Presidential election.
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(2) With the same corrupt motives, President Trump—acting both directly and through his agents within and outside the United States Government—conditioned two official acts on the public announcements that he had requested—

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

(B) a head of state meeting at the White House, which the President of Ukraine sought to demonstrate continued United States support for the Government of Ukraine in the face of Russian aggression. (3) Faced with the public revelation of his actions, President Trump ultimately released the military and security assistance to the Government of Ukraine, but has persisted in openly and corruptly urging and soliciting Ukraine to undertake investigations for his personal political benefit.

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

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:

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.

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

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

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

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

(2) Directing other Executive Branch agencies and offices to defy lawful subpoenas and withhold the production of documents and records from the Committees—in response to which the Department of State, Office of Management and Budget, Department of Energy, and Department of Defense refused to produce a single document or record.
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(3) Directing current and former Executive Branch officials not to cooperate with the Committees—in response to which nine Administration officials defied subpoenas for testimony, namely John Michael “Mick” Mulvaney, Robert B. Blair, John A. Eisenberg, Michael Ellis, Preston Wells Griffith, Russell T. Vought, Michael Duffey, Brian McCormack, and T. Ulrich Brechbuhl. These actions were consistent with President Trump’s previous efforts to undermine United States Government investigations into foreign interference in United States elections.

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

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

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

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Attest:

Clerk.
The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Not voting: 

Mr. BASS changed her vote from "nay" to "yea." The previous vote was rescinded. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Mr. McGOVERN, Madam Speaker, asked that the vote be taken by electronic device, and there were ayes 228, noes 197, not voting 5, as follows:

[Holl No. 40]
December 18, 2019

H12131

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to rule X, paragraph (l), the following amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to by the House, the same having been reported from the Committees on the Judiciary and House Administration:

The amendment in the nature of a substitute consists of this text:

The Speaker recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 3 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous matter. So ordered.

The Speaker pro tempore. There is no objection.

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

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

I also extend my gratitude to Chair- man SCOFF, who will be presiding later in the day.

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

Let us recall what that pledge says: 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 the United States of America, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. As the Speaker of the House, I solemnly and solemnly invoke the words of our beautiful American flag:

"I do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States.

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 Misdeavors.

In all of this, President Trump abdicated the powers of the Presidency by lying and innub- ing national security and other critical 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 I: 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 Misdeavors.

In his conduct of the foreign policy of the United States—and in violation of his constitutional oath faithfully to execute the office of President of the United States, and in duty bound to take care that the laws be faithfully executed—Donald J. Trump has betrayed the Nation, profited at the expense of our National security, and violated the Constitution of 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 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.

The Speaker, the Speaker pro tempore, and the House Committee on the Judiciary have investigated the facts and thereby have determined that impeachment necessary.

The resolution shall be debateable for 5 hours equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 3 legislative days in which to

26607
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 disputes for the manner in which the President executes his office. Only "Treason, Bribery, or other High Crimes and Misdemeanors" warrant impeachment. But there is overwhelming evidence that President Trump betrayed his oath of office by seeking to use presidential power to pressure a foreign government to help him distort an American election, for his personal and political benefit, at the direct expense of national security interests as determined by Congress. His conduct is precisely the type of threat to our democracy that the founders feared when they included the remedy of impeachment in the Constitution.

We take no position on whether the President committed a crime. But conduct need not meet the standard here to constitute impeachment. It does not depend on what Congress has chosen to criminalize.

Impeachment is a remedy for grave abuses of power and must be used for serious and grave abuses. It is not a remedy for every alleged abuse of power.

- The primary check on the President is the Constitution, the courts, and the public. At the highest level, these are the checks that can remove the president between elections.
- The public can punish the president for an abuse of power.
- The courts can hold the president accountable for an abuse of power.
- The Constitution, the courts, and the public can hold the president accountable for an abuse of power.

But we conclude that the President committed impeachable offenses. He withheld military aid from Ukraine in exchange for an announcement that he had been "treated unfairly"—an announcement that would further subvert the public trust in the 2020 election.

We conclude that the President committed the offenses set out in our letter because:

1. He committed an action that was impeachable.
2. The facts are not disputed.
3. The President was aware of the facts.
4. He was aware that the facts were impeachable.
5. He directed subordinates to act on the facts.
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December 18, 2019

Somland testified that the President made a White House visit for the Ukrainian president conditional on public announcement of his investigation into the corruption of the Ukrainian president. President Trump asked for a “favor” in the form of a foreign government investigation of his political rival, President Trump and his Chief of Staff Mike McInroy made public statements confirming this use of government power to solicit investigations that would aid the President’s personal political interests. The President made clear that his private attorney, Rudy Giuliani, was central to efforts to spur Ukrainian investigations, and Mr. Giuliani confirmed that his efforts were in service of President Trump’s personal interests.

Unfortunately, whether to impeach the President and remove him from office depends on public opinion. As Hamilton wrote in The Federalist, if the President is “a man of mean understanding or bad moral character,” it will be “more easy to assure ourselves by every possible supply of information in order to advance his own re-election.” President Trump’s numerous and flagrant abuses of power are precisely what the Founders had in mind as grounds for impeaching and removing a president. Among those most burdened 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 opportunity to extract false information in order to advance his own re-election.

President Trump’s lawless obstruction of the House of Representatives, which is rightly described as a “coercive form of lawlessness,” is in pursuit of its constitutionally-mandated oversight role, has demonstrated an attempt to coerce representative government. So have his attempts to justify that obstruction on the grounds of a lie, as multiple members of Congress are in their practice above the law.

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

It is our certified judgment that if President Trump’s misconduct does not rise to the level of impeachment, then virtually every other does.

Hamilton understood, as he wrote in 1892, that the republic remained vulnerable to the rise of an unscrupulous demagogue, “unprincipled in private life, despotic in his fortune, bold in his temper, possessed of considerable talents, and despotic in his ordinary demeanor.” That demagogue, Hamilton said, could easily enough manage “to mount the hobby horse of popularity—to join in the cry of danger to liberty—to take every opportunity of embarrassing the General Government & bringing it under suspicion—to flatter and fall in with all the non sense of the malcontents of the day.” Such a figure, Hamilton wrote, would “throw things into confusion that he may ride the storm and direct the whirlwind.” President Trump’s actions committed both before and during the House investigations fit Hamilton’s description and manifest utter and 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.

Mr. PELOSI of California, 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 office to do an improper personal, political benefit at the expense of America’s national security. When the President wields a democratic authority that is advancing American security interests by fighting an American adversary, the President weakens America.

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

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

As George Washington, our Nation’s first president, who wrote, would “throw things into confusion that he may ride the storm and direct the whirlwind.”

Accused of further crimes by the President, which necessitate the second Article of Impeachment: obstruction of Congress. When the President’s wrongdoing was revealed, he launched an unprecedented, indiscriminate, and categorical campaign of disinformation.

Never before in the history of our Nation have we seen a President declare war. We are in a war. No, he is not acting as if he is above the law.

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

No, it doesn’t.

That reckless disregard is a profound violation of the Constitution and our Republic, which endure because of our system of separation of powers: three equal branches, each a check and balance on the other, or as Madison put it, “if we can keep it.”

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

As one you, the North Carolinians, warned, unless the Constitution contained an impeachment provision, a President might simply refuse to bow to mistakes or corruption and refuse to resign.

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

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

Last week, in observance of the 75th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, Members traveled to that hallowed ground to express our gratitude to the heroes who sacrificed everything to secure victory of freedom over tyranny, not just for America.

The veterans of that battle, who are in their nineties, told us how, after the war, the Europeans whom they liberated would ask: Why did you risk— you don’t know us—and give your lives to save us?

Our men would say: We came here to fight for you not because you are Americans but because we are Americans. As our beloved Elijah Cummings, our Oversight Committee chair, our North Star, said when he announced his support of this action: “When the history books are written about this tumultuous era, I want them to show that I was among those in the House of Representatives who stood up to lawlessness and tyranny.”

He also said, almost prophetically: “When we are dancing with the angels, the question will be: What did we do to make sure we kept our democracy intact?”

Elijah is no longer with us. We must now answer that question for him. Now, he is dancing with the angels.

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

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

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

Madam Speaker, we are here today to debate a topic without surprise no one. This has not been a surprise, and it is not even something that we would not have thought about.
From the very moment that the majority party in this House won, the inevitability that we would be here today was only a matter of what date they would schedule it, nothing else.

In fact, I have said before, and I will say it again. I do not believe, no matter how the words are phrased, that what has been said—this is not a solemn occasion. When you go looking for something, you see it everywhere and everywhere. And what the majority has done, and what has been said—I am concerned if we do this ever since the gentleman was elected. The President came forward and did what was necessary to protect our country—nothing more. The President who did not do as being required, so much so that 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 are also things that I think the majority all along, and that is, also, the Founders were very concerned about a partisan nature behind politics or the majority, who have their strength, can do what they want to do, regardless.

In fact, I have said it before, and I will say it again. I do not believe, no matter how the words are phrased, that what has been said—this is not a solemn occasion. When you go looking for something, you see it everywhere and everywhere. And what the majority has done, and what has been said—I am concerned if we do this ever since the gentleman was elected. The President came forward and did what was necessary to protect our country—nothing more. The President who did not do as being required, so much so that the Speaker announced an impeachment inquiry even before seeing the call transcript that we are going to hear so much about today.

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

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

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

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

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

So why are we here?

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

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

First of all, abuse of power. The phone call in question had the President say, “our country has been through a lot. I want you to do us a favor.” Not “me” a favor; “us” a favor.

And there he was referring to our country, the United States of America, not a personal political gain.

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

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

That is a bunch of bunk.

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

Whenever there has been a dispute between the executive and legislative branches heretofore, they have gone to court.

The Supreme Court a couple years ago said they would take jurisdiction deciding whether the President has to comply with one subpoena relating to his tax returns.

Now, here, the Democrats have been bent to impeach the President of the United States before the court decides this.

This means that there is a rush job.

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

They have spent 5 years doing this; they shamed millions of taxpayer dollars, including the Mueller report, putting together this impeachment; and they also have had this Congress wrapped around impeachment and not doing their jobs until the dam broke this week.
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Stop this charade. Vote "no." Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, the gentle­

man from Wisconsin knows full well the President asserted no privileges here. He simply ordered complete defen­

ce 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 committee and Congress, but for our country.

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

President Trump's behavior is ex­

actly what our Founders feared most.

Chairman NADLER for his leadership as our children depend upon it.

I know it. The American people know
terest before the coun­

try.

This isn't complicated. You know it. The President has committed the

Democrats don't have time for it. The real abuse power here is on

our country. I will vote to impeach Donald J. Trump.

The President is the smoking gun. He uses the highest office in the Presi­

dent's behavior is ex­

actly what our Founders feared most. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the
gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentle­

man from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) for yielding. Mr. Speaker, the Founders of this country warned us against a single­party impeachment because they feared it would bitterly and perhaps ir­

repairably divide our Nation.

The truth is, in the 235 years of this Republic, there has never been a single­party, fraudulent impeachment process like the one being used today. Our Democrat colleagues have weaponized the impeachment provision of the Constitution to nullify the votes of 63 million Americans who elected President Donald J. Trump.

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 dis­

agreed with the President, they coerced a foreign country to interfer­

e in our elections. He undermined our national security.

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

A government where the President tells his own elected House, Senate, and court that his conduct is not under­

ning any of our elections is not "of the people." When the President

on the entire record of these proceedings to show that President Trump engaged in any abuse of power.

As you will hear today, their entire case

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.

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I know it. The American people know it.

President Trump's wrongdoing and the urgent threat that his actions present to our next election and our dem­

ocracy leaves us no principled alter­

native but to support these Articles of Impeachment.

Our Constitution, our country, and

our children depend upon it.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speak­

er, I wish, as the gentlewoman just said, that they would examine the fac­

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

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

son).

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

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President Trump's beha­

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

A government where the President

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ty is not "of the people." This isn't complicated. You know it.

I know it. The American people know it.

President Trump's wrongdoing and the urgent threat that his actions present to our next election and our dem­

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native but to support these Articles of Impeachment.

Our Constitution, our country, and

our children depend upon it.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speak­

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

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

son).

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

Mr. Speaker, the Founders of this country warned us against a single­party impeachment because they feared it would bitterly and perhaps ir­

repairably divide our Nation.

The truth is, in the 235 years of this Republic, there has never been a single­party, fraudulent impeachment process like the one being used today. Our Democrat colleagues have weaponized the impeachment provision of the Constitution to nullify the votes of 63 million Americans who elected President Donald J. Trump.

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son).

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank 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

ing our country's national security.

The President's allies say that they did this never makes as a point­
corruption, but if President Trump truly cared about corruption, then he would have listened to the talking points that were prepared by the Na­
tional Security Council, which protects the separation of powers.

He did not abide by the Department of Justice recommendation that Ukraine had passed all the anti­
corruption benchmarks, and he went ahead with the impeachment in­
spection of all of his top advisers that he must release that aid to Ukraine.

He wanted President Zelensky to open an in­

vestigation into the Biden family, which protects the separation of power.

The President is the smoking gun. Our Founders, Mr. Speaker, en­

trusted us with the awesome responsi­

bility of protecting our elections, which gets its power not from the bloodlines of monarchs, but from the votes of We the People.

Without that, we are no longer a de­

ocracy, we are a monarchy or a dicta­

ture.

So today, I will uphold my oath to Constitu­tion and country. I will vote to impeach Donald J. Trump.
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 flawed 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 blinded from hearing the facts for themselves.

Chairman Schiff repeatedly withheld crucial information from the Republicans, including the ability for anyone but himself and his staff to speak with the whistleblower at the center of this investigation. He was even called out by liberal media for spreading misinformation and false-speak with the whistleblower at the elected President. If there was criminal activity that could not be shared with the House and all Americans, he has the right to keep that information.

The public hearings 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’ predesigned narrative.

Most importantly, we have not presented to the American people, policies that can impact their lives, or they could use the tools to undo the 2016 election. They have tried to overturn the election every time they had the chance to do so. Now, the President’s actions in this case were particularly inspiring, because he allowed 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 of his opponent. And by harming Ukrainian national security, the President also harmed U.S. national security.

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

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

Moreover, impeachment is a form of deterrence. Our children are watching. Whether Donald Trump leaves office in 1 month, 1 year, or 5 years, this impeachment vote today proves the President is guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors, as required by the Constitution to keep government officials from doing whatever they want.

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

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

No President may cheat the people — Endorse candidates or remove a duly elected President. If there was criminal activity, as many of my Democrat colleagues have argued, are there 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. COLLINS).

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman NADLER for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. McHENRY).

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

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

Since then, House Democrats have issued more subpoenas than bills have been signed into law. They have asked all the records we need to know about this Congress and that party.

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

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

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

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

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman NADLER for his leadership.

Let’s start by making this very simple. No one in American history 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 president 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. 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 make basic parliamentary motions. In fact, the only witnesses allowed to testify publicly were those who fit neatly within the Democrats’ predesigned narrative.

Most importantly, we have not presented to the American people, policies that can impact their lives, or they could use the tools to undo the 2016 election. They chose the latter.

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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 gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. MILLER).

Mrs. MILLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H. Res. 785.

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 obstructing over the vote to impeach our duly-elected President.

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

Mr. Speaker, Trump has led, our country has thrived, and Washington liberals have failed. Donald Trump has committed the mistakes of so many of our colleagues to obstruct the Trump administration’s agenda at every turn, our country continues to succeed.

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

If Congress hadn’t spent the last year stuck in a divisive, ugly, partisan impeachment debate, 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 we were expending over the positive work that we should do for our country. But we didn’t, all because of divisive political theatrics.

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 46th President of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, no one runs for Congress and then sits in the House and votes against every piece of legislation because he solicited foreign interference for the purpose of helping him in his reelection campaign in 2020. The President betrayed our national security and undermined the security of our elections when he put his own personal political interests ahead of the interests of our country. He tried to cheat to win reelection, and he confessed. He got caught. He confessed.

This wasn’t an attack on Vice President Biden. This was an attack on our democracy. If we do not hold the President accountable today, we will no longer live in a democracy. We will live in a dictatorship where any future President will be free to abuse their office in order to get reelected.

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

To my friends on the other side of the aisle, I say this: This is not about making history. This is about holding a lawless President accountable in the way our Framers intended. This is a time to put our country over your political party. And this is a time for the American people to ask whether you will seek safety in the high grass of a vote against these articles.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3½ 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 tools that we can make in this body, and this impeachment is based purely on partisan motivations.

Speaker PELOSI said we shouldn’t go down this path unless there was something compelling, overwhelming, and
The majority has failed to deliver for the American people. They failed to pass a budget on time, failed to pass the spending bills on time, and failed to deliver bipartisan solutions that will actually help improve the lives of Americans. But the American people see through this 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, does it argue 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 the bar for what future Presidents will face.

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

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

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

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

The Chair, as a Member of the Homeland Security Committee, I know firsthand the dangers that foreign interference in our elections poses to all 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. I take this responsibility and I do not take impeachment lightly. Yet, I am here to do my job as a Member of Congress.

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

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

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, multiplying a national election requires an overwhelming case of high crimes supported by individual acts. I yield to Mr. Newhouse for the balance of my time.
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) yields 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEUSER).

Mr. MEUSER. Madam Speaker, back in the 2016 election, President Trump attacked and is a continuing threat to our system of free and fair elections.

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

God save the United States of America.

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. Before Ukraine, I failed to tell my colleagues that called for foreign interference when he said: “Russia, if you are listening:…"

In 2016, President Trump sought foreign interference when he needed a favor from Ukraine to intervene in the 2020 election. President Trump attacked and is a continuing threat to our system of free and fair elections.

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

God save the United States of America.
Congressional Record — House

December 18, 2019

Obstruction of Congress? Is this what our President is about?

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

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

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

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

Ms. BASS. Madam Speaker, this is a sad moment, and I say to my colleagues, do not vote on Articles of Impeachment because Donald Trump has abused the power of the Presidency in his attempt to cheat his way to reelection.

The facts are uncontested.

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

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

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

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

The House of Representatives has no choice but to vote and pass Articles of Impeachment because President Trump has abused his power and obstructed the ability of Congress from performing our constitutional duty. The urgency to move forward with Articles of Impeachment is because there is no reason to believe President Trump won’t continue to abuse the power of his office, no reason to believe he won’t continue to put his foot on the scale of his reelection, and, in fact, President Trump just returned from Ukraine, and in an article just released in The New Yorker magazine confesses to continuing the effort to interfere in the election that our country recognizes. They got it right, high crimes and misdemeanors. Other than that, I look forward to that day. Let the American people decide.

This President elected by the American people has violated his oath of office and has worked to delegitimize him so that he can’t be reelected. This vote this day has nothing to do with Ukraine. It has nothing to do with abuse of power, and it has nothing to do with obstruction of Congress.

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

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

For those who think this started yesterday, for those who think this is about something else, you have been trying to impeach this President since he was sworn into office.

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

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

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

If you set this bar as being impeachable, every President in our future will be impeached. It erodes our Republic in a way that our Founding Fathers recognized. They got it right, high crimes and misdemeanors. Other than that, I look forward to that day. Let the American people decide.

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

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

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

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

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

This President elected by the American people has violated his oath of office and has leveraged our House meetings to extract a political favor from a foreign government.

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

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

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

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. I yield ½ minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING).

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

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

As Chairman NADLER must recall, exactly 21 years ago today, I spoke on this floor in opposition to the impeachments of President Clinton. And 21 years ago tomorrow, I voted against all four Articles of Impeachment against President Clinton.
Today's Articles of Impeachment against President Trump are an assault on our Constitution and the American people. To impeach a President for a phone call for which no crime is charged, never mind a high crime, and asserting his constitutional prerogative as a President is a clear abuse of power by the Congress. It sets a dangerous precedent of weaponizing impeachment to undo the solemn decision of the American people.

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

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

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 live up to our oath of office.

We have been presented with direct evidence about the President's actions. They were corruption of national security and undermine the integrity of the next election. We now vote on Articles of Impeachment for abuse of power and conduct 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. However, I am determined to combat corruption. His agents broke into the Democratic Party headquarters to get his 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 re-election, he used a foreign government to do it. He used military aid provided to fight the Russians as leverage solely to benefit his personal and political gain.

George Washington would be astounded since he warned "against the intrigues of foreign influences."

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

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

The President's unconstitutional abuse of power, a high crime and misdemeanor, is clear. He totally refused to provide any information to Congress related to the impeachment inquiry. It is our responsibility to use the tool our Founders gave us in the Constitution to preserve the constitutional order. We must impeach.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ROUZER).

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

Here we are, almost 3 years later, and what we are witnessing today is unprecedented in American history, a very partisan-based impeachment with no facts that warrant it. This is an impeachment based on hearsay and speculation rooted in a deep-seated hatred for a man whom many of my colleagues and I have come to view as our President.

They threaten our national security and undermine the integrity of our 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.

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I want to ask a woman or a man.

Today, the American people should receive clarity and truth. The Congress has set the highest bar in the land. The President breached and violated the Constitution of the United States and committed constitutional crimes. The President's crimes are impeachable.

Mr. ROUZER. Madam Speaker, the Constitution protects us, and I hate no woman or man.

President Zelensky said there was no pressure. 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.

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

They allowed 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 trampered 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.

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I want to ask a woman or a man.

Today, the American people should receive clarity and truth. The Congress has set the highest bar in the land. The President breached and violated the Constitution of the United States and committed constitutional crimes. The President's crimes are impeachable.

Mr. ROUZER. Madam Speaker, the Constitution protects us, and I hate no woman or man.

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the waiting on an early-morning shift. It matters to the steelworker building America. It matters to the teacher in a fifth grade class. It matters to a mother kissing her military recruit going off to war. The Constitution must be preserved. Our laws must be honored and respected. The bloodshed and sacrifice of fellow Americans cannot be ignored, trampled on, or rejected. Our actions on the vote taken today must be for no personal gain or grandeur.

The bright light of this constitutional democracy has been dimmed because of acts that are no longer for all. It is for one man, Donald J. Trump, his truth, his way. He accepts that abuse of power because that is not America. No one is above the law. Alexander Hamilton said impeachment means "because the misconduct of public men" and violations of public trust.

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

Third, the essential purpose of the scheme concocted by President Trump was to enhance his re-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—to deal with the misconduct of public men. It matters to the teacher in her fifth-grade class. It matters to the businessman helping to build America. It matters to the teacher in her fifth-grade social studies class. It matters to a mother kissing her young military recruit before he or she goes off to war.

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

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

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

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

The President would like you to do us a favor, though because our country has been through a lot and Ukraine knows a lot about it. And we found out what happened with this whole situation with Ukraine, they say Crowsnest... I guess you have one of your wealthy people... however, they say Ukraine has it. There are a lot of things that happened, the whole story and information. 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 Zelensky: 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 again to express my trust and your trust and confidence and have personal relations which are even more so. I will personally tell you that one of my assistants spoke with Mr. Giuliani that Mr. Giuliani will be able to travel to Ukraine and we will meet once in... I mean... Mr. Giuliani is very important for us. 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 very much knows the inner circles... He is a very good guy. If you could speak to him that would be great. The former mayor of the United States, the man had bad news and the people she was dealing with in the Ukraine were bad. We need to find out who that was and let you know that. The other thing, There’s a bầu that I can ask him. He stopped the prosecution and a lot of people want to find out about that so whatever you can do with the Justice Department, I appreciate it. I want to see him. I want to see him with you. He has a lot of talk about it. I guess he can provide help to the prosecution and a lot of people can look into it... It sounds horrible to me.

President Zelensky: I wanted to tell you about the president. First of all I understand and I’m knowledgeable about the situation. Since we have won the absolute majority in our Parliament the next president will be 100% my president, my candidate, who will be approved by the parliament and will start as a new president in September. He or she will take into the situation, specifically to the company that you mentioned in this issue. The issue of the investigation of the case of the issue of making sure to restore the honesty so we could like you to make sure we could do the investigation of the case. On top of that, I would kindly ask you if you have any additional information which you can provide to us, it would be very helpful for the investigation. I am eager to cooperate with you in our country with regard to the Ambassador to the United States from Ukraine as far as I recall her name was Ivanovich. It was great that you were the first one who told me that she was a bad ambassador because I agree with you 100%. Her attitude towards was far from the best as she admired the previous President and she was on his side. She would not accept me as a new President well enough. She was a very important leader and she was very fair and she was very fair and we will figure it out. I heard the prosecutor was treated very badly and he was a very fair prosecutor so good luck with everything. Your economy is going to get better and better I predict. You have a lot of assets. It’s a
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great President. I have many Ukrainian friends, their incredible people.

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

Putin Declares Crimea for Russia and Beverly Donaldson This Week
(By Steven Loew Myer and Ellen Barry —
Mar. 18, 2014)

Aleksei. Putin said it would further the military intervention in Crimea, a group of scenes opened from them during a Russian military mapping office near Simferopol, killing a Ukrainian soldier and another according to a Ukrainian officer off the base and a statement by Ukraine’s Defense Ministry.

The base appeared to be under the control of the attacking soldiers, who have been the most of a series or military intervention in Crimea, while the authorities to move to elements and successfully to control that began with the collapse of Mr. Yanukovych’s government on the Feb. 21.

Within a week, Russian special operations troops had seized control of strategic locations across Crimea, while the regional authorities moved to declare independence and the collapse of the Soviet Union had left Ukraine with nearly half of the people of Crimea. When he finished, he moved to announce that the United States and the European Union were ready to defend themselves.

The episode underscored the fact that the foreign policy of Russia, which had been widely described as a major military power, remains dangerous and unpredictable.

In the capital, Kiev, Ukraine’s new president, Arseniy P. Yatsenyuk, declared that the conflict had moved from “a political to a military phase” and laid the blame squarely on Russia.

Mr. Putin’s determined response to the actions of Ukraine’s president, Viktor F. Yanukovych, last month has left American and European leaders scrambling to find an end to the latest tensions politically critical. The president of Ukraine, who is in Moscow on Sunday to make a political solution to the crisis.

The treaty requires legislative approval, but there is a more formalism given Mr. Putin’s unchallenged political authority and his actions, which have raised his approval ratings and undermined a narrative of the Yanukovych that bowed the few voices of opposition or even caution about the potential costs to Russia.

Mr. Putin appeared Tuesday evening at a rally in Red Square to announce that Russia has “the option of the Crimea” and the city of Sevastopol the 8th and 85th divisions of Ukraine’s Russian Federation.

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Denmark's casinos, which have been closed since March due to the coronavirus pandemic, are set to reopen on Friday, according to the country's health minister.

The decision comes as part of a broader easing of restrictions in Denmark, where the number of new daily infections has been declining in recent weeks. The reopening of casinos is expected to boost the country's economy, which has been severely affected by the pandemic.

In a statement, health minister Magnus Heunicke said: "We have seen a significant reduction in the number of new infections, and we are now in a position to gradually ease some of the restrictions."

Casinos were among the first businesses to be closed in Denmark in March as the country entered lockdown to fight the spread of the virus. Since then, a number of other businesses have been allowed to reopen, including restaurants, bars and shops.

He added: "We are now confident that we can safely allow casinos to reopen, while still maintaining the necessary public health measures to prevent a second wave of infections."

The decision has been welcomed by the industry, which has been struggling during the pandemic. Casino owners have reported significant losses due to the closures, and the reopening is expected to bring much-needed relief.

"This is a huge relief," said Jan Pedersen, owner of one of Denmark's largest casinos. "We have been struggling for months, and this will be a major boost for our business."

Heunicke also announced that more sectors, including hotels and gyms, will be allowed to reopen from June 10, further easing the country's lockdown measures.

"The lifting of restrictions will continue to be gradual, and we will be guided by the latest scientific advice," he said. "But we are now confident that we can safely move forward with further easing of restrictions."
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Trainig Center in western Ukraine. "And at the end of that day-long exercise, we'll do a field training exercise with that battalion." The U.S. provided them training last year. It's been a couple years since Ukraine's conflict has largely taken a backseat to the sequel to ongoing threats: 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 around 1,500 soldiers and civilians to Russia-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 received an additional 3,000 or so Ukrainian soldiers to Kiev's ranks.

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

In the U.S. plans is to build an army's entire training infrastructure almost from the ground up. After 30 years of downsizing and decades of not-so-casual corruption that has plagued Ukraine's and many post-Soviet countries' militaries across eastern Europe.

"Our overall goal is essentially to help the Ukraine's military become NATO-interoperable," Christopher said. "So the more they have an opportunity to work with different commodities and different partner nations, all their Slavic neighbors, and all the other Western European countries. They will get a better understanding of how to train a team or exercise with Ukraine's military."

That includes Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, and several NATO allies. And the U.S. has been working to grow a variety of non-lethal military help to Ukraine—equipment like Humvees, medical supplies, bulletproof vests, and rear sights to track the hundreds of artillery shells that have fallen on the eastern Donbas and Luhansk regions. Maybe Javelin anti-tank missiles, Defense Secretary Mattis said in August, Ent Christopher's unit is far from the fighting. Their mission is "training the trainers," and a propagandizer, adding to Ukraine's NGO corps—the school disciplinarians who ensure that units are fit and ready for combat.

THREATS IN THE EAST

For Ukraine's new soldiers, combat means many things. It means flying missions 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," she said. "So they're not really Russians, you know. They're essentially terrorists."

So the U.S. calls eastern Ukraine's most troubled regions an Anti Terrorism Operation Zone, or 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 positions.)

In just the first two days of this month, U.S. officials said, several of those Russian-backed separatists, or theinos II ceasefire, an agreement reached in February 2015 between Russia, Ukraine, France, Germany, and the United States. By that time, more than 5,000 civilians had already been killed in the fighting. In the weeks after Minsk II was signed, the death toll had slowly hardened.

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

Most of the civilians killed in the fighting were killed by tanks and artillery, 50 percent, followed by IEDs, 56 percent and small arms fire, 9 percent. For months it puzzled observers how allegedly local separatists could be trained to use such heavy weaponry, even factoring in Ukraine's legacy as a sort of junkyard of old Soviet weapons systems. The AP says many of more advanced equipment—drones and armored vehicles, for example—came from Russia's hand in Ukraine as early as January 2015, although President Vladimir Putin didn't admit Russia's role until that December. Since then, their advanced equipment has only grown more sophisticated and deadly for Ukraine's front-line soldiers.

International ceasefire monitors aren't having an easy job of their job in 2017, either. During the first six months, they were removed from or intimidated through threats of confrontation (see photo below) inside Russia where, according to the Minsk agreement, no fighting could occur within 500 meters of the 70 percent of these occurred in separated-held areas.

U.S. troops are largely kept away from the conflict. That is by design; the U.S. and the other participating countries have agreed with the appropriate response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine and annexation of Crimea. Speaking alongside Ukraine Prime Minister Petro Poroshenko in August, U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said, "We do not, and we will not accept, Russia's seizure of Crimea and despite Russia's threats, we know that they are not about to reopen international borders by undermining the sovereign and free nations of Europe."

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

That is a world away from the U.S. Army in Yavoriv, and even the fighting on the other side of Ukraine feels remote. Chris topher said, "They're a little bit ironic, how little you feel the effect of the fighting in the western side of Ukraine. It's almost as if nothing is happening," she said. And if I didn't work directly with soldiers every day. I don't think you would really know. I mean, we see it on the news every day, and I work with soldiers ever day, so we know about it. But you go out into Lviv, or any of the other big cities around this area and you really don't feel the effects of things being war time."

Except, perhaps, for the U.S. and NATO soldiers who for months have shouldered the costs of such a large-scale operation, and Roberto Cingi, Russia's most famous economist. On top of that, Moscow has spent the past four months ferrying troops around its border with Ukraine and into Belarus for extended exercises that run from the Barents Sea to the Mediterranean Sea.

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's. The administration has tried to continue its predecessor's "reset" policy that aimed to improve relations with Russia, but the administration's efforts have been more focused on trying to roll back Russia's influence in the region. The administration has also been working to improve ties with the European Union and other countries in the region.

"The U.S. will continue to pressure 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.

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

While Russia does not heed that warning, these procedures are weaponizing impeachment, making it another elec-

I have carefully examined the evidence presented throughout the inquiry and counter to some, considered our history, our founding documents, and our future. It is clear, Mr. Speaker, that actions, as described in these articles, do not constitute treason, bribery, or high crimes and misdeemous. You simply don't like them.

I will be voting "no" on these articles, band hand will have a hand in serving the needs of the American people.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. Richmond).

Mr. RICHMOND. Madam Speaker, President Trump, on January 20, 2017, raised his hand and swore to protect, preserve, and defend the Constitution. Now we must preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution from him. The President's actions, not to disparage and embarrass the President of the United States, but to defend our precious democratic traditions. I speak today, not because I hate this President, but because I love this body, the people's House.
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I have heard Republicans say: Why are we rushing to judgment? This is not a rush to judgment: it is a rush to justice, and we must not delay.

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

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

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

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

My fear and my prediction is that his actions will cost us.

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

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

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

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

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

Let me say that again. The Speaker of the House said publicly that the driving force behind their actions was: "If we don't impeach the President, he will get reelected.

This wasn't an investigation, Madam Speaker; this was a political crusade. In order to arrive at their Stalinitic, the Democrats still came up with absolutely nothing.

A while ago, the Speaker spoke of the Pledge of Allegiance. The last phrase of the pledge is "justices for all." Justice was not something afforded the President during the investigation. He was denied due process, something the Supreme Court said should be afforded in all congressional investigations. That makes this process illegal and illegitimate.

What a shame. What a sham.

Mr. NADLER, Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GARCIA). Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Madam Speaker, I didn't come to Congress to impeach the President—even when he separated babies from their parents at the border, even when he took money from our troops to build his wall. No, I didn't call for impeachment because I am here to make a difference in the lives of my constituents. Yet, here we are in the middle of a constitutional crisis.

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

Let me stand on my oath that I have sworn to the Constitution and to the American people, and, today, I urge my colleagues to stand with theirs, too.

The Framers of the Constitution included impeachment as a safeguard against a corrupt President whose misconduct could destroy the very foundations of our country. Donald J. Trump abused his power when he obstructed Congress and ordered government officials not to appear before him.

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

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

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 27½ minutes remaining.

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

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

I start out, friends, with this is the largest, most massive coverup of such a list of crimes against our country, and to go far as to hold 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 21-way primary, and he is running third in that race. His opponents are another 20 Democrats. How would anybody dig into that mess of 21 people and decide he is going to go overseas and try to help the corruption here before this money is handed over.

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

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

No, it is the other way around. Democrats' number one proponent of impeachment is Al. GREEN of Texas, and he said those very same things: and they brought this case November 3, the day after Trump was elected.

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

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

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

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

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

And when is it ever right for a President to block a coequal branch of government from investigating this scheme to cheat an election?
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Mr. SCHIFF of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

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

Mr. SCHIFF. I rise in support of today's impeachment proceedings. I want to say to my colleagues: that this is not a business as usual. This is not a motion for the impeachment of a president. As Members of Congress, we took an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. Today, we are asking whether that is possible. My impeachment vote is also a signal to future presidents that they are not above the law and will be held accountable if they violate our Constitution. When our children and grandchildren look back on this historic time, I hope they will know we did not shy away from our oath of office and that we fought to protect our democracy and to preserve our Constitution for them and for future generations.

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of today's impeachment proceedings. We are declaring the need to address a President who is refusing to accept responsibility for his crimes and misdemeanors. We are declaring that we will not allow him to use his office to undermine our Constitution. We are declaring that we will not allow him to cover up his actions and hide the truth from the American people. We are declaring that we will not allow him to obstruct the impeachment process with impunity. We are declaring that we will not allow him to use his office to solicit foreign interference in our elections.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of today's impeachment proceedings. We are declaring that we will not allow him to obstruct the impeachment process with impunity. We are declaring that we will not allow him to use his office to solicit foreign interference in our elections. We are declaring that we will not allow him to cover up his actions and hide the truth from the American people. We are declaring that we will not allow him to use his office to undermine our Constitution. We are declaring that we will not allow him to use that power to uphold the Constitution and the rule of law.

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of today's impeachment proceedings. We are declaring the need to address a President who is refusing to accept responsibility for his crimes and misdemeanors. We are declaring that we will not allow him to use his office to undermine our Constitution. We are declaring that we will not allow him to use that power to uphold the Constitution and the rule of law.
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 conduct an investigation, the President, take it to court. Let the third branch of government decide. They are the rule.

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. House Republicans are not absurd but, rather, frightening: House Democrats, today, are setting a dangerous precedent. If the President is not above impeachment, then 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 defense aid and other military aid and other security aid to Ukraine. This was done as the President was threatening to suspend a meeting with President Zelensky of Ukraine unless he agreed to investigate his political rival. Military aid and other security aid is critical to our national security. The House voted in favor of this aid package, despite President Trump’s threat of its withholding.

In this moment, the future of our democracy hangs in the balance. 

When constitutional boundaries are broken, it’s we—living, breathing people within our institutions who must rise to defend our democracy. It is this accountability that prevents creeping authoritarianism and protects our representative democracy, where no one, including the President, is above the law.

It’s up to the Congress, the first branch of government, to apply the remedy that the Constitution prescribes, because the threats to our democracy are real and present. The eyes of history are upon us.

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

Mr. COFFIER. Madam Speaker, as we begin the beginning of this impeachment inquiry, it has been extremely troubling to see the partisan way in which Democrats have carried out this entire process.

I am voting “no” because the President from now on an impeachment has arrived. These abuses threaten the integrity of our elections, corrupt our diplomacy, and undermine our national security.

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

We sometimes regard constitutional checks and balances as the imperfect underpinnings of our democracy. In fact, they’re not fixed. They’re not indestructible. The President has demonstrated this beyond all doubt.

It’s up to the Congress, the first branch of government, to apply the remedy that the Constitution prescribes, because the threats to our democracy are real and present.

With this vote, we affirm that no one, including the President, is above the law.

Madam Speaker, impeachment was designed by our framers as the ultimate constitutional protection against presidential misconduct, reserved, as North Carolina’s James Iredell put it, for “acts of great injury to the community.” The impeachable acts the framers envisioned were not disputed policy positions, as disastrous as they might be, nor flaws in character, as deep as those might be, but acts that threaten the very foundation of the country and Constitution we vowed to protect.

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of this sham process and these illegiti- 

mately drafted Articles of Impeachment. These articles were written and built on a rep- 

port that was drafted with biased pre- 
sumptions, cherry-picked witnesses, and vastly disputed facts.

The President did not commit any impeachable offense, and it is clear for all of us to see through the now very 
well-known transcript. This rigged process sets a concerning precedent for 

impeachable offenses moving forward, and I wholeheartedly oppose these baseless Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California, Mr. Peters.

Mr. PETERS. Madam Speaker, many have lamented that this effort is not bipartisan, but that is on my Repub- 

lican colleagues.

Republicans refuse to seek the truth. They have sought to avoid the truth. They have demeaned and in- 

sulted witnesses, patriots, warriors, and career diplomats who have pro- 

vided 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 will decline to come and testify before the Judiciary Committee. To send his counsel, to question witnesses. He declined to do so.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan. Mr. Kil- 

dee.

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, this is a sad day for our country and for our 

American people. Today, I vote to impeach Donald Trump, but in strong opposition to this pro- 

cess.

I did not come here to Congress to im- 

peach a President of the United States, but, sadly, the President’s misconduct leaves us no choice but to follow the 

Constitution.

I have two grandchildren. My grand- 

daughter, Caitlin, is 8, and my grand- 

collar, Colin, is 4. Some day a long time from now, they will ask me about this 

day. They will ask about the time a 

President put himself above the law.

His behavior has jeovardized the in- 

dependence of our judiciary, the powers of his office, betrayed the public trust, and undermined Amer- 

ica’s national security at risk, and placed his 

personal and political gain. No Presi- 

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In this moment in our history, the Constitution is clear: The remedy for such misconduct by a President is im- 

peachment.

But in November 14, Speaker Pelosi informed the press that the President 

should prove his innocence when she stated: Mr. President, if you have any- 

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that the accused can call witnesses to testify on their behalf, but the Repub-

licans and the President were continu- 

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process.

The Sixth Amendment guarantees the right of the defendant to face their 

accuser, but not only have the Demo- 

crats prohibited Republicans and the President from questioning the so-

called whistleblower, his identity has been kept secret.

Before Members take this historic vote today, one week before Christmas, I 

warn Members to keep this in mind: When Jesus was falsely accused of tres-

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dent is above the law.
I represent the Fifth District of Vir­ginia, which boasts to so many Founding Fathers whose vision shaped the great country we are living in today.

Thomas Jefferson and James Mad­ison are not around to see what their creation has become, but I don’t think they would be pleased to see Congress subverting the will of democracy by holding an impeachment vote because the majority party simply cannot ac­cept the 2016 election.

Instead of wasting the taxpayers’ time and money on spurious investiga­tions, we could have passed legislation to address the issues that the American public actually care about.

Tomorrow, we might have a vote on the USMCA, which we should have passed months ago had it not been for the obstruction and delays from Demo­crats who 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 car­reerist 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.

We are the people’s Congress. That is not the way to serve the United States of America.

And, Madam Speaker, to my col­leagues who do just that, I offer a quote Thomas Paine wrote in ‘The Cri­psect the 2018 election.

in Moscow at the Kremlin.

in Washington. Eighty percent of these litany of other issues tha.t Americans

in my district and other districts suf­fer.

Democracy has become. but I don’t think today.

Foundin­K Fathers whose vision shaped the United States of America.

To believe the United States of America.

vote for the Articles of Impeach­ment.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker. I yield 1/2 minutes to the gen­tleman from North Carolina (Mr. MUR­PHY).

Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina.

Madam Speaker. I rise in opposition to these baseless Articles of impeachment and the unprecedented process that has been used in this effort to impeach­ment the duly elected President of the United States.

It is a mockery of American justice.

In 1788, one of our Founding Fathers, Alexander Hamilton, wrote in the Fed­eralist Papers

in many ways, impeachment will connect itself with the preceding facts . . . and in such cases, there will always be the great­est danger that the decision will be regulated more by the comparable strength of parties, majoritv and minority. than by real dem­onstrations of innocence or guilt.

What does this mean? It means that the majority can exert its influence regard­less of justice.

In this statement, Hamilton warned us about the danger of mob rule.

Democrats have a criminal and have been searching for a crime for 3 years, but this President has not committed a crime.

As the leader of American foreign policy, the President has a constitu­tional obligation to root out corrup­tion in countries to which we provide aid.

This is not an abuse of power. It is his job.

One of the articles is obstruction of Congress. Our only thing that has been obstructed is that this President’s right to due process.

I don’t blame the President for refus­ing to participate in this guilty­until 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 seeks to block which is complicity in 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

Mr. MURPHY. Madam Speaker. I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (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 reported. Trump insists that he did nothing wrong. That is a prom­ise to continue his long pattern of abuse of power and obstruction of Con­gress.

Impeachment is our only recourse.

Mr. COLLINS. Madam Speaker. I yield 2 minutes to the gentle­man from Colorado (Mr. BUCK), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. BUCK. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COL­LINS) for yielding.

Today, Democrats lower the bar for impeachment.

Under this standard, a President can be impeached in the absence of a crime, without due process, and for asserting a legally. constitutionally recognized privilege.

History shows Democrat Presidents have abused power and undermined de­mocracy to win elections, and yet they have not been impeached.

President Franklin Roosevelt used the IRS to target his political oppo­nents. His son later admitted FDR used the IRS “as a weapon of political re­tribution.”

President John F. Kennedy used the 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 eavesdropping 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 FBI, JFK, LBJ, and Obama, Republic 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 demand the Ist requests, and that Attorney General Holder and others testified, unlike now.

Madam Speaker. I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KILTY).

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Madam Speaker, today is a solemn day in American democracy. It is a day that none of us hoped for when we came to Congress, but the events of today are something that each of us knows we were prepared to execute the duties of the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

This is the oath that binds the men and women of the 116th Congress, as our country and our people defend her. A clear and present threat to American democracy is what brings us here. This is the oath that each of us took in our election: this was our Founding Fathers' oath.

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 Kingslake, Diane in Flossmoor, "yes" for Kathy in Monrovia, Kathryn in Crete, and Jimmy in Park Forest.

The facts are simple. The path forward is clear. There is no other 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. RUSCHENBERGER) as a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. RUSCHENBERGER. 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 terrorized that President Trump is going to win re-election.

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 court house. 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 lied about his position as chairman to leak phone records of Ranking Member DEVIN NUNES? How about the fact that he dumped over 8,000 pages of documents on Republicans less than 48 hours before a hearing? That is the abuse of power.

And obstruction? I would prosecute the Democrats for obstruction. How are the facts that the Judiciary Committee Democrats voted down my request to subpoena the whistleblower? How are the facts that Chairman NADLER refused every single Republican request for a fact witness? That is obstruction of Congress.

So, again, let me be clear: Today is nothing more than a political hit job.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, once again, I hear a lot of attacks on Demo­cratic Members of Congress, but not one single word of substantive defense of the President's conduct.

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

Mr. CONWAY. Madam Speaker, each of us here took an oath to protect the Constitution of the United States, not the President, and not our political party.

Today, history will judge. Did we abide that oath?

To extort a foreign country to investi­gate your political opponent is an uncon­stitutional abuse of power. To so­licit foreign interference in an Amer­ican election is an unconstitutional abuse of power.

The need to protect against just such abuses prompted the Founding Fathers to grant the sole power of impeachment to this House.

The delicate balance of power that underpins our democracy is threatened when a President disregards the Con­stitution by usurping Congress's power in order to cover up illegal behavior. In doing that, President Trump violated his oath.

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

Mr. DAVIDSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I hear new colleagues say they didn't run for Congress to impeach the President. Well, may be not originally, but, unfortu­nately, from the moment proceedings began, after the fourth vote to launch an impeachment inquiry, today's vote was inevitable. Many of them cam­paigned on it.

I love this country with a soldier's passion. I came here to defend freedom, to deny due process to anyone. I came here to solve problems and change the broken status quo, not to yield to those like Presi­dent Donald Trump, who deliver on promises to put America back on the losing end of a prosperity that has made and kept our country free.

For months now, Americans have heard speculation about the Presi­dent's motives in Ukraine. Despite months of effort, dozens of hearings, and countless documents, Americans have not seen proof that the President committed a high crime or a mis­deemeanor.

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 gentlewoman from New York has 1 hour and 2 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Georgia has 2 hours and 3 minutes remaining.

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

Ms. VEZA­LUEZ. Madam Speaker, the facts are clear. The President of the United States withheld $363 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 our 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. If the dealings of Hunter Eiden were nothing but a star chamber, the Democratic majority literally looked themselves in the basement of this building, hiding from the American people. When my colleagues and I refused to stand for it, Democrats moved to public hearing, but denied us questions, denied us witnesses, and denied the President any meaningful opportunity to defend himself.

With this complete abuse of process, the Democratic majority has produced the most discredited whistleblower complaint to the production of Articles of Impeachment against a President of the United States. Not since Andrew Johnson has a President been so vilified. If we choose to turn a blind eye to this impeachment, we have failed the people who sent us here. Never before has the Democratic majority has produced 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 Article of Impeachment, yet this majority will do just fine looking around the corner.

No one understands that better than us, for whom I have great respect. And I agree with the comments she made on March 6 of just this year: "Impediment is so divisive to the country that unless there is something so treasonous and overwhelming and bipartisan, I don't think we should go down that path because it divides the Nation."

That is exactly what has happened. When we walk out of here tonight, we all know how this is going to go. The Democrats are voting for this. Not one Republican is breaking. This is not bipartisan.

The American people are disgusted with the United States House of Representatives, and they deserve shame upon this body today by moving forward with this impeachment.

"NAZI Hunter Biden is a gentlemonster. I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL)."

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Madam Speaker, the facts in this case are as simple as they are tragic. Witness after witness testified to these facts. No one has credibly refuted them. President Trump tried to coerce Ukraine to interfere in the 2020 elections. He used the power of his office for personal political gain. By withholding aid to Ukraine, the President has endangered our allies and undermined our own national security. When he got caught, the President attempted to cover up the crime and shut down any investigation by obstructing Congress.

We have overwhelming evidence that this President poses an urgent threat to our elections, to our national security, and to the rule of law. Congress must vote to impeach him to protect our constitutional Republic. There is no alternative.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, the only urgent threat to this body is the clock and the calendar and the desire to impeach the President before we go home for Christmas.

"Madam Speaker, I yield 1/4 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVID P. ROE)."

Mr. DAVID P. ROE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today is a sad day in the people's House. Since Donald Trump was elected in 2016, Democrats have been on a crusade to stop him by any means.

I believe the American people are the most important people on this Earth. They believe that everyone should be treated equally under the law, no matter what job or color, President or factory worker—fair. This process has been anything but fair. I have sat in meetings watching that then-candidate Donald Trump colluded with Russians to interfere with our democratic process. I have sat and watched the dollars spent on the Mueller investigation: no collusion.

I am proud to have fought against this charade every step of the way, and I will proudly vote no today.

Ms. BONAMICI. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI).

Ms. BONAMICI. Madam Speaker, I take seriously my oath to uphold and defend the Constitution, and I do not take today's proceedings lightly.

The Founding Fathers included the impeachment process in the Constitution to uphold our values and to maintain the checks and balances that are essential to the 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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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 of Representatives, the people's House, is vested by the Constitution with the power of impeachment to balance the power of the Presidency. Without this essential duty, the President could easily expand his office without any regard for the law.

On January 3, 2019, every Member of the House swore an oath to defend the Constitution, and this week, we are being asked to do just that.

When allegations arose that the President tried to coerce a foreign government to help undermine the 2020 election, the House carried out its duty to investigate a potential abuse of power, but the President refused to cooperate and forbade his administration from doing so, obstructing Congress from carrying out our sworn responsibility.

If these actions bear no consequence, future Presidents may act without constraints and American democracy will be at an end. Therefore, compelled by my sworn duty to defend the Constitution, I will vote to impeach this President.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. Yoho), my friend.

Mr. 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 223 years ago.

The Constitution rightly sets a high bar for impeachment, but the integrity of the process also depends on the ability of the legislators to vote their minds, independent of party politics.

Removing a President is too important and lawmakers are given too much latitude to define "high crimes and misdemeanors" for it to be any other way. Otherwise, excessively partisan politicians could overturn an election simply because the President is a member of the opposite and opposing party.
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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 murmur 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 unavailing for our Nation. He warned the danger when "You are apprehensive of foreign interference, intrigue, influence. So am I—but then as elections happen, the danger of foreign influence recurs."

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mrs. Lawrence).

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Madam Speaker, today's power is being written. The facts are conclusive: The President attempted to use the power of the powerful to force Ukraine to influence our 2020 election.

In the process, President Trump jeopardized our national security and withheld vital military assistance intended to prevent further Russian aggression in the region.

However, as our committees—including the Committee on Oversight and Reform, of which I am a member—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 obstruct 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 President Trump in 2020, over 200 years ago, they went to great lengths to ensure future Presidents will be forced to answer to the constitutional responsibility. I stand today in support of the two Articles of Impeachment.

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

Mr. OLINE. Madam Speaker, today is a sad day for this body, for the voters who sent me here last November, and for our Constitution.

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 and engaged in the activity that they specifically warned against: the misuse of the constitutional power of impeachment. Written for one party's political gain.

Our Constitution is the very foundation of our Republic. Its assurance of self-determination has been the shining beacon by which our Nation has charted its course over the last two centuries.

Please note a new democratic experiment, struggling to survive to the greatest Nation on Earth, America has been blessed, over 200 years, not by government, but by the ingenuity, the bravery, and the faith of its people, content in the fact as one nation, under God, Indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

So it is the people who determine our President, not we the Judicial Committee nor we the Congress. The President today, history is being written. The question: Is he qualified to hold this Constitution and for the people? Do we not have that proof today. Thomas Jefferson said: "I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but in the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education."

But rather than educate, this majority has chosen today to obfuscate with honor, immendo, and speculation. And when history looks back on this shameful period for this House, it will judged for what it truly is: the hijacking of the country, by the majority, of our Constitution and the powers it so solemnly 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 future and their votes that their votes should not be bound by the decisions of their party but by the Constitution.

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, and 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 unconstitutio

Historians will marvel how some Members of Congress continued to stand by this man; how they put blind, unyielding loyalty or the President above their duty to defend the Constitution, how they made absurd and false arguments, how they tried to obstruct these proceedings; and how, instead of pushing back when their party fell, as often as elections happen, the party line was defended, even when it was against the American people.

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 counterparts are desperately trying to convey.

Today, will be remembered as the day that the Democrat, claiming a false moral supremacy over the desire of the American people to address a derisive and orchestrated plan to overturn a Presidential election.

It will be the first time in history that a party paraded out their Ivy League academicians to explain to 31 States and almost 50 million people that their voices 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." Democratic attempt to change history will never undo that.

To God bless the greatest country in the world, the United States of America.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I would remind the gentleman that the impeachment clause is placed in the Constitution to protect the people and our form of government against a President who would subvert our constitutional liberties in between elections.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. Green).

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, and still I rise.

Madam Speaker, I rise because I love my country, and, Madam Speaker, shall any man be above justice? That is the question posed in 1787 by George Mason at the Constitutional Convention.

Shall any man be beyond justice? Madam Speaker, if this President is allowed to thwart the efforts of Congress
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Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker. I urge my colleagues to please “yes” on these Articles of Impeachment.

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

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker. I rise today on this dark day in the United States House of Representatives to vote my opposition to the sham 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 south-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 bringing revenue to the President’s election 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 me and vote “no” on the Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, all we keep hearing from the other side are attacks on the process and questions of our motives. We do not hear, because we cannot hear, because they cannot articulate a real defense of the President’s actions. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. Pressley).

Ms. PRESSLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to protect our democracy. Today, we take a stand against corruption and abuses of power. What we are doing here today is not only patriotic, it is uniquely American. America is a story of ordinary people combating abuses of power with a steadfast pursuit of justice.

Throughout our history, the oppressed have been the most powerful position in the world for personal gain. We do not serve our veterans in this Chamber almost on a daily basis. Do we ever follow their lead, where we serve the people of the United States and uphold the Constitution, not as Republicans or Democrats, but as Americans?

We should learn from their sense of duty and responsibility to country and democracy, not political party. Doing nothing here, Madam Speaker, is not an option. Looking away from these crimes against our country is not an option.

This is about protecting the future of our Nation and our democracy from corruption, abuse of power, criminal coverups, and bribery. Madam Speaker, this vote is also for my sons and the future of so many generations. I urge my colleagues to please “yes” on these Articles of Impeachment.

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

Mr. BUCHANAN. Madam Speaker, I will vote today against both Articles of Impeachment because they are without merit and setting a dangerous precedent for our country. This political vendetta is an abuse of the impeachment process and would subvert the votes of 65 million Americans.

Just because the President’s opponents are afraid that he will win reelection is not a reason to impeach him. They have not ever addressed the truths and the facts. After there was nothing done to get the money, guess what? They got the money. That is the fact. That is what they don’t want to deal with. That is where we are today.

So let’s continue to see how the sham was perpetrated. That is what many of our Members are talking about.

Madam Speaker, I rise today on this dark day in the House and was continued over these past several months, with the sham process which did not follow a partisan precedent—no due process; closed-door depositions, even though nothing in this investigation was classified; and leaking only details that fit their narrative. This sham process began without a formal vote in the House and was continued over these past several months, with the sham process which did not follow a partisan precedent—no due process; closed-door depositions, even though nothing in this investigation was classified; and leaking only details that fit their narrative.

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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.

President abused his power when he used his official office and power to ask a foreign government to interfere in our elections for personal gain and to benefit himself. He then lied, then he tried to cover it up.

Today we say no more. Today we say we will not allow this President to abuse his power and endanger our nation's security. To say that no one is above the law, not even this President.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 15 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PICCIO).

Mr. PERRY. Madam Speaker, since before inauguration, the press and Members of this Congress have been for impeachment. However, some were already voted against 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 isn't. Today I will vote to impeach President Trump for abuse of power and obstruction of justice.

Mr. CASTEN of Illinois. Madam Speaker, this would not be a partisan act. When President Trump stonewalled Congress' investigation to cover up his misconduct, our Attorney General asserted his lack of evidence.

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, that have agreed and that have been part of an agreement to impeach this President.

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

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

Make no mistake, this process did not begin with the whistleblower but before this House is unani­

vote your character. That is how you vote. That is how you vote for your party. That is how you vote for your values.
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age-old political trap of thinking blind partisanship is all that matters. Will you vote to defend the Constitution and our democracy so that President Trump and every future President will know that they are not above the law and will be held accountable for their actions? I have made my choice. I hope every Member puts the defense of our Nation first and joins me.

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak out against this attempt to remove the duly elected President of the United States.

Impeachment is importantly established in our Constitution. The impeachment of a President has only happened three times in the history of the country. Yet, today, for highly political purposes, the House majority is trying to remove President Trump from office based on secondhand, indirect accusations.

The Articles of Impeachment we are voting on today offer no evidence of a crime but, instead, are purposely broad to fit the majority narrative.

Less than 1 year until the next Presidential election, we are being asked to override the choice of the American people. This lop-sided, hyperpartisan, biased impeachment process has been predetermined as an outcome from the very beginning.

This is an unfortunate day in the history of our great country. We must hope this political game does not set a precedent of which to follow in the future.

Surely, there will be disagreements between the President and Congress for many years to come. Instead of unnecessarily dividing our country, as we are seeing today, we should be looking at ways to bring our country together.

Mr. MALDONADO. Madam Speaker, President Trump’s actions are both impeachable and criminal. Although the vote of the Federal Criminal statute is not necessary nor sufficient to justify impeachment, President Trump’s conduct violated the Federal anti bribery 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 that what the President has done is deeply wrong and 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.

Madam Speaker, I yield ½ minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. GUEST).

Mr. GUEST. Madam Speaker, Article II, Section 4 of the United States Constitution states that the President of the United States may be removed from office for treason, bribery, or high crimes and misdemeanors.

As a former prosecutor, I am 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 vote for President because a single party disagreed with the 2016 Presidential election results.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the Articles of Impeachment.

Today, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON).

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I find no pleasure coming to the floor today to consider impeachment. I ran for Congress to represent my community and to serve the country I love.

As a combat veteran and having served 8 years on the Intelligence Committee, I understand the threat that foreign actors can play in our elections. Every elected official must dedicatedly themselves to protecting our democracy. No one should invite a foreign country to interfere with our most sacred act of voting.

It was abuse of power by the President that led him 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 ½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY).

Mr. ROY. Madam Speaker, our Founders intentionally did not embrace recalls or votes of no confidence. Rather, we demand from Congress evidence of high crimes and misdemeanors.

While my colleagues are free to dislike the President, and while they may reasonably view the infamous phone call and negotiations with Ukrainians as something less than perfect, they are not free to impeach for something less than a high crime and misdemeanor.

Nearly 10 months, though, the people are free to decide, and we should let them.

Madam Speaker, the eyes of the world are upon us. The press galleries are full. Our floor is filled with Members.

As the President of the United States may be removed from office for treason, bribery, or high crimes and misdemeanors.

Surely, there will be disagreements about the constitutionality of actions dictated in the name of the President’s personal and political interests and to the detriment of our democracy so that President Trump and every future President will know that they are not above the law and will be held accountable for their actions.

I and my colleagues are free to dislike the President, and while they may reasonably view the infamous phone call and negotiations with Ukrainians as something less than perfect, they are not free to impeach for something less than a high crime and misdemeanor.

Today, Madam Speaker, the eyes of the world are upon us. The press galleries are full. Our floor is filled with Members. What is the world something better than this?

While my colleagues are eloquent about the constitutionality of actions dictated in the name of the President’s personal and political interests and to the detriment of our democracy so that President Trump and every future President will know that they are not above the law and will be held accountable for their actions.

So, I yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY).

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As a combat veteran and having served 8 years on the Intelligence Committee, I understand the threat that foreign actors can play in our elections. Every elected official must dedicatedly themselves to protecting our democracy. No one should invite a foreign country to interfere with our most sacred act of voting.

This is the conduct by Congress failing to do its job that should be impeached. One might ask if America would be better off taking the first $350 names out of the phonebook to represent us in the United States House than what is on display here today.

Today is not a dark day because the American people know this. Washington is broken. And we are taking our country back.

Today, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from California (Ms. MATSUO).
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Mr. MATHUI. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart. I came to this House to serve the great people of Sacramento and to build a better future for our children and grandchildren, including my grandkids, Anna and Bobby.

The facts before us are crystal clear. We heard testimony from 17 brave patriots who voice our democracy and the Constitution. They testified that President Trump threatened to withhold congressionally approved money in exchange for dirt on a political rival and, worse, that he continues to invite foreign powers to violate our sovereignty.

On its face, these are impeachable offenses that represent a clear and present danger to our country. That is why the only answer is to act now. We need to stand together and stop President Trump from becoming the most powerful despot in the history of the country.

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 when the American people are disaffected with their government, the primary tool that the Constitution gives them to make a choice is their vote. On November 8, 2016, Americans from every part of this Nation packed the polls to elect Donald J. Trump to be their President. Did he honor the trust of our country? He has obstructed justice, invited foreign corruption and interference in our elections, and betrayed the Constitution and the trust of the American people.

When the American people are dissatisfied with the way their government is operating, they have the right to demand accountability from their representatives. Unfettered authority has turned the executive branch into a rogue state. The investigations and hearings conducted by the House Intelligence and Judiciary Committees provide overwhelming evidence that President Trump abused his power and endangered our country.

The investigations and hearings conducted by the U.S. House of Representatives, the U.S. Senate, and the U.S. government are clear evidence of the fact that we are in the presence of a constitutional crisis.

I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Sterling D. Haga).

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Jim Jordan).

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Speaker, for the sake of our Constitution, for the sake of our country, for the sake of our principles, for the sake of our children, for the sake of our nation, and for the sake of the American people worth? Because when the American people are disaffected with their government, the primary tool that the Constitution gives them to make a choice is their vote. On November 8, 2016, Americans from every part of this Nation packed the polls to elect Donald J. Trump to be their President. Did he honor the trust of our country? He has obstructed justice, invited foreign corruption and interference in our elections, and betrayed the Constitution and the trust of the American people.

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Jim Jordan).

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Speaker, for the sake of our Constitution, for the sake of our country, for the sake of our principles, for the sake of our children, for the sake of our nation, and for the sake of the American people.
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Your whole case is sort of destroyed if there's cost. Somebody if there was no pressure felt: yet, we don't seem to get that part on this floor debate too.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. Gianforte).

Mr. GIANFORTE. Madam Speaker, today this Chamber is pushing through the most partisan, baseless Articles of Impeachment in our history.

House Democrats' hyperpartisan impeachment has been a sham since day one, driven by those whose bitter rage against President Trump has blinded their better judgment.

The fact is they resolved to overturn the results of the 2016 election the day President Trump won. Earlier this year, Speaker Pelosi said: "Impeachment is so divisive to the country that unless there's something so compelling and overwhelming and bipartisan, I don't think we should go down that path."

None of those standards have been met.

The committee hearings were a scripted, substance-free, made-for-TV show. They would be comedy if impeachment weren't so serious and grave. Witnesses denied awareness of an impeachable offense. And because the majority has failed to make the case for impeachment, there is no bipartisan support.

Compelling? Overwhelming? Bipartisan? Speaker Pelosi has not met her own standards for impeachment. If impeachment wasn't so serious and grave, we would be. Despite Democrats testing and tweaking their impeachment message, the American people have rejected it.

I will vote against this partisan impeachment sham. Let's get back to the work that the American people sent us here to do on this sad day of an impeachment charade.

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

Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise on a sad day for America, a sad day for Texas, and a very sad day for the people I represent. I am not gleeful for today.

I came to Congress to lower the costs of health care, to make sure our children get a 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, watching our democracy crumble and rot from within.

That is not the America the world knows and loves, and it is certainly not the America we would be proud to have our future generations inherit. And that is why, today, I must vote to impeach the President of the United States and fulfill my oath to the Constitution.

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

Mr. HURD of Texas. Madam Speaker, throughout this process, the American people have learned of binding 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 another's integrity. Today, a process that will be set: impeachment becoming a weaponized political tool.

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

This institution has a fabled history of placing legislation in play 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. Davis).

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, this is, indeed, a sad day for our country. This is, indeed, a sad day for America. But it is a good day for our Constitution.

It is a sad day, but our country becomes President Trump has defiled our Constitution, our rules, our requirements, and our precedents.

It is clear that President Trump places himself above the law, above our Constitution. And above the expectations of the American people.

At my last townhall meeting, which was held Saturday, December 15, at Malcolm X College in Chicago, someone asked the question: What is our position on impeachment?

Madam Speaker, every person there rose and said: Impeach.

When I speak, I speak for the people of the Seventh District of Illinois, and my vote will be impeachment. Impeach.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. Gohmert).

Mr. GOHMET of Texas. Madam Speaker, in 2008, Hillary Clinton was sent to Ukraine, open and announce an investigation into her campaign finances. It was a green light to Russia to invade Georgia.

What happened? Bush put sanctions on Russia to teach them a lesson.

What happened after that? Well, in March of 2009, Hillary Clinton was sent to Ukraine to announce that she would release $391 million in military aid. The Obama administration did.

What happened? Bush put sanctions on Russia to teach them a lesson.

And what do you do? Oh, yeah, you send blankets and MREs. They can eat. Or freely: You, President of the United States, to Russia with a reset button to deal with the Russians.

This is a truce, 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. It will be used for political battles. It will be used for political battles.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I am deeply concerned that any Member of this 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. He has abused the power of his office by soliciting a bribe from a foreign leader to interfere in an election, and he is afraid he could not win honorably, fairly, or freely. You, President of the United States, open and announces an investigation of my political rival, and I, President of the United States, will release $350 million in military aid and give you the stature-amplifying White House meeting that you need.

This is a this-for-that, something-for-nothing transaction. Soliciting a bribe from a foreign leader is an abuse of power and a Federal crime.

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my Republican colleagues who voted against impeachment and the rule of law under difficult circumstances. Madam Speaker, it is a
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I would cast in my tenure as a Repub­lican member of Congress, and I am not doing so now, but, no, they want to get out of here before Christmas, so it is okay to rush the process.

I am ashamed to be part of this today, even as I vote against the impeach­ment. My constituents are call­ing every day mad as hell, saying we should be ashamed that this historic Chamber has fallen so low as to allow something like this to happen.

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

Madam Speaker, my friend, the gentle­man from Georgia, has a tagline about the clock and the calendar. Madam Speaker, this is not about the clock and the calendar. It is about cor­ruption and the Constitution. It is about a President who abuses power to coerce an ally to intervene in our elec­tion and poses a continuing threat to the integrity of our next election.

The President’s defense is built on three pillars, and when those three pil­lars fall, the entire defense of the President collapses.

First, they claim there was no quid pro quo. Well, let’s get something right. President Trump conditioned a White House visit and military aid on President Zelensky’s public announce­ment of the investigations. Ambas­sador William Taylor wrote at the time, “I think the President is seeking security assistance for help with a po­litical campaign.”

A reporter asked White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney if there had been a quid pro quo here, and he re­plied, “We do that all the time. Get over it.” The President refused to help Ukraine to help his reelection campaign. Impeachment is a con­stitutional remedy for these actions.

The evidence, again, is undisputed. Ukraine knew about the hold on the military assistance within hours of the President’s July 25 call. Laura Cooper, the Department of Defense testified under oath that on July 26 the State Department sent two emails to the De­partment of Defense notifying them that Ukrainian officials were asking, “Thank you! This is the answer. The Ukrainians understood exactly what the President was asking. He wanted a per­sonal political favor, and so the first defense falls.

Second, the minority claims that the Ukrainians didn’t know about the hold. The evidence, again, is undisputed. Ukrainians knew about the hold on the military assistance within hours of the President’s July 25 call, and he re­plied, “We do that all the time. Get over it.”

As a nation, we have no other alter­native. We must protect our Consti­tution and the integrity of the United States of America.

In his own words: “No intelligent person believes what he is saying.”

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. KEVIN HERRIN).

Mr. KEVIN HERRIN of Oklahoma. Pub­lic hearings began November 13. Less than a month later, Speaker PELOSI an­nounced Articles of Impeachment on December 9, saying the investigation had revealed enough information to move forward with impeachment.

Let’s think about that 22-day inves­tigation. Six of those days were weekend­ends where the hearings weren’t hap­pening, and the House wasn’t in ses­sion. Seven of those days were week­days that the House was in recess, in­cluding the week of Thanksgiving. Two of those days were fly-in days, where Congress didn’t hold hearings. So out of the 22 days, just 7 days were used to investigate, debate, and vote on the impeachment of the duly elected leader of our country.

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With our national security and the information at risk, we must act, not because of the clock and the calendar, but to fight against corruption and for continued self-government by the American people.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I would just point out that, to believe everything that was just said, you have to also believe that President Zelensky is a pathological liar.

I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN).

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, we are not debating impeachment of an American President today. Your minds are already made up. The Democrat majority has had a verdict, impeachment looking for a crime since the inauguration.

The Washington Post ran the headline, "The Campaign to Impeach President Trump Has Begun" just 1½ minutes before President Trump took the oath of office.

The freshman Congresswoman from Michigan, Mr. NADLER, I would say, is not aware of support for the campaign to impeach. "We are going to impeach the mother-blank" shortly after she was sworn in. 

Madam Speaker, 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 and opinion, 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 NDAs voted on by both parties in this Chamber.

So in the simplest terms, we are impeaching the President for doing something we just did. Give me a break. We have wasted precious time we were given to serve the American people while he 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) is 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 temper, possessed of considerable talents, having the advantage of military habits—deeply in his ordinary demeanour—known to have scouted in private at the principles of liberty—when such a man is seen to mount the hobb-yhorse of popularity—to join in the cry of danger to liberty—to take every opportunity of embarrassing the general government and bringing it under the influence of a faction—and fall in with all the nonsense of the zealots of the day—it may justly be suspected that his object is to throw things into confusion that he may ride the storm and direct the whirlwind." These are the words of Alexander Hamilton written in 1792. Could we find a more perfect description of the present danger emanating from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue? The Framers crafted a Constitution that contemplated free and fair elections for the highest office in the land, but also afforded the Congress with a power to remove a President who abused the powers of his office for personal gain, who compromised the public trust by betraying our Nation's security or who sought to undermine our democratic system by seeking foreign intervention in the conduct of our elections.

I would say that the Founders could have little imagined that a single President might have done all of these things, except the evidence clearly and sadly proved this is exactly what this President has done. Hamilton, among others, warned and predicted the rise of Donald Trump with a staggering prescience.

"When wronging freedom from a king, the drafters of our Constitution designed a government in which ambition was made to check ambition, in which no branch of government would predominate over another, and no man would be allowed to be above the law, including the President, especially the President, since with whom the danger be greatest is with the officer charged with being our Commander in Chief."

Over the course of the last 3 months, we have found incontrovertible evidence that President Trump abused his power by pressuring the newly elected President of Ukraine to announce an investigation into President Trump's political rival, Joe Biden, with the hopes of defeating Mr. Biden in the 2020 Presidential election and enhancing his own prospects for reelection. He didn't even need the investigation to be undertaken, just simply announced to the public, the smear of his opponent would be enough.

To effectuate this scheme, President Trump withheld two official acts of vital importance the day that President Zelensky took office. The President with-held a White House meeting that Ukraine desperately sought to bolster its standing on the world stage. And even more perniciously, President Trump suspended hundreds of millions of dollars of military aid approved by this Congress to coerce Ukraine into doing his electoral dirty work.

The President of the United States was willing to sacrifice our national security for a critical strategic partner at war in order to improve his reelection prospects. But for the courage of someone willing to blow the whistle, he would have succeeded. But the American people have a great sense of fairness. I promise you. Hopefully, they will demand the full Mueller Report and its findings. And they will vote in November 2020 to make sure that this sort of thing never happens again.

This Russian effort to interfere in our elections didn't deter Donald Trump. Not only did candidate Trump welcome that effort, but he made full use of it, building it into his campaign plan and his messaging strategy. And then he sought to cover it up.

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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 России 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 next conversation, 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 cares only about big stuff that benefits him personally, like the big stuff in Ukraine, like a 'war with Russia.'

The diplomat noted that there was big stuff in Ukraine, like a war with Russia.

And Sondland replied that the President cared only about big stuff that benefits him personally, like the "Biden investigation that Mr. Giuliani was pushing.""' In that short conversation, we learned everything we need to know about the 45th President of the United States. He doesn't care about Ukraine or the impact on our national security caused by withholding military aid to that country fighting for its democratic life. All that matters to this President is what affects him personally, his political survival 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 Chinese company 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 purusing these sham investigations on behalf of his client, the President. Choose the President and his men plot on. The danger persists. The risk is real. Our democracy is at peril.

Many of my colleagues appear to have made their choice: to protect the President, to enable him to be above the law, to empower this President to do it again as long as it is in the service of their party and their power. They have made their choice, despite this President and the White House stonewalling every subpoena, every request for witnesses and testimony from this co-equal branch of government.

They have made their choice, knowing that to allow this President to obstruct Congress will empower him and any other President that follows to be as corrupt, as negligent, as abusive of the power of the Presidency as they choose. They have made their choice, and I believe they will rue the day that they did.

When Donald J. Trump was sworn in on January 20, 2017, he repeated these words: "I am a very stable genius." It will be a genius who will faithfully execute the of the President of the United States, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States."

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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.

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, the gentleman from Missouri. Madam Speaker, I come from a State that raising corn and cotton, cockleburs and algirmont.

Your frothy eloquence neither convinces nor satisfies me. I am from the Show Me State. You have to show me.

The only thing that you all have shown so far is that you are about to impeach a duly elected President who has done nothing wrong.

Democrats are not impeaching the President because they are scared for our republic or that he has committed a crime; they are impeaching him because they choose to impeach. They choose to impeach because they believe, despite all that they have seen, that he can't beat him.

In fact, one of my Democrat colleagues is quoted as stating: "I am concerned if we don't impeach him, he will get reelected."

This kind of rhetoric is disgusting. Impeachment is not a political weapon, and any Member who votes for impeachment should be ashamed today.

You cannot undo the results of the 2016 election simply because your candidate lost.

And I thank God she didn't.

Over the last 3 years, unemployment has dropped to the lowest point in generations, we are seeing better trade agreements with our trading partners, and record numbers of taxes and regulations that stifle economic growth have been rolled back, all thanks to President Trump's leadership and commitment.

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

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 15 seconds to the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. Smith of Missouri. Madam Speaker, this is very important. We shouldn't be surprised. Democrats have introduced Articles of Impeachment against five of our last six Republican Presidents.

They are the party of impeachment. The Democrats are the party of impeachment.
December 18, 2019

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Once again, Members are admonished to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL). Mr. SWALWELL. Madam Speaker, Donald Trump is using the Presidency to put his own personal gain above our national interests.

He is using our taxpayer dollars and foreign interference to cheat the next election, and it jeopardizes our national security and integrity at the ballot box.

Not a single fact in this case is seriously in dispute.

I ask my colleagues: Who sent his personal lawyer to Ukraine to investigate a political rival? Who fired an ambassador who stood in his way? Who conditioned a White House meeting on investigations only personally benefiting him and not the national interest? Who cut off military aid to an ally that desperately needed it? Who pressured President Zelensky to conduct those investigations? Who stood on the White House lawn and asked not only Ukraine to investigate his rival, but also China? Who has buried evidence and blocked witnesses from testifying? And who is still today sending his personal lawyer to Ukraine to dig up dirt and rig an election?

The answer to all of those questions is President Donald Trump.

This is a crime spree in progress, but we know how to stop it: courage.

Our election integrity is at stake. Our national security is at stake. The Speaker pro tempore. The gentleman from California (Mr. COSAL). Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the detail.

Amid the BBB.

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I am back. I also noticed I have a new manager on the other side. Who, as I came back in from getting a quick bite, I noticed gave an eloquent defense of his side of this story that we'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.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLER). Mr. KELLER. Madam Speaker, today will forever be remembered as a stain on our Republic.

These impeachment proceedings are not based upon facts, evidence, reason, or any inappropriate or impeachable referrals by our President. Instead, the actions being taken by those favoring impeachment are a product of their disdain for President Trump, his America First agenda, and, particularly, a disdain by the other party for the 63 million Americans who elected him as President.

Again, these Articles of impeachment are not based on any facts but, rather, on hearsay, presumptions, inimical, and feelings, feelings by Democrats and careerists and also those who have wanted President Trump removed from office since the day he was elected.

In defense of the impeachment, I urge all Members to oppose both Articles of impeachment. It is unclear who will judge those votes for impeachment today more harshly: history or voters.

I want Democrats voting for impeachment today to know that I will be praying for them from the Gospel of Luke, the 23rd chapter, verse 34: "And Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'"

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

Madam Speaker, my colleagues have testified before the Intelligence Committee as career bureaucrats. I want to remind people just who those career bureaucrats are.

They are people like Ambassador Bill Taylor, who has served this country for decades. He graduated top in his class at West Point, served during Vietnam and the war on terrorism.

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

They are people like Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch, who served in dangerous places all over the world, one of the most respected of all our Foreign Service officers.

These are the people who my colleagues would perjoratively 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 this caliber.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Alaska (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 is to vote to go to war or to impeach. Today, I will vote for the Articles of Impeachment.

Over the last few months, I have listened carefully to my constituents. I have weighed all the available information to determine whether or not the President committed any wrongdoing. There are disturbing facts from this administration that informed my decision, including the President’s own words:

His handpicked Ambassador to the European Union testified there was a quid pro quo to withhold aid to Ukraine for an investigation of former Vice President Biden, and that everyone was in the loop.

His own National Security Advisor, John Bolton, which began, not with facts but with this drug deal, as he called it. Then, the President openly acknowledged that China and Ukraine should investigate Mr. Eiden.

There is more evidence point-in-point, so all the President can do is remain in his office of the United States. I have not made this decision lightly, but I must uphold my own oath. I believe the President has failed to uphold his oath of office.

The weight of history, my belief in the Constitution of the United States, and our own national security interests have led me to this vote.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I appreciate anyone 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 be brought in by Ambassador Volker to tell the country what happened. Ambassador Golosow is intereeted in determining whether or not the President’s own actions violated the Constitution of the United States.

Mr. GRAHAM of South Carolina (Ms. SPEIER). There is no question the President has weighed all the available information and has decided against impeaching. Today, now, during the earlier rule debate, comes the floor manager of the House Republicans 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. I tell 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, more than a decade ago, I was given the honor to serve as the lead House impeachment manager of the first impeachment of President Clinton. That was a time when Republicans were in the majority, and we were able to do our business. We now have a majority of Democrats. But this is a different time. It is a time when Republicans have a new majority.

There is no question the President has used any and all undemocratic and unfair means necessary to try and remove him from office. I am happy to refer to their testimony as well.

Madam Speaker, I am now happy to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WIGGINS).
Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWES).

Mr. LEWES. 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 6, 1965, for the signing of the Voting Rights Act, we chose that day. When we came here on August 28, 1963, for the March on Washington, it was joyful. We met with a young President, President John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

When we came here on August 6, 1965, for the signing of the Voting Rights Act, we chose that day. Today is the fourth impeachment-resolution, and I yield to the other side and their superior imaginations.

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

Mr. WEINSTRUP. Madam Speaker, since 2016, America has seen a pattern of failed and disproven attacks and allegations against President Trump. Today is the fourth impeachment-resolution vote since President Trump took office. It is yet another attempt to remove a President who has refused to concede the results of an election, and it is a predetermined conclusion of impeachment, a conclusion built on political bias, accusations, and innuendo rather than facts. These repetitive and false allegations reveal a political obsession disguised as some kind of righteous oversight.

When they didn’t win at the ballot box, they pursued a Russian collusion narrative that Special Counsel Robert Mueller had to waste time and taxpayer dollars to prove false. When the Russian collusion malicious deception didn’t work, Madam Speaker, Democrats sought a new path forward to impeach President Trump. They created a made-for-TV set of hearings complete with witness auditions held in the basement of the Capitol.

Despite all of their efforts, the charges the House considers today lack evidence to support them. There wasn’t even a witness who said a crime or impeachable offense was committed. Madam Speaker, I remind my colleagues that Ambassador Volker said that the attacks on Joe Biden were meritless, and he tried to persuade Mr. Giuliani that there was no factual support for them.

Mr. LEWES. Madam Speaker, it is not just my colleagues that believed there was no factual support. When they didn’t win at the ballot box, they pursued a Russian collusion narrative that Special Counsel Robert Mueller had to waste time and taxpayer dollars to prove false. When the Russian collusion malicious deception didn’t work, Madam Speaker, Democrats sought a new path forward to impeach President Trump.

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On September 9, Congress starts to investigate the President’s actions, and the jig is up.

On September 11, the lid is suddenly released without explanation—over 2 months later.

When you read the call transcript and follow the timeline, you have laid out, guilty is guilty. Nothing changed during that time regarding the President’s supposed concerns over corruption.

So let’s be clear. The military aid was released because the President got caught.

But getting caught doesn’t get you off the hook.

And I ask my colleagues: Is attempted murder a crime? Is attempted robbery a crime? Is attempted extortion a crime, by a President a crime? Yes, it is.

The only question now is whether we will all of my courage to stand up for our country and impeach the President of the United States.

My Democratic colleagues claim the Russians influenced the outcome of the 2016 election, but based on their corruption 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.

Today, my Democratic colleagues seek to overturn an election by forcing a vote that will forever be a stain on our Nation.

My Democratic colleagues claim the Constitution describes such conduct as “high crimes and misdemeanors,” but because it pertains to high office and relates to the misuse of that office, we need not rely on any other branch or body to engage our determinations. We have “the sole power to try all impeachments.”

The Constitution grants the House “the sole power of impeachment” and the Senate “the sole power to try all impeachments.”

We in the House are empowered to charge impeachable conduct. The Constitution describes such conduct as “high crimes and misdemeanors,” but because it pertains to high office and relates to the misuse of that office, we need not rely on any other branch or body to engage our determinations.

Today is a day that diminishes the reputation and stature of the United States House of Representatives, a day I never dreamed I would see.

Every impeachment proceeding—every impeachment proceeding has made it up and called it a parity.

Every impeachment proceeding—every impeachment proceeding will find the moral courage to stand up for our country and impeach the President of the United States.

Mr. SCHIFF of Georgia, 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 depose-

I remind my colleagues that, when they were in the majority, they conducted depositions, but they were different in this respect:

In the depositions we conducted in the Intelligence Committee, over 100 Members were able to participate. That is how secret they were. We revealed all of the transcripts of those depositions.

The repetition of this falsehood does not make it true; it only makes the falsehood that much more deliberate.

I urge all Members to vote “no” on impeachment.

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The majority waves around a report drawn up by the Democratic staff con­curred as a matter of fact. When they needed backup for their approach, they carded out liberal professors with anims 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 ac­counting 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 (Mr. CUÉNDOLES).

Mr. CUÉNDOLES. 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 when I work hard to live by that oath and give the 39th Di­strict the representation it deserves.

In my time in Congress, I have concluded that impeach­ment is a serious undertaking and must be done with incredible care. What we have seen is not compelling. It is not overwhelm­ning, and the process is undoubt­edly a bipartisan, 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. JUDY CHU of California. Madam Speaker, we know that President Trump withheld 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 operate at every turn, even when or­dered by a court.

Mr. SCHIFF. A president that any Presi­dent can abuse their power to interfere in our elections is an existential threat to our democracy.

Therefore, in fulfillment of my own oath of office, it is with solemn purpose today that I vote to impeach President Donald Trump.

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

Mr. GIBBS. Madam Speaker, Demo­crats started with quid pro quo. That didn’t work so well. Then it was bribery and extortion. Then they brought the witnesses in, and not one could an­swer if they saw any evidence of the leg­is­lative branch, or the Constitu­tion, was thwarting the quid pro quo.

It was just silence. Then the witnesses testified they heard from so-and-so. When the Democrats brought their star witnesses in, Ambassador Sondland, when asked, he said: I presumed the aid was held up.

Mr. SCHIFTS. It’s testimony. Testimony was all hearsay, conjec­ture, and assumptions. So now it is abuse of power with no underlying crime, which is opinion. Abuse of power to the Democrats is they don’t like his policies, or he treated a reporter harsh­ly, or he said a politician lied.

Obstruction of Congress: there are three coequal branches of government. When the executive branch and the legis­lative branch have an impasse, that is when the judicial branch intervenes. The President didn’t do that. The Democrats didn’t take that route.

Every President, including George Washington, could have been impeached based on these factless articles.

There is no crime, and there is no victim as Ukraine received their aid before the December 30 deadline and no legal or ethical wrongdoing.

This isn’t about the rule of law. It is politics at its worst. It is disgraceful. It is time to end the charade and scorn on the American people.

Madam Speaker, I urge everybody to vote no on these Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I am happy to remind the Members of Ambas­sador Sondland’s testimony.

He posed the question: Was there a quid pro quo?

The answer is yes.

When he was asked about a quid pro quo involving the military aid, he said it was as clear as two plus two equals four.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, my adult son, Ian Schakowsky, will always credit for my decision last June to support the impeachment inquiry. It had never been my goal to impeach a President, but Ian made such a compel­ling case. He reminded me of the oath I have taken 11 times now to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. He said: Mom, this is not about politics, and this is not about party.

Pushing back against my arguments, he said: This has nothing to do with our final outcome. It is about doing the right thing, even if others don’t.

He made me see that it was about my country, my modest place in history.

I want to thank my son for helping me do the right thing today to vote to impeach the President of the United States, Donald Trump, because no American is above the law.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I also would like to remind the gentleman from California that Mr. Sondland also said he had no direct ev­i­dence; he presumed that that was going on.

I guess we are back to presumption again.

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

Mr. FLORES. Madam Speaker, on this side of the aisle, 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
is the lengths the majority has gone to appease the radical, Socialist wing of their party.

Second, the only overwhelming feature about this sham is the abuse of power by the majority and the reckless disregard for fairness by the majority throughout this entire circus.

Finally, the only bipartisan activity related to this sham will be the votes against these flimsy Articles of Impeachment.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in opposing these deplorable Articles of Impeachment and to demand that the House get back to working on the priorities that hardworking American families care about the most.

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

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Madam Speaker, I spent 12 years on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, which now is in the hands of a Democrat. My bipartisan cooperation with the Republican chairman was widely recognized, and it comes to national security, there is no room for bipartisan politics.

All 17 witnesses—mostly Trump appointees—told the same story during the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence hearings, each testifying that our Commander in Chief jeopardized American national security for the sake of his reelection. The President held hostage military aid for the fight against a common enemy, Russia.

He willfully obstructed Congress’ constitutionally prescribed impeachment powers.

Over the last 2 years, I restated calls to begin impeachment proceedings, and I resent those who say this is about reversing the election. This isn’t about whether or not you like Trump. It is about upholding our Constitution.

Allowing this conduct to go unquestioned sets a dangerous precedent and permanently damages our system of checks and balances. No one is above the law. President Trump’s actions are a clear threat to our national security and democracy. We must uphold our oath of office and support these articles of impeachment.

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

Mr. WALBERG. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to these baseless Articles of Impeachment.

Our Founding Fathers never intended impeachment to be a one-sided political weapon. Sadly, the majority has reduced this serious constitutional action to a purely partisan tactic to take down President Trump.

History will not be kind to the vote today. It will forever be remembered as the Senate Joe McCartys of our time, so blindered by their hatred of President Trump that they abandoned American rights of due process, fairness, and just decency. The precedent of Joe McCarthy, they assaulted the Constitution, tookgoo in secret hearings, blocked evidence, and switched charges like rogue prosecutors. Ultimately, they chose abuse of power because they practice it so well.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I will vote in favor of impeachment today. The facts are irrefutable, and the ongoing obstruction and coverup is shameful.

Our parents came here as immigrants, and I am proud to live in a nation that rewarded their hard work by providing a better future for their sisters and me. As a first generation American and now a Member of Congress, a story like mine is only made possible by a nation that upholds the rule of law and truly lives out the values enshrined in our Constitution.

Mona and I are blessed with three wonderful daughters and five grandkids. Because of this living legacy and the legacy I intend to pass on to my grandchildren, my vote today is rooted in protecting their future.

The underpinnings for impeachment are real and historic. Trump has perverted the rule of law, abused his power, and engaged in a coverup. No amount of misdirection, lies, disinformation, tantrums, and cries of victimization by Trump and others can undo the abuse of power and obstruction of Congress that remains clear and present. The President leaves us no choice but to vote to impeach, so that we can protect our democracy and correct the damage that is already done.

I will vote in favor of the impeachment of Donald J. Trump, not as a partisan act but as a serious, urgent, and necessary one.

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

Mr. BRADY. Madam Speaker, 21 years ago this week, I spoke here on impeachment. Sadly, history will not treat Democrats well. They will forever be remembered as the Senator Joe McCartys of our time, so blinded by their hatred of President Trump that they abandoned American rights of due process, fairness, and just decency.

A prominent of Joe McCarthy, they assaulted the Constitution, tookgo into secret hearings, blocked evidence, and switched charges like rogue prosecutors. Ultimately, they chose abuse of power because they practice it so well.

President Trump committed no 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 raw 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. DOUGGERT).

Mr. DOUGGERT. Tyranny rarely appears full borne. It arises, it encroaches as freedom ebb. Our great Founders sought to protect us from tyranny with a carefully crafted system of checks and balances.

But now along comes a President who actually says he is constitutionally empowered to do whatever he wants, that he can neither be prosecuted nor tossed out of office for any crime, and that he can totally ignore any impeachment proceeding of which he deems himself above.

These are the claims of a wannabe tyrant who has extolled the virtues of tyrants and autocrats from Manila to Moscow.

To advance tyranny, he adopts an open-border policy inviting foreigners to come into our country and intrude in our elections. Foreign nations have their own agendas, especially adversaries like Russia and China.

American citizens should be the only ones determining the fate of America. If the President continues demanding more foreign interference, we will never have truly free elections, and we will not be free.

We act today, recognizing the solemn decision for which the Constitution, and the SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia has the floor for 5½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from California has 5½ minutes remaining.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, before I call my next speaker, may I ask the time remaining.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend from Georgia for his great work in dealing with this very sad day in our country.

Madam Speaker, today, for the third time in our Nation’s history, a President will be impeached. This will be, however, the first time impeachment has been entirely partisan and without merit. This charade is not because Trump is guilty of a high crime or misdemeanor but because one political party doesn’t like him or his policies.

Fact one: We have a divided government, and House Democrats are at war with the executive branch.
December 18, 2019

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FACT TWO: They have been planning for this day since President Trump took office.

FACT THREE: They accused the President first and have spent months looking for a crime.

FACT FOUR: No evidence has been presented of an impeachable offense.

During one of the partisan hearings, a Member of this body asked: If President Trump had evidence of his innocence, why didn't he bring it forward? The Democrats want Americans to believe that our President is guilty until he proves himself innocent. This whole process is unconstitutional.

Today, we have heard both sides, but we need to get the truth. The truth is, the decision of who should be our President should be made by the American people, not Speaker Pelosi, Adam Schiff, and House Democrats.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL).

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend.

As chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, I say that this is a sad day. No one is ghoulful that the President's actions have brought us to this point.

But when you boil it down, we are here today because the President abused the power of his office to help his chances at reelection. He used the enormous weight of the Presidency and American foreign policy to push a foreign government to snarl a political rival. And he got caught.

Why is this conduct so serious? Why has the President's behavior pushed the House of Representatives to exercise one of its most consequential constitutional responsibilities? Because corrupting an American election, particularly in cahoots with a foreign power, means corrupting American democracy.

Our elections are at the heart of our democracy, the foundation of what makes our system of government great. Our Republic can stand only as long as it is free from corruption.

In this case, it is even more serious, because what was the President willing to give up for this advantage? What price was he willing to pay? The price was our national security.

When the President devised a shadow foreign policy that undermined our diplomacy and diplomats; when he held back assistance for Ukraine, which was engaged in a war against Russia; when he pressured a foreign government to interfere in our elections; and when he sacrificed our security and he shook the faith of a loyal ally. He played right into the hands of Vladimir Putin. He weakened our country all because he thought it might help his reelection.

Only the President has that power to corrupt our foreign policy for political gain. The moment he chose to do so, the moment he undermined our security in this scheme to undermine our democracy, this moment he became the violator of our Constitution.

A President who abuses his power for personal gain is exactly what the Framers feared. It is why impeachment is in the Constitution.

We need to pass these articles. The President's actions have left us no choice. He cannot be allowed to undermine our democracy and bear apart the faith that binds us together.

Madam Speaker, I will vote for impeachment.

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

Mr. WELCH. Madam Speaker, we, the people, have a responsibility to promote us together now as it has since the founding of our country, and it is our duty to respect the Constitution of the United States.

Let us all step back from the mud-storm of the moment to recall that, at our country's inception 243 years ago, the concept of a democratic, self-governed 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 survives through the ages was an enormous existential challenge. It was met with the adoption of the Constitution in 1788.

At its heart are two bedrock principles that have served as touchstones for our country ever since. First, it established America as a nation of laws, where no person is above the law. Second, it established the concept of a separation of powers where three coequal branches of government would check each other's actions and be limited 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 sufficiently 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 unambiguous authority 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. BIGGS).

Mr. BIGGS. Madam Speaker, some of my colleagues across the aisle have said, "Hey, where are the facts?" as if we have the burden of proof.

Madam Speaker, it is their burden of proof. It is the Democrats' burden of proof.

But the facts are unchanged. Ukraine received the aid that they were promised and appropriated for. The aid was lawfully disbursed. In fact, it was disbursed within the time limits set by
this Congress. If you wanted it sent to them before September 30, 2019, you should have put that in the legislation. You did not.

The Ukrainians gave nothing in return. The Ukrainian President said he felt no pressure, no coercion, no duress, no conditionality.

What changed? On the day that the aid was released, two anticorruption measures were signed into law by the Ukrainian President, President Zelensky.

Democrats have manufactured this sham and then argue that refusing to cooperate is impeachable. The Supreme Court is currently considering the extent of executive privilege when fighting dubious subpoenas. But instead of taking this stance, while waiting for the Court to rule on the pending case, the Democrats chose to press forward because, simply, they said: ‘We don’t want to wait.’

“We don’t have time,” they say. But failure on their part is an abuse of power that will have grave consequences for our Republic. Whatever else they hold in common, they proceeded with soberness. I am bemused by the Constitution names them as ‘Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misprision of the law.’ Under normal circumstances, the deniability of process shouldn’t need to be discussed. We would have to discuss the credibility of witnesses, the impeachment vote and the violation.

Multiple House Committees have conducted extensive investigations into the President’s conduct. The facts are uncontested. President Trump invited Ukraine to interfere in our presidential election and leveraged desperately needed military aid and a high-profile visit to the White House to promote his scheme. This constitutes an attack on our electoral system and democracy itself. It is a grave assault on our national security. This scheme needs to be viewed in the context of other actions by this President. The Mueller report found multiple instances of obstruction of justice committed by the President, and that obstruction has continued. Furthermore, the President has continued to violate the Emoluments Clause by profiting from foreign and domestic business transactions from the moment he took office, and that violation has continued.

With the Ukraine scheme, the President has committed in public view violations that sacrifice national security for his own personal, political gain and then he insisted that he did nothing wrong. His ongoing attack of the whistleblower serves to discourage other whistleblowers from coming forward, his intimidation of witnesses during impeachment proceedings, his orders to witnesses to ignore subpoenas, and his invitation to China to meddle in our next election all indicate that, left unchecked, this President will not change his misconduct. He 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 simply acknowledged the basic fact that trying to sabotage the next presidential election is wrong, and that he would not continue such behavior, we could be discussing the question of waiting until the next election to express our views on his conduct.

This process has been partisan, vindictive, dishonest. In this impeachment, Democrats have lied about the content of the July 25 call; met secretly with the whistleblower; held Bo­vist-style hearings behind closed doors where the Committee on the Judiciary, the committee of instruction, could not attend; and blocked the President’s counsel from participating in the fact-­finding portion of the investigation.

Madam Speaker, it has been a sham from start to finish.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) for a unanimous consent request.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I include my remarks in favor of both Articles of Impeachment.

Every member of Congress swore an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution, and that oath should be the guide for all of us when considering articles of impeachment against the President of the United States. There has been considerable public debate over what constitutes impeachable offenses; the Constitution names them as ‘Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misde­meanors.’ Under normal circumstances, the country could wait until the next election to remove an undesirable president from office. Issues like the President’s Muslim ban, separation of children from their parents at the border, trying to undermine access to health care, cutting funding for education, standing in the way of commonsense gun legislation, or other harmful policy stances are not impeachable offenses, but issues that will be addressed in the 2020 election. However, our founders included impeachment in the Constitution for times when an official’s conduct was egregious; we could not wait for the next election to remove that individual from office. President Trump’s Ukraine scheme was intended to influence the 2020 election. The Mueller report found multiple instances of obstruction of justice by the President, and that obstruction has continued.

We must not allow our democracy to survive, President Trump’s abuse of power cannot be ignored. No one is above the law. No exceptions.

This was not a political decision, this was a political necessity. We are duty bound to report this. We are duty bound to put a stop to tyranny.

Mr. SCOTT. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA).

Mr. LATTA of Ohio. Madam Speaker, this is a sad day for our country, one that our forefathers warned us against.

We have watched this illegitimate impeachment process unfold while making a mockery of our constitutional duties. House Democrats have conducted the most polarizing impeachment process in our Nation’s history.

We have heard that the impeachment process was conducted with the goals of the U.S.-led NATO alliance.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CARSON).

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, as we continue and consider this historic impeachment vote, let’s be clear that the President’s actions seriously jeopardize not only America’s national security but the security of our closest allies. His actions threaten the goals of the U.S.-led NATO alliance.

When our European allies are strong, America is stronger. We are better equipped to protect the Western Hemisphere, to put a stop to tyranny.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, President Trump strengthening this valuable national security objective was not as important as smearing a political rival.

Madam Speaker, President Trump’s actions and attacks on Ukraine are an ongoing threat to our democracy.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA).

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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 Trump. 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 derailed 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 gentleman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY). Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the impeachment of President Donald J. Trump.

President Trump abused the power of his office for his personal and political gain at the expense of our national security.

President Trump's wholesale obstruction of Congress is unprecedented, undisputable, and impeachable. President Trump has hidden his history to openly and completely defy all aspects of the constitutional impeachment process.

In an attempt to cover up his abuse of power, he ordered the entire executive branch not to participate in the inquiry and directed it to defy lawful subpoenas from Congress.

As chairwoman of the Committee on Oversight and Reform, I find this obstruction particularly offensive.

Even President Nixon accepted Congress' impeachment authority and allowed his aides and advisors to produce the documents. As a Congress, Mr. President, Nixon allowed current and former staff to testify in both the House impeachment inquiry and the Senate Watergate investigation, including his chief of staff and White House counsel.

By contrast, President Trump, without any legal basis, directed current and former officials not to cooperate with the House 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 single—one 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 our branch of government, and we have allowed President Trump to elevate himself above the law.

I am not standing in this House today under the Constitution, to impeach President Trump for his blatant abuse of power and his obstruction of Congress.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WOUMACK). Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman for giving me this moment.

Mr. Speaker, years from now, history books will tell of this day. It will tell of our purely partisan effort to remove the President of the United States, an effort not built on a high crime or misdemeanor, not on a process in keeping with the high American standard of due process and equal treatment. This effort is rooted only in the governing party's hatred of a man elected President of the United States.

Members on the other side of the aisle have been in pursuit of this moment since 2016. They are consumed by it. Earlier in this debate, one of our colleagues referred to our President as a "domestic enemy." Our Founders warned us about this day. That is why our Nation has entrusted the future of the country with the outcome of elections, not the will of a party filled with contempt for a "domestic enemy.".

Mr. Speaker, let me be clear: when historians write about this day, it is not written in the context of a nation that lost its way because its elected Members chose hateful partisan politics over the sacred oath that has protected this great Republic since its founding.

Mr. Speaker, yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MALINOWSKI). Mr. MALINOWSKI. Mr. Speaker, in America, when we call the fire department or our children in school, we do not expect a government official to say to us: "I need you to do us a favor, though." Why would we tolerate a President using his awesome power to make foreign policy, when the safety of our country is at stake, not for the people, but for himself?

I will vote to impeach today because President Trump did just that when he shook down a foreign country to criminally investigate his political rival.

If we fail to say that this was wrong, then any President will be free to ask a foreign power—to be it Russia, China, or Iran—to help him hurt his political enemies at home, and every foreign tyrant and kleptocrat will know that America's foreign policy can be bought by doing our President a political favor.

If you believe that our highest duty is to protect America, then search your conscience and ask: Do you want our future Presidents to behave as this one has done?

Do not whisper in the shadows of the Capitol that you disapprove and then defend that conduct here today. Do your duty. Keep your oath. Defend our Constitution.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON). Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, over a month ago, on November 14, I spoke on the impeachment hoax with points true then and still true today.

After over a month of secret investigations into the administration, Democrats have now decided to open these controlled hearings to the public. This continues the deception by Democrats to mislead the American people. It is insulting: no Republican witnesses, no counsel by the President to participate, and full exoneration by courageous President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine.

It is sad that, instead of focusing on funding our military through the National Defense Authorization Act passed only last month by 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 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. GOMEZ). Mr. Speaker, we are here at this moment in our Nation's history because Congress removed the power of our President, 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 his 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
a check on that power. Therefore, we must hold them to account, regardless of party or politics, who sets fire to the very institutions that define our Nation and our values. With this in mind, I will vote "yes" to impeach Donald J. Trump.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1/4 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX).

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 we, as a nation, determine guilt by the high court 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 No. 65 has come true, where he warned: "In many cases, it will connect itself with the pre-existing faction[s] and will enlist all the animosities, partialities, influence, and interest on one side or on the other." In such cases, there will always be the greatest danger that the decision will be regulated more by the comparative strength of parties than by the real demonstrations of innocence or guilt.

After years of investigations, hoaxes, and millions of taxpayer dollars, Democrats found no proof that the President committed a crime—no proof the vague accusations in these articles clearly reflect. A basic prerequisite for impeaching for "high crimes and misdemeanors" is that an actual crime was committed. These empty, baseless articles explodes on the people what this is: a desperate, partisan attempt to avenge the loss of the Democrats' preferred candidate in 2016.

We must respect American voters and reject these articles.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Just a quick fact-check before I yield to my colleagues from Massachusetts.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle claim that no Republican witnesses were allowed to testify. That is, of course, not correct.

In the Intelligence Committee, three of the Republicans vowed to testify: that is, one out of every four of the witnesses were Republican-requested witnesses testified; that is, of course, not correct.

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

Mr. KRATZING. Mr. Speaker, today I reflect on the imperatives of two sons of Massachusetts:

John Adams, who, in one sentence, captured the very foundation of our country, saying, "We are a government of laws, not men—translation: no one is above the law; and John F. Kennedy, who, in his iconic City Upon A Hill address, cautioned that any one of us holding public office would be judged by the high court of history on whether we were truly men and women of courage, with the courage to stand up to our enemies and the courage to stand up to us, as well, to one's associates, the courage to resist public pressure as well as private greed, and on whether we are truly men and women of integrity who never fall short of that.

President Donald Trump, indifferent and disdainful of this sacred trust, conspired to extract personal benefit from his office.

Former President and Vice President Johnson, I honor his oath. I refuse to abandon mine.

On 1799

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I would like to point out very quickly that the only Republican witnesses allowed in the Intelligence Committee hearings were on the Democrats' pre-approved list.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1/5 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. RVN).

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Madam Speaker. I rise in opposition to a partisan sham of an impeachment resolution that is ripping our country apart.

Beginning even before he took office, President Trump has been attacked by our enemies, with no new offense to the Constitution, and deceit by the liberal political elite, including James Comey, Peter Strzok, Lisa Page, Hillary Clinton, and the impeachment zealots in this Congress. The 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 abiding his office: another joke.

Democrats structure these proceedings to deny the President and Republicans in Congress a fair hearing. Then, they accuse the President of obstructing Congress. Look in the mirror, folks! It is not Speaker Pelosi who is obstructing Congress.

The reaction of the American people, that this is contrived and corrupt, was entirely predictable and is entirely correct. I have been so steeped in Ukrainian issues for so long, I know how damaging President Trump's actions were.

But the President's damage does not end there. He has consistently obstructed at every turn of this investigation. This Nation's Founding Fathers fought to be free from a King to turn the President into a monarch.

I will cast my vote consistent with the principles of democracy, the rule of law, and our Constitution. And I urge all of my colleagues to do the same.

May God bless the United States of America.

I stand before you on a serious and solemn day in the House of Representatives. The decision to impeach a President of the United States is of enormous magnitude and the utmost significance. There are few issues that so deeply reflect upon the Constitution and the American system of governance.

My ancestors were African slaves, forced on a transatlantic journey from the coasts of Sierra Leone to the plantations of South Carolina. I know full well that the designers of our Constitution, who were descendants of slavery, to become Members of Congress with the right and duty to weigh in on the most important questions confronting our republic, I will exercise that responsibility here today.

Given my background as a lawyer and former prosecutor, I believe we must look at the relevant law in question before casting a vote. That language comes directly from the Constitution, which sets out the procedures, including the impeachment process. This is a discharge proceeding. Under the Constitution, the President is impeached, and the Senate conducts the trial.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I didn't think I would have to do another fact-check so quickly, but, of course, that was not correct.

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

Mr. MEeks. Madam Speaker, the decision to impeach a President of the United States is of enormous magnitude and utmost significance. There are few issues that so deeply reflect upon the Constitution and the American system of governance.

As a senior member of the United States House Foreign Affairs Committee, I have spent years trying to promote American values of democracy and the rule of law in other parts of the world, including Eastern Europe. Because I have been so steeped in Ukrainian issues for so long, I know how damaging President Trump's actions were.

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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. BACON. Madam Speaker, I am strongly opposed to this impeachment. No law was broken, no high crimes or misdemeanors, no impeachable offenses.

The Ukrainians received aid 1 week prior to the law's requirement, aid that was previously rejected by the administration before it. There was no investigation, and President Zelensky said he received no pressure from the Trump administration ever.

Simply put, there was no quid pro quo and no crime. There was only the majority's disdain for the President, and that is not an impeachable offense.

The elections are in 10 months, but the majority doesn't trust the American people. Too many have said that the impeachment is necessary so that the President is not reelected in 2020, and that is shameless.

Today's vote sets a new precedent for America. In some cases, the majority will use impeachment as a tactic to remove a President simply based on partisan disagreement. Our framers feared this and I strongly oppose it.

I want my statement to be in the RECORD until the end of time to show that I was on the side of the Constitution, that I oppose the majority taking down a duly elected President who committed no crime, and that I defended the truth.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, my colleagues continue to make the argument that the Ukrainians got the money. Yes, the President got caught, but they got the money. No harm, no foul.

It is the equivalent of saying that if you are pulled over by a cop and you attempt to bribe the cop, and the cop doesn't take the money but arrests you, well, where is the crime in that? They didn't get the money.

The question is what my colleagues would have you accept. This is what my colleagues would have you accept, that because the President got caught in the act, we must lock the other way. Of course, that is not the way the law works. That is not the way the Constitution works. That is not the way our oath of office works.

Our oath of office requires us to impeach a President who abuses his power, whether he gets away with it or he gets caught. In this case, he got caught.

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

Mr. NORCROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today at a time of grave concern for the American constitution and 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 had I not been able to point to a system that had stood the test of time.

This past weekend, I joined a bipartisan delegation traveling to Belgium and Luxembourg for the 75th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, a battle in which over 15,000 Americans gave their lives. Today, we are called to preserve the democracy that they so bravely defended.

Over 2 years ago, I was one of the first Members of Congress to vote to advance the inquiry. Since then, I have withheld final judgment as I reviewed the facts and heard the testimony. I believe there is overwhelming evidence well beyond a reasonable doubt that President Donald Trump is guilty in both Articles of Impeachment, abuse of power and obstruction of Congress. Therefore, I will uphold my oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States in favor of impeachment.

It is our solemn responsibility to honor all those who have fought and given their lives to uphold the truth. In America, no one is above the law.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Wow. I just love this, again, potshot it when you can.

Remember, quid pro quo didn't work out really well for them because that was supposedly who had pressure on President Zelensky. In fact, it didn't work out so well, you had to go over it. The majority didn't work out and it is a political weapon.

So, what do we do? We throw it in here, a bribe. It is all in their report. It turns out they had a bribe or if they actually had a crime, it would be in the articles.

Guess what? He doesn't have it. He can't put it in here. This is all fluff and circumstance because they can't come up with the President, and that is what is killing them.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1/4 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON).

Mr. BUCSHON. Madam Speaker, I am opposed to impeaching President Trump since he was elected. He wasn't supposed to win. "How could the voters support him?" they asked.

The American people were told the only way the Speaker would move forward with impeachment was if the case was bipartisan, yet the case for impeachment has been rushed forward by House Democrats and House Republicans.

To be clear, neither of these Articles of Impeachment prove any wrongdoing or impeachable offense has actually taken place. Instead, House Democrats' case rests solely on hearsay testimony and presumptions from cherry-picked witnesses.

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To be clear, neither of these Articles of Impeachment prove any wrongdoing or impeachable offense has actually taken place. Instead, House Democrats' case rests solely on hearsay testimony and presumptions from cherry-picked witnesses.

The Framers of the Constitution never intended impeachment to be used as a tool to settle political and policy differences. That is what elections are for.

This is a sad and dangerous moment in our history, as impeachment is being used to undo the will of the American people and silence the voices of millions of Americans in this Republican Congress. Alexander Hamilton would be ashamed.

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

Mr. CROW. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. Crow).

May God bless the United States of America and all those who serve in its defense.
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.

I have long said and still hold that our constitutional checks and balances are unprecedented. Unless we stand up against the President, we will set the country on a dangerous new course.

My oath, my love of our country, and my duty to honor the sacrifices of those who came before us require me to act.

This impeachment has been a sham and an act of injustice against the President and against 63 million Americans who voted for him.

Mr. BARR. Madam Speaker, our country was founded on the belief in the rule of law and a belief in its strength and the same resolve.

Our Founders’ primal fear was that powerful members of our government would become a mercenary instrument of foreign corruption. That is precisely what this impeachment is.

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 35 seconds to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. HICE).

Mr. HICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, the Democrats’ new definition for impeachment is unprecedented. Unless we stand up against the President, we will set the country on a dangerous new course.

Narrative of subpoenas issued by this House of Representatives and the abuse of the President’s high office is trifling.

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

Ms. ESHEH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to defend our Constitution and our democracy by voting for the two Articles of Impeachment.

The words of our sacred oath define our duty, and those words must be kept.

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

Ms. GILBERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 755.

As a CIA case officer, I used to meet with foreign nationals who were providing vital intelligence to help inform our hardest national security decisions and keep our country safe. These individuals, from countries where terrorists abused their power and defied the rule of law, risked imprisonment and often their very lives to provide to the United States with information to help us, to inform us.

But why? It was their belief in the United States, their belief in our country, the longest-standing democracy in the world, our country, a beacon of hope in the world, a democratic republic founded on a document and the belief in the rule of law and a belief in the people.

Today, I am proud to serve in the people’s House of Representatives and go home-town and again serving our country, that beacon of hope in the world.

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

Mr. BARR. Madam Speaker, don’t be fooled. Democrats are not impeaching the President to protect national security.

Democrats are impeaching the President for following a law that they themselves voted for.

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

Mr. BARR. Madam Speaker, don’t be fooled. Democrats are not impeaching the President to protect national security.

Democrats are impeaching the President for following a law that they themselves voted for.
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world to risk everything because of their belief in our great country.

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. ABBOTT).

Mr. ABBOTT. Madam Speaker, today, many of my Democratic colleagues will be making history, unfortunately, for supporting the first-over 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, 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 diabolical political ploy.

Mr. SCHIFF, Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Los Angeles (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 be above the law and 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, former Vice President Joseph R. Biden.

This impeachment resolution introduces that this President withheld $300 million of taxpayer funds that Congress appropriated for the purpose of providing vital military and security assistance to Ukraine to oppose Russian aggression, another blatant abuse of power.

Our investigations revealed that this President advanced "a discredited theory promoted by Russia alleging that Ukrainian President Zelensky to publicly announce investigations into his political opponents," including evidence that this President absolutely "has no respect for our Constitution and the rule of law," because at every turn, he has shown us who he is.

It is no secret that this President could have been impeached a long time ago.

Today, we stand here with an irrebuttable case and an indisputable set of facts that this President absolutely abused his power and obstructed Congress.

Any other individual who would have been caught conducting themselves in the way this President has would have been prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

It is shameful that any Members of this House are willing to disregard the Constitution, turn a blind eye to hard facts, and ignore a confession from the President himself.

History will remember those who were willing to speak truth to power.

Yes, I called for Trump's impeachment early.

This is our country. Our foremothers and our forefathers shed their blood to build and defend this democracy. I refuse to have it undermined.

I wholeheartedly support this resolution. I am proud that, in the final analysis, justice will have been served in America and Donald Trump will have been impeached.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, reclaiming my time that the gentlewoman did not have, I yield 35 seconds to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. Himes).

Mr. HINES. Madam Speaker, I rise today in anger and hope.

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

The truth is clear to anyone not deliberately looking away. The President withheld military aid and a White House meeting unless and until a vulnerable Ukrainian President announced a_nakedly political investigation.

I didn't matter if the Ukrainians uncovered any wrongdoing: The mere announcement of an investigation would damage his political opponents.

Mr. Trump didn't care about stopping corruption in Ukraine. He never mentioned the word "corruption" once in the infamous July 25 call. This was not an attempt to reduce Ukrainian corruption.

It was an attempt by Donald J. Trump to aim Ukrainian corruption straight at the heart of the Presidential election of 2020.

The President knows this, which is why he has not given this Congress a single email, phone record, or document.

That is not the behavior of a man with nothing to hide. It is, simply and undeniably, contempt of this Congress.

But what makes this Impeachment essential is that without Trump's abuse of power has not stopped. As we speak, he continues to urge foreign interference in our democracy: beseeching China to investigate Biden, sending Rudy Giuliani overseas to chase Russian conspiracy theories.

This morning, the President tweeted, "I did nothing wrong," all caps. He believes it, too. He sees nothing wrong with inviting Russian, Ukrainian, or Chinese interference into our election.

He did it, he continues to do it, and it seems nothing is going to stop him. He will wake up tomorrow and do it again if we don't stop him today.

There is our hope.
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Madmam 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 call to come seconds to speak in this laughable process.

Our President made a campaign promise to drain the swamp, and there are those today relying on swamp creatures’ words to preserve the swamp.

How do you suppress the votes of 65 million people in an electoral landscape where the President is winning back the same line without any factual basis.

I have heard some of the greatest fiction ever spoken here today. If you don’t like the facts, just rewrite them in a parody and repeat.

If the facts are so clear and indisputable, why is the minority leader begging for more witnesses?

You can’t disprove something that never happened.

Mr. Speaker, due to a rushed process and limited debate, I was not allocated time to speak on the Floor ahead of this monumental vote, an opportunity that every member should be afforded.

I have spent two Christmases down range, defending our Constitution and Country, and it is a sad day when something this historic is rushed to our colleagues and will be home in time for the holidays.

I am disappointed in this body for putting their own convenience over the sanctity of our Nation.

I will tell you this: I would rather face attacks from our Nation’s enemies than an attack on our Constitution. This is the first time in history that impeachment proceedings have been completely partisan, shrouded in secrecy, and based on hearsay-said-acusations.

As a former prosecutor, I find it insulting my colleagues have built a case on second-hand accounts, editorials, and opinions. When facts do not support the elements of crime, my experience tells me there is no crime.

Under the Constitution, it is the duty of the prosecution to prove the crime and not the accused to prove its innocence. The House has wasted time and tax dollars on an unfounded witch hunt instead of legislating on behalf of our country.

Upon passage along party lines, the Senate will then be obligated to continue this circus at the expense of the American people.

Today is a stain on this esteemed body for generations to come and a detrimental precedent set for future presidencies.

Today is a day of reckoning and a day the framers of our Constitution warned us about. James Madison foresaw this day when he feared the vague and highly-disputed claims by my colleagues would turn our republic into an unruly parliamentary system in which Congress could remove a president over political differences with only partisan motives as evidence.

The power to impeach the President is the single most important vote that a member of this body can cast. It should not be taken lightly, and it certainly shouldn’t be rushed through the House.

Alexander Hamilton feared the greatest danger of abusing impeachment authority is that the decision would be “regulated more by the comparative strength of parties than the real demonstration of innocence or guilt.”

The fears of our Founding Fathers have manifested in this Chamber today. We face a partisan process that will jeopardize our 243-year experiment at self-government, and I urge my colleagues to come to support the Articles of Impeachment.

First, President Trump attempted to pressure a foreign government to help his reelection campaign.

And second, the President used the powers of his office to obstruct a congressional investigation into that wrongdoing.

The President has falsely claimed he has been denied the chance to defend himself, but at the same time, he is preventing the testimony of witnesses with direct knowledge of the events under investigation.

If the President were innocent, as he claims, surely those witnesses would be able to testify to that. If there had been no quid pro quo, these witnesses could say that. And to Ukraine were not intentionally delayed for improper purposes, they could surely testify to that also.

But rather than giving these witnesses the chance to speak, the President has silenced them. The President has silenced witnesses at the Defense Department. The President has silenced witnesses at the State Department. The President has silenced witnesses at the White House. He even silenced the pragmatic Mick Mulvaney, who uttered at a press conference that there was a quid pro quo and “get over it.”

By choosing to block this testimony, the President is not proving his innocence; he is just proving he is afraid of what they have to say.

As a wise man once said, “the truth will come to light. And it has. It is our duty to act on it.”

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, it is a shame, on the floor of this House, when you accuse somebody and then make them prove they are not guilty of what you are accusing them of.

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

Mr. JOHN W. ROBY of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today, I rise in strong opposition to this partisan impeachment spectacle that just seeks to accomplish what President Trump’s opponents failed to do at the ballot box in 2016.

Our votes today are merely formalizing the decision my colleagues on the other side of the aisle reached 3 years ago. This has been an embarrassment to our country, an insult to our Constitution, and a distraction from the real work we should be accomplishing for the American people.

I stand with the people of Tennessee’s Sixth District in strongly supporting President Trump, and I will vote against the Articles of Impeachment before us today.

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA).

Mr. HUIZENGA. Madam Speaker, in her own words, Speaker Pelosi said impeachment is a swamp. Swampy, overwhelming, and bipartisan. These Articles of Impeachment being considered today by the House fail to meet Speaker Pelosi’s own standards.

Process matters, folks. Representing the people of Gerald Ford’s old district and being a staffer during the Clinton administration, I have an intimate understanding of the effects of impeachment on this Nation. I am ashamed to see my Democratic colleagues whitewash, or maybe I should say “Whitewater.” Bill Clinton’s cooperation with the House of Representatives. That is not exactly what was going on.

This is the most partisan impeachment that we have seen in our Nation’s history.

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December 18, 2019

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

Mr. LONG. Madam Speaker, we have a lot of concern about the country, see a Presidency like this one.

Once the President was sworn in, 19 minutes later, The Washington Post said impeachment begins today. A million women marched the next day in Washington, Bank of America and Starbucks, both who supported Hillary Clinton, had their windows broken out here in Washington because people were so upset that this man was elected President of the United States.

He has had no idea how to water for almost 3 years now, never coming up for a breath of air, just keep pushing him down.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. Ftuchtman).

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Madam Speaker, I yield to Mr. SCHIFF.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, today, in the final day of this House, we are here to bring the President to justice. We are here to bring the President to justice.

I implore my friends from the other side of the aisle to come together. Don't the American people want to come together? Don't they want to come together?

It is the President. not any Member of this House, who has brought us to this sad place. His actions echo in every Chamber and, like a tin can tied to his leg, will rattler behind him through the pages of history. What we do today goes to the heart of the oath we take support all of the constitution, and the evidence beyond per

To the American people. They want so dearly for us to come together for our great Republic and thank our great President. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, today, in the final day of the American people, we have come to impeach.

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Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, today, in the final day of our democracy with these nystenca1. We owe the American people a great day. They want so dearly for us to come together, Don't give the Senate the victory lap. Give the House the victory lap. Vote "no" to impeach. Vote "no" to impeach. Vote "no" to impeach.

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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 plague 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 hononableness, a productivity, and a time of working together.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ROBISON).

Mr. ROBISON. Madam Speaker, today, a duly elected President is being impeached by the House of Representatives for the democratic community by partisanship and not by the facts.

I am proud to stand here with President Donald Trump, and I plan to cast my vote against both Articles of Impeachment.

It is not that the President abused his power. It is my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who are abusing one of the most powerful tools that has been entrusted to Congress in the Constitution by our Founding Fathers.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON).

Mr. OLSON. Madam Speaker, Webster's dictionary defines the star chamber as ‘characterized by secrecy and often being irresponsibly arbitrary and oppressive.’

Sadly, my Democratic friends have turned this Chamber, the people’s Chamber, into the star chamber of the people.

One great example is the most important part of our Members is declarative war. The next one is to impeach a President.

We are hoping Republicans can have every Member stand up and vote, like for Speaker, and say their vote loudly. Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON).

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, while this institution should rightfully ensure the law is followed as a duty its own accord, the impeachment of the legislative branch’s oversight powers in order to achieve political gains.

I caution my colleagues, who have placed political expediency ahead of moderation, their votes later today will forever change this institution. Imagine a future where this body utilizes the most severe of its constitutional tools to continually put the opposition party on trial.

Madam Speaker, the American people have elected their Representatives to be their voice and vote on matters most important to this country. We must collectively focus on these issues, not on the political impulses of a few. This cannot become the new normal. I will be voting a resounding ‘no’ on these Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BROWN).

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 been so 13 times in my 35 years of public service. That oath means everything: to serve and fight for our country and to protect and promote our values.

Yet, President Trump betrayed his oath. He abused his power, the immense power of the Presidency. He threatened our elections by inviting foreign interference. He chose investigating a political rival over defending our national security.

So, today, we must use our power, the extraordinary power endowed by our Constitution and entrusted by the people, the power to impeach. We must hold President Trump accountable or else we will be complicit in undermining our democracy, our security, and our dignity.

His conduct demonstrates his unfitness to serve as Commander in Chief and warrants removal from office. The oath I took as a Member of Congress is the same oath 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 of Illinois. 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 complaint—that has not been met here.

In addition, this process has lacked transparency, due process, and transparency.

We shouldn’t be here today doing this. This is a travesty.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker. I revere the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HARRIS).

Mr. HARRIS of Maryland. Madam Speaker, it is unbelievable to the few Americans who are going to be watching this because they know what the outcome is. We all know what the outcome is.

They are wondering: Why are we trying to negate the vote of 63 million Americans instead of talking about the things that Americans care about: prescription drug coverage, the high cost of prescription underwrite, our health care system, securing our borders, keeping our economy going? These are the things we should be talking about.

No, instead, we are going to pass this resolution tonight and then go home for Christmas vacation instead of doing the job of America.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. WATKINS).

Mr. WATKINS of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I was a political newcomer before this; and just like President Trump, perhaps like me, he was naive to think that this House, that this body, everybody was true and just. That is not the case.

Democrats weren’t saddled by this sudden day. They weren’t waiting for all of the evidence. This was always about politics because they loathe the President because he doesn’t play by their rules. I should have known.

But the fact is Kansas is better, the U.S. is better, and the world is better because of Donald Trump.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mr. CALVET).

Mr. CALVET of California. Madam Speaker, my friends on the other side of the aisle have been clamoring for this day since President Trump was elected.

The refusal for the election results and, later, the findings of the Mueller investigation have brought forth Articles of Impeachment. These were negated by two simple facts, namely, the military aid to Ukraine was provided, and no investigation was ever started.

The real offense is that the President won the election, and their fear is that he will win again, despite all of their efforts.

I will vote against the partisan attempt to overturn the election.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. BURCHETT).

Mr. BURCHETT of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to impeachment against President Donald Trump.
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 passes and pass USMCA that the President and the House Republicans have been working on for over 1 year. I am disappointed in the path Congress chose to go down.

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.

What do they hate the man so much? Maybe it is because of the out-of-control government zone wild; the abuses of FISA, the abuses of the FBI, the abuses in the State Department.

Madam Speaker, it is true that the previous administration they are trying to cover up. It is sad. This is a shameful act in what is supposed to be the law.

Shame on the Democrats. Shame on them for pursuing this.

I ask every Member to vote “no” and to take notice of who votes for these Articles of Impeachment.

Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. ROSE). Mr. ROSE. Madam Speaker, this is a sad day for Americans.

We know this impeachment is a sham. They know this impeachment is a sham. They know we know this impeachment is a sham, and they know that most of the American people know that this impeachment is a sham.

We know that it began the moment the Mueller investigation was closed, long before he ever had a telephone call with any foreign leaders. We have heard the numbers, the numbers from the FBI, the abuses that they validated those very points, yet they persist in trying to overturn the duly elected President of the United States of America’s election.

Mr. SCHEFF, 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.

Apparent, 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 legitimate. What they can’t say was that this President’s conduct was constitutional.

What they can’t say is this President uphold his oath of office.

No, they can’t say that. All they can say is: We don’t like the process, or, Our colleagues are just too happy to impeach. or, It is overturning the will of the public when it is a Republican President.

Interestingly, my colleagues who supported the impeachment of Bill Clinton did not think it was overturning the will of the people. Apparently, this impeachment provision only applies if the people if it is a Republican President.

I would like to give them more credit than that. What is the distinction here is the ser­iousness of the conduct. This remedy is put in the Constitution for a reason. It is not an unconstitutional remedy. It is part of the Constitution.

The only way you can conceive of this remedy as being unconstitutional is if you believe, as the President does, that he is the state, that anything that opposes him opposes the state and is, by definition, anticonstitutional.

But that, of course, is nonsense. But it is more than nonsense; it is dangerous nonsense.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Washington (Ms. SCHRIER). Ms. SCHRIER. Madam Speaker, the people of Washington’s Eighth District sent me to Congress to fight for their families and make thoughtful, evidence-based decisions.

I did not come to Congress to im­peach a President, but evidence is evi­dence, and a balance of power is funda­mental to our democracy.

On my first day in office, like everybody else here, I took an oath to up­hold the Constitution and protect our country. History will judge this mo­ment. Given all the 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 extoration, put in articles. The gen­tlemen 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 in the press. The fact of the matter is 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 July 25 phone call.

But also during that time, the Russia conspiracy hoax was exposed. Obstruc­tion of justice charges were abandoned after the Mueller hearings fell flat.

So, after 2 years, 14 lawyers, 40 agents, 2,500 subpoenas, 500 warrants, and 17 lies in a FISA warrant application, they had nothing to show for it.

Unleashed by the facts and uninter­ested in governing, the bench marched on. So here we are today. We have no evidence. 562 witnesses and no new 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 calling 30 million voters that you don’t respect their vote.

Voters in States like mine, who not that long ago used to send Democrats to this august Chamber but, recently, have families no longer happy 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 omen­nously 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, un­like the President who won the results of 2016.

I wonder if my colleagues recognize the irony that their impeachment ver­dict 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. SCHEFF, Madam Speaker, I re­serve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentle­man from New York (Mr. ZELDIN).

Mr. ZELDIN. Madam Speaker, this impeachment is an embarrassment for House Democrats.

On the substance, the Democrats claim that their case is unconstituted,
relying on presumptions, hearsay, and 3 percent of the story trying to connect dots that actually aren’t connected.

Some inconvenient truths: President Zelensky didn’t know that there was a hold on aid until August 29. The aid gets released shortly thereafter, and Ukraine didn’t have to do anything in order to get that aid released: President Zelensky says no demand, no quid pro quo, no pressure.

But Democrats want the public to ignore the other 97 percent of this story. It doesn’t work like that.

Senate Democrats want new witnesses to show why there was a hold on aid. That’s 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 about Trump’s corrupt oligarch hunting Biden for credit for

Next, the Democrats claim the Republicans are arguing that it was Ukraine and not Russia that wanted to interfere and was interfering in the 2016 election. They want you to ignore Avakov and Chaly’s words, with that Chaly worked with the Ukrainian Embassy, origins of the Steele dossier, the black ledger, and more.

The problem with all of this is that the American public are smarter than Democrats and信用 for

Now, the company wanted to hire Hunter Biden because they wanted to carry favor while there was this ongoing corruption investigation. Enter Joe Biden. He gets that that Ukrainian first threatening the loss of $1 billion if it didn’t happen immediately, which it was.

Now, Democrats believe that Burisma and Biden should be immune from prosecution. Never again should that conflict of interest ever happen. And our governments should be looking together to get to the bottom of all of this.

This has also been a total disaster on the process. From getting a Federal worker to file a whistleblower complaint to Schiff’s made-up version of the July 25 call.

In the closed-door interviews, Schiff was prosecutor, judge, jury, and witness coach. Every day he would setting America drunk on his favorite cocktail, three ingredients: cherry-picking facts, cherry-picking key facts, and misstating evidence.

In the depostitions and in the public hearings, the President’s counsel was not invited to attend, present evidence, or cross-examine witnesses; and Republicans weren’t allowed to call witnesses like Hunter Biden, Joe Biden, and others.

Then there was the House Judiciary debacle where Schiff couldn’t even show up to present his reports. He had to have one of his staffers present it for him. This impeachment is ripping our country in half. It is fatally flawed on the process, the substance, the intentions, and the consequences. It is a total Schiff show. I encourage all my colleagues to vote “no.”

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS).

Mr. MEADOWS. Madam Speaker, today, as we sit here debating impeachment, all they want to talk about is the Constitution and Alexander Hamilton. During the last 30 days I have heard more about Hamilton from my Democrat colleagues, and until then closest these colleagues came to Hamilton was a $10 bill. All of a sudden, what we have are these strict constitutionalists on the other side of the aisle.

Madam Speaker, this has nothing to do with the Constitution. It has nothing to do with anything but raw politics.

There is only one person on the other side of the aisle who got seven Pinocchios for not telling the truth. No one on this side of the aisle got that during this impeachment process, Madam Speaker.

The American people need to understand two key facts: The Democrats in control set their own rules of evidence. They said, what we need to do for impeachment is to have compelling evidence and bipartisan support.

They don’t have either of those two things. They failed the rules that they made 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 pressure. We have got 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 61 times, and ultimately, he said, I presume that is what is the President meant.

Madam Speaker, I can tell you that there are not facts here to support it. But what is more important than that, Madam Speaker, is that here we are today and we have bipartisan opposition to impeachment, not bipartisan support.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, my colleagues oppose want the American people to think that this is a sad and somber day. This is a sad day. It is a sad day for this institution 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 232 Democrats deserve to decide who the President of the United States should be and disenfranchise 47 million people.

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 instead of helping the American people, they voted to impeach, instead by silencing the will of those who did: the American people.

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

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Speaker, Robert Mueller lays out facts from 2017 that constitute Obstruction of Justice that the Democrats did not indict, only Congress can apply the law to those facts.

So why did 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 in 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 attempts to extort Ukraine was secretive and futile. 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 felt immune from impeachment.

It is the Democrats.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RATCLIFFE).

Mr. RATCLIFFE. Madam Speaker, do you know who doesn’t think the Democrats have enough evidence to impeach President Trump today?

It is the Democrats.

Sure, here in the House, Democrats running this inquiry have declared they have done everything needed and
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they have all the testimony and evidence necessary to impeach him.

But right now, down the hall, Democrats in the Senate are saying the exact opposite. They are complaining they need more evidence and more testimony, because Senate Democrats know that House Democrats have built them a house-of-cards impeachment, an impeachment built by the same Democrats who told America: Trust us, President Trump committed treason; he is a Russian agent, and we have got evidence—which, of course, proved to be totally false.

To quote the favorite catchphrase of one Member of this House, they got caught.

Along the way, those same Democrats said: Trust us, the FISA law and court weren’t abused by the Obama administration using a Democratic opposition research dossier against the Trump campaign and President Trump—again, totally false, and, again, caught.

When Democrats started this latest impeachment inquiry, they said: Trust us. We have not yet spoken to the whistleblower.

Again, totally false, and they got caught.

Sadly, my Democratic colleagues have placed their own credibility in the hands of Members of this body who have no credibility left. Members whom nobody trusts because they keep getting caught betraying America.

Unless a bolt of courage and integrity strikes that side of the room in the next hour, history will reflect that he will be the third President to be impeached. History may also shortly reflect that we, the Congress, held him to account.

The president’s egregious abuse of power undermined the integrity of our elections, which are the foundation of our democracy, and threatened our national security.

Furthermore, his refusal to cooperate with the House’s impeachment inquiry represents an unprecedented level of contempt for the law and violation of our democratic norms. What the president obstructed wasn’t trivial, nor was it about concealing private conduct—he obstructed a Congressional investigation of great significance to our national interest and infringed on Congress’ 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 gentleman from New York (Ms. CLARKE) for a unanimous consent request.

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

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Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) for a unanimous consent request.

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) for a unanimous consent request.

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Ms. WEXTON) for a unanimous consent request.

(Ms. WEXTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Ms. WEXTON) for a unanimous consent request.

(Ms. WEXTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Ms. WEXTON) for a unanimous consent request.

(Ms. WEXTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)
I did not come to Congress to impeach the President, but his actions have left us no choice. The facts are uncontested and the truth is inescapable.

The President leveraged the highest office in the land for personal political gain. In doing so, he jeopardized our national security, undermined the integrity of our elections, and betrayed the public trust. The Framers gave Congress the power of impeachment precisely to protect our democracy from this kind of abuse of power.

The President's pattern of misconduct outlined in the articles of impeachment, and his unrepentant contempt for the rule of law, make it clear that he poses a clear and present danger to the very foundations of our democracy.

Voting to impeach the President is not an easy decision, nor is it one I take lightly. I will cast my vote tonight with a heavy heart and a solemn sense of duty to protect our Constitution.

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

Mr. PASSELLL. Mr. Speaker, we are here today because of the failure of so many to cast aside narrow ambition to combat the threats standing before us. Offered the chance to investigate this government together, the President and his party stonewalled and obstructed. We are here today because we choose comfort over courage and abandon the Constitution.

This is the ongoing tragedy of our age. And it is ongoing. The matter is now solely in our hands and belongs to us and us alone. The buck has stopped. Many have invoked the judgment of history as an anodyne to this threat, but the threat to democracy is here today, not tomorrow.

We need not and we must not await the verdict of time for Donald Trump's abuse of power and obstruction. We can offer that verdict right now, and we are.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASSELLL).

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Speaker, the Democrats forgot two key things. They forgot the facts and they forgot about fairness. Facts will never change. We have the call transcript, no questions asked, we have the two guys on the call who have repeatedly said there was no pressure and there was no pushing; we have the fact Ukraine didn't know aid was held up at the time of the phone call, and, most importantly, Ukraine took no action and no announcement of investigation to get the aid released.

But Democrats don't care. They don't care about the facts, and they sure don't care about the process.

There was no subpoena power for Republicans and no Republican witnesses. During the depositions Republicans were presented with getting all their questions answered, but Democrats got every one of their questions, the witnesses responded to every one of theirs, but not Republicans! The chairman wouldn't let them.

Of course, there was the whistleblower, the anonymous whistleblower, who was biased against the President, who worked for Joe Biden, and who was never brought in to testify—the guy who started it all.

This is really about that the President has been driving these guys crazy because he is getting things done. He is doing what he said he was going to do. He is having results. Taxes have been cut, regulations have been reduced, unemployment is at its lowest level in 50 years, the economy is growing. Gorka and Kavanaugh are on Court, we are out of the Iran deal, the embassy is in Jerusalem, hostages are home from North Korea, and a new NAPTA agreement coming tomorrow.

But guess what, Madam Speaker? When you drain the swamp, the swamp fights back. And they started attacking the President before the election even. On July 23, 2016, the FBI opened the Russian investigation. The FBI spied on four American citizens associated with the Trump campaign. The FBI took the dossier to the FISA court. The dossier they already knew was false, they took it to the court and lied to the court 17 times.

Guess what, Madam Speaker? Three days ago, on national television, even James Comey had to admit the FISA was wrong. Yesterday—1 day ago—the FISA court sent the FBI a letter and says: Straighten up and get your act together when it comes to the FISA application process.

Think about this: the attacks started then, and they have continued right up until today. But, Madam Speaker, I want you to think about something: the individual who said that the FISA process was fine, the dossier was fine, and the Russian investigation was fine, that same individual ran the impeachment process. That same individual's staff met with the whistleblower, that same individual is the only guy in Congress who knows who the whistleblower is, and they released the phone records of the President's personal attorney, released the phone records of the FISA court. The President's personal attorney, released the phone records of the President's personal attorney, released the phone records of the person who lied to the court.

Think about this: the President was impeached for a crime that didn't exist. He didn't do nothing.

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Madam Speaker, I rise to defend the Constitution and support these Articles of Impeachment. The President abused the power of his office by corruptly putting his own political interest ahead of our Nation's security.

He brokered unconstitutionally authorized military aid to coerce Ukraine to launch a phony investigation into his political rival.

In the months since, he has waged a campaign of absolute obstruction against Congress' constitutional authority, ordering all Federal officials to defy subpoenas and refusing to produce even a single document.

Madam Speaker, I take no joy in today's impeachment vote or that the imposter in the Oval Office is no longer in the White House. This is a sad moment for our Nation. Only twice before has the House voted to impeach a President, and never before on accusations of compromising our Nation's security. I hope, in the Senate, prosecution and defense can call and cross-examine witnesses, and the Senators will hear the evidence and make their decisions without prejudice or pre-judgment.

This is a solemn moment, but our system of checks and balances was designed for times like these. I have faith that our Constitution will guide us on the path ahead.

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

Mr. NUNES. Madam Speaker, as the Democrats now stand in their attempt to remove the President, began on Trump's Inauguration Day. When the Democrats semi-official mouthpiece, The Washington Post, declared: 'The campaign to impeach President Trump has begun.'

For years, the Democrats tried to expel the President with the preposterous accusation that he was a Russian agent. As detailed by Inspector General Horowitz, dishonest intelligence officials weaponized a smear spread by the Democrats to gain approval of a spying operation against the Trump campaign.

As they falsely accused the Trump campaign of colluding with Russians, the Democrats also colluded with Russians to manufacture these allegations in the infamous Steele dossier. They even tried to get made pictures of Trump from Russian pranksters.

When the Russian collusion hoax, the Democrats had everything going for them: Federal investigations run by Trump haters; an endless supply of media cheerleaders; and a galaxy of leftwing interest groups amplifying their ridiculous messages.

Yet, even with all those messages at their disposal, the Russia conspiracy theory collapsed, so they quickly concocted plan B.

The Ukraine hoax was based on a supposed whistleblower who colluded with Democrats, who was simply used by the Democrats to reflect their political interest.
beforehand with the Democrats. The Democrats that prevented Congress from interviewing the whistleblower while conducting bizarre secret depositions and selectively leaking testimony to discredited media hacks. The Democrats showcased the most useless witnesses in public hearings that somehow reduced support for impeachment.

It is not easy to make a coup attempt boring, but the Democrats found a way. As it turns out, the American people don’t think a routine phone call with a foreign leader is the best basis for ousting a U.S. President.

The Democrats also put forth ever-changing accusations against the President, including campaign finance violations, quid pro quo, election interference, bribery, and extortion.

Eventually, they ended up with the ridiculous charges we consider today, abuse of power, an utterly meaningless term, and obstruction of Congress. One Democrat has pronounced the President guilty simply because he won’t cooperate with their plan to railroad him.

But the only thing President Trump is guilty of is beating Hillary Clinton. The Democrats refuse to accept that. For now. They are indicating they will continue their impeachment efforts even after this one falls in the U.S. Senate.

Madam Speaker, after all their deceit, phony investigations, ginned-up crises, and manufactured outrage, the Democrats need a long period of rehabilitation. They must learn how to do something productive for the American people.

However, you want to remove our voice from office. Well, our voice will be heard. I strongly suspect that it will be because we will fight back against this corrupt and unfair impeachment process.

How dare you, the liberal elites, the condescending bureaucrats, and every other kind of swamp critter in this godforsaken place tell the American public who the President should be. That is the job of the American vote.

This whole flipping rodeo is a sham and a shame, and it will not be forgotten.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL), chairman of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. NEAL. Madam Speaker, it is deeply unfortunate that we have to undertake this impeachment proceeding that unfolds this evening, but the part we play in this process is not optional.

Among other things, as the Intelligence Committee and Committee on the Judiciary have painstakingly documented, the President has indeed abused his authority, and he has indeed obstructed justice.

He threatened to withhold congressionally appropriated U.S. taxpayer dollars from an ally under attack from Russia unless they agreed to interfere in our election on his behalf. He has expressed no remorse, and he continues to maintain that his behavior was “perfect,” while simultaneously obstructing legitimate congressional oversight and subpoenas and blocking members of his administration from providing truthful testimony to investigators.

His actions are so far beyond the pale that they have no recourse with no redlining recourse except impeachment, and so we shall impeach because, as drastic and as unseemly as this step is, our country faces even greater long-term risk if we fail to do so.

We cannot excuse a President who self-entitled to disregard or break the law with impunity. We are a nation built upon the rule of law, not the law of rulers.

The Framers gave us their best effort in 1787, and, indeed, it was an extraordinary one. The Constitution they set down wasn’t perfect, but it founded a republic that has endured and thrived with exceptional stability.

But the only thing President Trump is guilty of is beating Hillary Clinton. The Democrats refuse to accept that. For now, they are indicating they will continue their impeachment efforts even after this one falls in the U.S. Senate.

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This whole flipping rodeo is a sham and a shame, and it will not be forgotten.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. HERCK)

Mr. HECK. Madam Speaker, this week, Americans are busy finishing up their Christmas shopping mostly for their children, or if they are lucky enough to have them, their grandchildren. And high school and college students are taking final exams and sweating out the results.

While thinking about those who follow and what our obligation is to them, and that got me to thinking about those who came before and how they might have seen their obligation to us, people like my grandfather, who our family believes literally was born on the boat on the way over here from Germany, or my father, who fought in World War II against the very people that his grandfather had left.

We are all here today, all of us, because someone before us sacrificed so that they could journey here and build a new life in this unique land. We are here today because those immigrants and their children were dedicated not just to the land of America, but to the promise of opportunity secured by self-government, choosing our own leaders in free and fair elections, and the rule of law under the Constitution.
Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS).

Mrs. DEMINGS. Madam Speaker, we live in the greatest democracy in the world, and I am convinced that the overwhelming majority of Americans are good, decent people who work hard and play by the rules. But then, we have people who have no respect for the law, people who have little regard for the rules, people who spend a lot of their time trying to figure out how to game the system. Law enforcement officers call them habitual offenders. The more they get away with, the more likely they are to engage in misconduct.

Some say President Trump'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, "This is, 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 embittered and emboldened, came on that smear and pressured him to help him rig the elections and chose to hold much-needed evidence of any impeachable offense.

On July 26, 2018, Mr. Zelensky said there was no quid pro quo. The two people with any direct knowledge both said that there was no crime. James, the one of my colleagues—the same one who publicly claimed for over a year that he had seen clear evidence that the President was a Russian stooge and met with a whistleblower who had heard that the President had withheld aid for a quid pro quo. Now, we don't know if that knowledge came to the whistleblower second, third, or even fourth hand because we weren't allowed to question them—we just knew it was hearsay.

What is repugnant about years of this garbage is that the Democrat party simply cannot accept the rule of the American people. Instead, they investigated the Russian collusion hoax for over a year and cleared that cluster of lies with his report. Rather than demobilizing President Zelensky, he continued to campaign on that sham, my colleagues across the aisle cooked up another scandal to depose on their unsuccessful promises.

In 2018 there will be no Soviet bloc countries left to accuse the President of colluding with and then what will you do?

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Wyoming (Ms. Cheney).

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today on the floor of this magnificent Chamber, the very heart of our democratic Republic, and I would imagine, Madam Speaker, that every one of us in this chamber, regardless of party, understands, shares a common view, that being citizens of this great Republic is among life's most tremendous blessings.

We all know that no force on Earth is more powerful than the force of freedom. It is our miraculous constitutional system, Madam Speaker, defended by our men and women in uniform that has safeguarded that freedom for 230 years.

Each one of us in this Chamber bears a sacred duty, passed down to us through generations and affirmed in our oath of office, to preserve and protect our Constitution.

Madam Speaker, our Nation's Framers recognized that this Republic is fragile and that extreme partisanship can be among the most severe threats to its survival. That is why, in Federalist 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 impeach. Failing to find one, Madam Speaker, they have decided to accuse one. Rather than attempting to enforce their subpoenas in court, they have also decided to declare it a high crime and misdemeanor when the President of the United States asserts his constitutional privileges.

The Democrats are asking Members of this body to impeach, despite the fact that they have presented no direct evidence of any impeachable offense.

If anyone in this Chamber still believes the Democrats have proven their case, I would urge those Members to ask the chairman of the Intelligence Committee, Mr. Schiff, why he failed to appear to answer questions about his report. Before Members vote for impeachment, they might want to know why the author of the impeachment report will not defend it under direct testimony.

If the House impeaches here, Madam Speaker, it will create exactly the type of partisan, reckless, and dangerous Articles of Impeachment that we want to avoid: It will mean that divided government can imperil a democratically elected President based on unproven allegations and in the absence of direct testimony. If any of the rhetoric you have heard today, Madam Speaker, passage of these Articles of Impeachment may permanently damage our Republic.

From this day forward, a hyperpartisan bare majority can cite this precedent to try to remove a future Commander in Chief.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to think of our Republic, think of the Constitution, think of the oath that we all sworn to protect and defend that Constitution, and vote against these partisan, reckless, and dangerous Articles of Impeachment.

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

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, today we proclaim that no person is above the law even the President of the United States.

Donald J. Trump abused the power of his office and violated his oath of office by extorting a new and inexperienced President of a vulnerable foreign ally to dig up dirt on Mr. Trump's domestic political opponents.

He then obstructed the Congress, this bicameral branch of government, from undertaking our duty, outlined in the Constitution itself, to investigate and impeach the President.

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 intrude into our democratic processes. He has endangered our national security and our democracy itself. Madam Speaker, for too long, unapologetic and unpunished, he has tried to obstruct this President.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) for a unanimous consent request.

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

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

Madam Speaker, President Donald Trump is unique in the history of the American presidency. No one has led as he has. His success in the quest for witnesses and information, The Constitution grants the power to the President to investigate the Trump campaign. The courts are required to turn over documents related to the ‘Fast and Furious’ fiasco. Congress sued and won this case. But Republicans never seriously thought about impeaching the President.

I threatened to subpoena President Trump’s Attorney General Jeff Sessions to his face in the East Room of the White House during our investigation of the opioid crisis. We eventually worked it out and got to review the data we sought. Not once did I think about impeaching the President over this matter.

The anti-Trump crowd has weaponized impeachment and converted it into a partisan tool, something one of America’s founding fathers—Alexander Hamilton—named against. The American people elected President Trump to shake things up in Washington, D.C. And that’s precisely what he’s done. Lower taxes and less oppressive regulations would not have happened under a Clinton Administration. Hillary Clinton would not have stepped up to China as President Trump has. She would not have demanded and gotten a new and better trade deal with our friends in the north and south. As for the Russians, she’s the one who led the “reset” with Russia that offended our European allies and played into Putin’s hand.

We’ve never had a better economy or lower unemployment in the modern era. We’re the envy of the world. America is standing up to our competitors and enemies. We’re getting better trade agreements and bringing more jobs back to America.

We’ve never had a President lean in more to get lower drug prices or make our allies keep their promises to help pay for their national security. President Trump is doing exactly what he promised, and that includes violating the political norms of the Washington, D.C. swamp. And for that, the left wants to send him packing.

In fact, matters, we should not impeach this President, but instead get back to work solving the problems facing American families.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. NORMAN) for a unanimous consent request.

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

Mr. NORMAN. Madam Speaker, I oppose this resolution, and I include my statement in the RECORD.

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 who won, and a criminal offense worthy of overturning the outcome of the voters’ will. Neither threshold has been met in this case.

With a clear conscience, I will vote against both articles of impeachment. Researching and preparing for my impeachment. "Abuse of power" and "obstruction of Congress," are the charges. Neither of these are criminal violations.

Every administration—Democratic and Republican—pushes back against Congress’ request for witnesses and information. The Constitution enshrines this separate-branch conflict. Congress doesn’t like being told no. At times we’ve sued over it. It’s the tension our founders designed into the competing branches of government. Work it out, or go to the courts. But in this case, they truncated the timeline to exclude a judicial review. They announced the outcome before the investigation was completed.

I voted to hold President Obama’s Attorney General in contempt of Congress for refusing to turn over documents related to the “Fast and Furious” fiasco. Congress sued and won this case. But Republicans never seriously thought about impeaching the President.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. PALAZZO) for a unanimous consent request.

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

Mr. PALAZZO. Madam Speaker, I oppose the Articles of Impeachment, and I include my statement in the RECORD.

Madam Speaker, as the Democrats continue suppressing Republicans’ right to speak out against the ridiculous impeachment inquiry. I was unable to provide remarks during the debate in the House on the two articles of impeachment today. I now ask my colleagues on the other side of the aisle why they chose to silence not only members of Congress but also our constituents. The responsibility of impeachment is not one I take lightly. I am disappointed the Democrats continued ramming this baseless impeachment through the House without hearing from every single member of Congress. Had I been provided the opportunity to speak before the House, I would have shared the following thoughts:

I rise with a heavy heart for our nation today.

Later this evening, House Democrats will force a vote on the weakest articles of impeachment. 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 process and procedure by blatantly ignoring the notion that all are innocent until proven guilty—the president is not guilty of obstruction of Congress, and he is not guilty of an abuse of power.

The president making efforts to curb corruption in a country that is supposed to be above it is not quid pro quo; it is good governance by a chief executive dedicated to doing right by the people of this country.

Make no mistake about it, when the work of this House is done, and the Senate votes to dismiss these charges, the other party will continue to obstruct and slander the president at every turn.

My constituents and I agree that the president is changing the face of America for the better. While some on the other side may not like his straight-forward manner, it is hard to argue that our country is not better because of him.

The Democrats have forgone due process in an attempt to fulfill their electoral short-comings.

When my colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to find reasons why they lost in 2016, they should not look beyond the confines of their own caucus.
I encourage my colleagues to give up this charade and get back to doing what we were elected to do. 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.

As such, President Trump has by no means proved 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 NODAA, and leave functioning on solutions for our constituents; the American families have made for all that we hold dear. That is abuse of power.

President Trump used the official White House meeting to extort the White House meeting to extort the United States of America.

We have a solemn duty to protect and defend 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 extort the President of Ukraine, that is abuse of power. President Trump has ordered the 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 three months have by no means proved President Trump committed an impeachable offense. Unhappy with the reports from the facts, the House Democrats have been working to build support for an articles of impeachment that would divest this President of the power.

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.

We have a solemn duty to protect our Constitution, to protect our democracy, and to honor all those who have laid their lives on the line for these United States of America.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Ms. WALORSKI) for a unanimous consent request (Mrs. WALORSKI asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks).

Ms. WALORSKI of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I will include in the Record my opposition to these Articles of Impeachment.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mrs. DAVIS).

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, make no mistake. We are not impeaching this President. He is impeaching himself.

If you are the President and you obstruct justice, try to bribe a foreign leader, and threaten national security, you are going to get impeached. End of story.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) for a unanimous consent request.

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Mexico (Ms. HAALAND).

Ms. HAALAND. Madam Speaker, I stand before you as a Representative of New Mexico, a place where we believe in dignity and respect for all. In Congress, I have been fighting for them.

We have been working to make healthcare more affordable, education accessible, and move our country forward for the people.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN) for a unanimous consent request (Mr. MULLIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks).

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ADAH) for a unanimous consent request (Ms. ADAMS asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks).

Ms. ADAMS of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Ms. BROWNLEY).

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Madam Speaker, I have been fighting for them. I urge my colleagues to live up to our responsibility and show our fellow Americans that no one, not even the President, is above the law.
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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, 2\frac{1}{2} years, actually. We cannot accept a second term for Donald Trump. What's more serious is that he can't win.

That's not about some crime that was committed. It is about fear that he might win reelection.

It's not why you impeach a President.

AL GREEN: 'I'm concerned that if we don't impeach this President, he will get reelected.'

The list goes on. Madam Speaker. In fact, there are some quotes that I can't even read on this House floor that some of our colleagues made.

And keep in mind, more than 100 Democrats on this House floor voted to impeach this President before the Zelensky phone call.

Just look at some of these Articles of Impeachment they voted for 2 years ago:

Fifty-eight Democrats voted to impeach the President over comments he made about NFL players kneeling for the Pledge of Allegiance. Over 50 Democrats voted to impeach him for that.

And this summer, over 90 Democrats voted to impeach the President for comments he made about The Squad. So Speaker Pelosi makes comments about some other Members of Congress who make a lot of comments about him, and 90 Members voted to impeach the President of the United States.

This is a political vendetta. It has nothing to do with a crime committed.

And why don't we listen to some of the witnesses? Obviously, we weren't able to call all the witnesses we wanted, but there were witnesses. In fact, Gordon Sondland, U.S. Ambassador to the European Union, he is mentioned over 600 times in the Schiff report. He was their star witness.

And what did he say when asked: "Did President Trump ever tell you personally about any preconditions for anything?"

His answer: "No."

"Any preconditions for the aid to be released?"

"No."

"Any preconditions for a White House meeting?"

Under oath, he testified: "No."

Abuse of power. Let's talk about that Article of Impeachment, Madam Speaker.

George Washington Law Professor Turley, who admitted under oath that he voted against Donald Trump, spoke to this claim of abuse of power. In fact, he said: "If you make a high crime and misdemeanor out of going to the courts, it is an abuse of power; it is your abuse of power."

You are doing precisely what you are criticizing the President of doing—abuse of power.

There is a House rule, Madam Speaker, that requires—not allows, but requires—that the minority get a day of hearing, which we asked for multiple times. They broke this rule. They didn't allow us to have a minority day of hearing. They didn't want to hear the facts about this case because it was never about the facts because there was no crime. It is about a personal political vendetta.

Now let's talk about obstruction of Congress, as they make up these terms to impeach a President because they didn't find a crime, and they were looking. It has been an impeachment in search of a crime.

But they talk about obstruction of Congress in saying the President defied subpoenas, subpoena after subpoena. Let's go through the Departments.

The Department of State they subpoenaed. Do you know that, literally, just 4 days after the subpoena, the Secretary of State, himself, responded to their subpoenas?

The Department of Defense, a week later responded to the subpoena.

The Department of Energy responded to the subpoena.

We can go on and on with all of these agencies.

That is an abuse of power, that is an obstruction of Congress, responding to your subpoenas.

That is what they did: They responded.

You might not have liked the answer, but that is not the way this works. You don't impeach a President because you don't like his foreign policy, as many of these foreign policy experts came and testified.

But this isn't just about Donald Trump. They don't just hate Donald Trump, Madam Speaker. They hate the 65 million Americans who voted for this President, the forgotten men and women of this country who have been left behind, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, it is those forgotten men and women of this country that Washington had left behind.

And what is this President doing for them? He is delivering for them: 600 jobs in Pennsylvania; 1,000 jobs, work—jobs in Mingo Junction, Ohio; $750 million investment for 600 new jobs across this country; The Detroit News; Chrysler; 6,500 new jobs. That is what this President is doing to deliver for those men and women of this country who have been left behind.

It is about time somebody stands up for Americans, and President Trump is. So it is a political vendetta.

But if they are going to go through this, Madam Speaker, impeachment will not just be a stain on this Court. It will be their legacy.

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

Mr. SCHEIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield the remainder of my time to the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. KUSTER) for a unanimous consent request.

Today, we must defend a future worthy of their sacrifice.

Just moments ago, I upheld my oath to protect and defend the Constitution when I cast my vote to charge President Donald John Trump with articles of impeachment.

I did so with a heavy heart, to protect and defend the future of our great nation—our American democracy—for generations to come.

The evidence and facts are clear and uncontested. President Trump has abused the power of the Presidency for his own personal gain, at the expense of our national security and the integrity of the 2020 election.

Articles of impeachment are formal charges against the President—this is not a vote to remove him from office. That decision will be made following a trial in the United States Senate.

I hope that the Senate will hold a fair, transparent and thorough trial to get to the truth for the American people.

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I hope that the Senate will hold a fair, transparent and thorough trial to get to the truth for the American people.

Mr. SCHEIFF. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. ROYCE), the majority leader of the House of Representatives.
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 partisanship 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 threatened our constitutional authority of the Congress to conduct oversight.

We have heard from Republicans that this impeachment really has to do with policy differences or how we feel personally about the President, about his temperament or that we simply dislike him.

Throughout the Trump Presidency, Democrats have resisted pursuing impeachment even as we watched with dismay and disgust at a pattern of wrongdoing. That pattern included:

- Firing the FBI Director for refusing to end investigations of his campaign.
- Setting policies that have led to the separation of families and caging of children.
- Taking funding away from the military to put towards an ineffective border wall.
- Ordering Federal agencies to lie to the public.
- Setting policies and allowing officials to testify, ultimately, both compelled because the President’s request, 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 exonerated him.

This itself, I suggest to you, is unprecedented. When Presidents Nixon and Clinton were asked to hand over documents and allow officials to testify, ultimately, both compiled 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 the law.

If the House does not act, 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 twice, we voted against it three times, as recently as July.

We did not want this.

However, President Trump’s misconduct has forced our constitutional Republic to protect itself.

These votes that we are about to take and the process that will follow in the Senate are not only an assessment of the President, but of the Constitution or to his oath of office.

It is, as well, a test of our own.

Dramatic evidence of the President’s high crimes has emerged.

Nevertheless, Republican Members of Congress and President and Speaker 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 craven, dishonest, and despicable acts of wrongdoing, or will they take the first step toward separating themselves from him and restoring the moral leadership that we need?”

Madam Speaker, we have seen Republican courage throughout our history, from the Civil War to the Cold War.
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE | H12191

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In 1960, Margaret Chase Smith, the Senator from Maine, a Republican, spoke bravely against the cancer of McCarthyism in her party, leading six of her Republican colleagues in a “Declaration of Conscience” against their own leadership.

“We are Republicans,” they declared.

“But we are Americans first.”

In 1974, one Congressman took the brave and principled step of becoming the first Republican on the Judiciary Committee to support impeaching President Nixon.

He said to his colleagues and to the country: “It is not easy to align myself against the President, to whom I gave my enthusiastic support... on whose side I have stood in many a legislative battle, where we 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 he has subjected the Presidency and the people of this country. The Constitution and my own oath of office,” he said, “demand that I bear true faith and allegiance to the principles of law and justice upon which this Nation was founded. And I cannot, in good conscience, turn away from the evidence of evil that is to me so clear and compelling.”

My colleagues, that Congressmen’s name was Larry Hogan, Sr. He represented the Fifth District of Maryland, which I now represent. His son is presently the second-term Republican Governor of our State.

When Larry Hogan, Sr., died in 2017, every obituary led with praise for his act of political courage.

Who among us, many years from now, will receive such praise as a man or woman of courage?

Who will 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 is not a member of the Republican Party or the Democratic Party. He is independent.

He said to his colleagues and to the country: “This President will only be in power for a short time, but excusing his behavior will only tarnish your name.”

He spoke on this floor in support of the two articles that we will consider this evening, neither a Democrat nor a Republican.

Representative Amash, of course, is the only Member of this House who has no allegiance to either party, but to his country. He is supporting, as he has said, both articles.

We need not ask who will be the first to show courage by standing up to President Trump.

The question we must now ask is: Who will be the last to find it?"
There were five meetings, but when you heard it all together, none of it mattered, because right now the dark cloud is descending upon this House. I am saddened by this moment. I will put his head down, even through this sham impeachment, and he will do his job. He will put the American people first. He will tell them, I care about you. He will still put the economy first, and he will make sure that this country stands strong.

That is what I see in this abyss. That is where we are.

Madam Speaker, it is with that hope in the future that I recognize right now that I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCA rthy), the Republican leader of this House.

Mr. MCCA rty, 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. He will be President when this impeachment is over.

Madam Speaker, when they accept that the 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 a citizen, no worse than the 435 Representatives who are in this Chamber or the 365 million Americans who voted for the candidate whose election 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 if it damages our country? Or will we proceed in the fair and proper way 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 2 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 a device Congress can make other than sending our men and women into war. Yet, 18 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, 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, but the hundreds of millions of people who represent a say in whether to pursue an impeachment, no worse than the bipartisan standards this House gave Presidents Nixon and Clinton.

This is why I immediately sent Speaker Pelosi a letter asking her to follow the rules of history, of tradition, to follow those standards that have served America well. What did she say? She rejected it. She rejected it because Democrats knew a fair process would crumble their case.

A fair process would have exposed to the American public what many already knew: Democrats have wanted to impeach President Trump since the day he was elected, and nothing was going to get in their way, certainly not the truth.

Madam Speaker, Chairman SCHIFF said he had evidence, more than circumstantial, of collusion. That was false.

In January, when we all stood in this body, we stood up, we raised our hands, and we swore that we would uphold the Constitution. A few weeks were hours after that, Congresswoman Tlaib said she was going to impeach the motherfucker. Those were not my words.

A year before taking the majority, Chairman Nadler campaigned to the Democrats that he wanted to be chair of the Judiciary Committee, where impeachment is, The New York Times called him a partisan Speaker. He is one of the strongest Members to lead a potential impeachment.

Democrats knew they had a leading Demo­crat on the Judiciary Committee, one who the Democrats had represented themselves to the American people. They knew the Committee for those articles just yesterday, as the New York Times called him a partisan Speaker, he is one of the strongest Members to lead a potential impeachment.

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 falls 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, Congress will create the public trust in our system of government.

I understand they dislike the President, his beliefs, the way he governs, even the people who voted for him. How do I know this? Because they say so, day in and day out.
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In 2016, they even dismissed his supporters, calling us “deplorables.” Now, they are trying to disqualify our voice before the 2020 election. They want to undo the results of the last election to influence the next one.

As I said, President Trump will still be President when this is all over. But Congress will have wasted months of time and taxpayer dollars on impeachment rather than doing what the American people want us to do. It didn’t have to be this way.

This is why we have come here to serve, to trample on the process rights, to issue more subpoenas than laws, to appease the new Democratic liberal base? That is not leadership. That is raw partisan politics, and they know it.

To my fellow Americans, if you approve of the way this House has conducted its business, if you want to see your tax dollars go forward to end Congress like the previous Congress on these grounds with unfair procedures, by withholding a White House meeting that the President of Ukraine desperately sought to establish the support of his most important benefactor, the United States; by withholding hundreds of millions of dollars of military aid to a nation at war in order to get that nation to intervene in our election by snaring his opponent. That is the gravamen of the charge in Article I.

And what is the defense from my colleagues? That isn’t leadership. That is raw partisan politics.

And I have listened carefully to my colleagues for the last 8 hours, and I didn’t have to be this way. But I think, when you cut through it all, when you cut through the rhetoric and the falsehoods, you begin to see the truth or follow the facts by substituting partisan animosity for real demonstration of sincere concern or guilt, and by continuing a 3-year effort to undermine the President, this impeachment has divided this Nation without any concern for the repercussions. Moreover, politicizing this process has discredited the role of this House of Representatives and could forever weaken the remedy of impeachment.

To again quote Professor Turley, it is the Democrats’ ‘rush to impeachment on these grounds, with unfair procedures, that is an “abuse of power.” History will right that.

Madam Speaker, as I said at the beginning, we face a choice. Do you trust the wisdom of the people, or do you deny them a say in their government? Fortunately, the people will have the opportunity to speak up and render their verdict in 11 months.

To my fellow Americans, if you approve of the way this House has conducted its business, if you want to see your tax dollars go forward to endless investigations, support this impeachment.

But if you want to restore a working Congress like the previous Congress that listened to you and worked to bring prosperity to this country, as our framers did, and as you have seen and one that, once again, will work with the President to get things done, if you want to do that, then join with us in rejecting this baseless impeachment.

And do you know what Yermak said: ‘This is wonderful architecture in which ambition is our defense.”

When Russia remakes the map of Europe for the first time since World War II by dint of military force and Ukraine fights back, it is our fight, too. And when the President sacrifices our interests, our national security for his election, he is sacrificing our country for his personal gain.

That is the gravamen of Article I.

Article II charges the President of the United States with obstructing the Congress, with denying the Congress, with any witness, any document, by telling all of his administration people: You will not appear. You will ignore a coequal branch of government.

And what is the defense from this House of Representatives today? It is: Why should we care? He is the President of our party. Why should we care if he ignores this Congress?

Well, I remind my friends that he will not be the last President. There will be another President, and you may be, one day—although you do not act like it—you may one day be in the majority, and you may want to hold a President accountable.

What will you say when that President says: “You are a paper tiger. You have no oversight. I can ignore your subpoenas”? What will you say? What will you argue?

“Well, no, no, that was different. Then we were in the minority. Then it was a Republican President.”

Will that be your argument? Is that how little faith you have in our democracy and our Constitution? Is that how poorly you defend and uphold our Constitution?

But, finally, let me ask this question that overrides it all: Why should we care about any of this?

I will bring you to one conversation that came to light, because it is not the most important conversation, but, in many ways, it is the most revealing.

It took place on September 14 in Ukraine, when Ambassador Volker sat down with Andriy Yermak, the top advisor to Zelensky, and he did what he was saying is: You, America, have allowed the repetition of the 2016 rule of law. You have forgotten what it means to say that no one is above the law. We are a struggling democracy, but even we know better than that.

What is at risk here is the very idea of America. That idea holds that we are a nation of laws, not of men. We are a nation that believes in the rule of law.

When we say we uphold the Constitution, we are not talking about a piece of parchment; we are talking about a beautiful architecture in which ambition is set against ambition, in which no branch of government can dominate another. That is what it means to uphold the Constitution.

If you ignore it, if you say the President may refuse to comply, may refuse lawful process, may coercively, may cheat in an election because he is the President of our party, you do not uphold our Constitution. You do not uphold your oath of office.

I will tell you this: I will uphold mine. I will vote to impeach Donald Trump.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. OMAR. Madam Speaker, on March 7, 2019, I was honored to have been signed at Independence Hall, Alexander Hamilton laid out in detail the standards for impeachment in the Federalist papers.

Impeachment should, quote, proceed from the misconduct of public men, or, in other words, from the abuse or neglect of some public trust,” Hamilton wrote.

Donald Trump has without question met these standards.

These words from our framers—they don’t only serve as guidance for people in this country. They serve as guidance for people around the world wishing to build a sound system of governance.

And they have allowed us in the United States of America, to stand for democracy and the rule of law around the world.

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Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, long before the Ukrainian government released the text of the July 25th call, I made arrangements to visit our son and I told him I did not support his impeachment, and I have requested that this statement of my reasons for opposing both articles of impeachment be entered into the Congressional Record.

I've been to Ukraine twice this year. I was an observer of the second round of the Presidential election on April 21, 2019. I returned with a bipartisan Congressional delegation from September 28 thru October 5, 2019 right in the middle of this supposed controversy.

We met with many people. We met with our embassy leadership. We also met with the Ukrainian Foreign Minister and Minister of Defense. We had a chance to visit our soldiers that are helping in the training mission of the Ukrainian military. We met with the military leadership of both countries. Finally, we met with members of the Ukrainian Parliament. During our meeting no one mentioned a quid pro quo.

What I also know is this: The Trump Administration provided lethal anti-tank missiles to Ukraine, including lethal Javelin anti-tank missiles, that had been authorized by Congress but withheld by the previous administration. We knew the President was using his unneeded administrative powers under Article II of the Constitution to censor an investigation with important facts. That action was based on unfounded accusations of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress—abuse of power and obstruction of Congress in the worst way possible.

We all know this shameful impeachment is a sham. They know that we know it is a sham. They know that we know it is a sham. They know that we know it is a sham. They know that we know it is a sham. They know that we know it is a sham. They know that we know it is a sham. They know that we know it is a sham. They know that we know it is a sham.
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 experience 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 and his Chief of Staff have admitted they did it and told us "we do all the time, get over it." We must not get over it. We must not let the President get away with it. We cannot allow this President to "do whatever he wants" if it violates the Constitution and laws of the United States.

To not impeach would say to future presidents they can disregard the Constitutional authorizations. To not impeach would condemn presidents to a politics of personal gain. And it is not just the President who could use this tactic: the Speaker and the Majority, driven by a desire to protect the President, could have administration lawyers attend all depositions and hearings, ask questions, and present evidence, and request their own witnesses. Those rights were denied in this inquiry, as this impeachment process was weaponized for political gain.

History will judge this inquiry for the rush to judgment, for the flawed inquiry process, for the lawless process without process, for the political gain at the expense of our national security; he conditioned official acts—of Ukraine on an investigation into an energy company. The facts are in dispute. The President and his Chief of Staff have admitted they did it and told us "we do all the time, get over it." We must not get over it. We must not let the President get away with it. We cannot allow this President to "do whatever he wants" if it violates the Constitution and laws of the United States.

To not impeach would say to future presidents they can try to rig an election in their favor instead of letting voters decide. To not impeach would say the President is above the law.

The President and Members of Congress take an oath to the Constitution. The President violated his oath, but I will not violate mine.

Mr. MCACAAL. 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 the President the U.S. security assistance to Ukraine on an investigation into an energy company.

The deeply flawed inquiry did not produce clear evidence or bipartisan support. At a minimum, one would expect bipartisan support for such a historic event.

As a former federal prosecutor with the Public Integrity Section of the Department of Justice, I approached this inquiry with the same standards I would have applied to any case I handled during that time. During six weeks of depositions, I listened diligently and sought out relevant facts. But the Majority, driven by a political timeline, insisted on a rush to judgment with an incomplete factual record. Instead of interviewing multiple people with firsthand knowledge, they settled for speculation and innuendo.

Ultimately, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle failed to prove the President bad U.S. national security. The House is moving to impeach the President, but there is no evidence of impeachment. Multiple witnesses provided testimony that the president was due to the President’s long-standing concern about corruption in Ukraine. It took for firsthand accounts from administrative officials, such as Vice President Mike Pence, to see the sinistrality of Ukraine’s new President Volodymyr Zelensky. He campaigned as an anti-corruption reformer and made historic progress after his party took over the Ukrainian parliament in August. The Democrats key witness—of which there was the only one who talked with the President about the aid—is Ambassador Gordon Sondland. When pressed, Sondland admitted he never knew why the aid was delayed, rather President Trump, nor anyone else, ever told him that aid was tied to investigations, and any opinion he expressed to others about such a connection was only him "speculating." President Zelensky and his senior advisor Andriy Yermak, the key Ukrainians in the Democratic narrative, have repeatedly and strongly denied they were ever pressured or given any sense that the temporary hold was connected to investigation requests. Indeed, they were not even aware of the hold until it was publicly reported in the press.

History will judge this inquiry for the rush to impeach President Trump without direct evidence, in defiance of historic precedent and as a one-sided political probe. The "investigation" was held in the most secret room in the Capitol. Depositions occurred on days lawmakers were out of town. The Minority denied basic fairness and did not allow their lawyers to defend themselves during depositions. This contrasts with previous impeachment inquiries, where both sides were afforded the same rights.

Opposing impeachment does not mean embracing every decision made by the administration in this case. I strongly disagreed with the hold on the security assistance that Congress had appropriated for Ukraine and wrote an urgent letter with the gentleman from New York, Chairman ELIOT ENGEL, a week before the aid was released. Then and now, I believe Russian malign influence on Ukraine could be a vital component of U.S. national security. I am glad the Democrats began their three-year effort to impeach the President the day he was sworn into office. In fact, 104 of my Democratic colleagues voted for impeachment before the phone call between President Trump and Ukrainian President Zelensky ever took place.

Our constitutional order demands far more than this to remove a duly-elected President. Sixty-three million Americans voted for President Trump. With an election less than a year away, Americans should decide their elected president at the ballot box, as our Constitution requires.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, the U.S. Constitution is clear and unambiguous—impeachment of any president is permitted only for treason, bribery, high crimes and misdemeanors. The House is moving to impeach a duly-elected president for an act of bribery. The Constitution does not define bribery, nor does it establish the standard for removing a duly-elected president.

Undeniably 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’ve retained 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 common-sense gun reform that is vital to our communities safer, and addressing income inequality in all of its forms. My role as the Representative for Nevada’s Fourth Congressional District also includes faithfully preserving and upholding our Constitution and the systems that underpin our federal government. Our Constitution clearly lays out Congress’ role in protecting our democratic institutions and the delicate balance that exists within it. Today, the House of Representatives is voting to uphold this solemn responsibility to hold President Trump accountable.

In an effort to fulfill my obligation to uphold our Constitution and the rule of law, I have paid careful attention to the investigations of the impeachment inquiry in the House of Representatives. The Committees of jurisdiction and witnesses have brought forward evidence uncovering the truth of President Trump’s July phone call and subsequent impropriate 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 used the power of his office for personal and political gain at the expense of our national security; he conditioned official acts—millions in military aid and a White House meeting for personal, political gain; and he attempted to cheat our democracy and corrupt our elections. And so today, I will vote in favor of the two articles of impeachment against President Trump. No one is above the law. Not even the President.

The first article of impeachment charges President Trump with violating his oath of office by abusing the powers of the Presidency when he solicited the interference of Ukraine in the 2020 United States presidential election.

The second article of impeachment charges President Trump with violating his oath of office by obstructing justice and directing defiance of subpoenas issued by the House as part of its impeachment inquiry, This is no new—nor should it ever be—grounds for impeachment.

The Democrats' key witness—of which there was the only one who talked with the President about the aid—is Ambassador Gordon Sondland. When pressed, Sondland admitted he never knew why the aid was delayed, rather President Trump, nor anyone else, ever told him that aid was tied to investigations, and any opinion he expressed to others about such a connection was only him "speculating." President Zelensky and his senior advisor Andriy Yermak, the key Ukrainians in the Democratic narrative, have repeatedly and strongly denied they were ever pressured or given any sense that the temporary hold was connected to investigation requests. Indeed, they were not even aware of the hold until it was publicly reported in the press. History will judge this inquiry for the rush to impeach President Trump without direct evidence, in defiance of historic precedent and as a one-sided political probe. The "investigation" was held in the most secret room in the Capitol. Depositions occurred on days lawmakers were out of town. The Minority denied basic fairness and did not allow their lawyers to defend themselves during depositions. This contrasts with previous impeachment inquiries, where both sides were afforded the same rights.

Opposing impeachment does not mean embracing every decision made by the administration in this case. I strongly disagreed with the hold on the security assistance that Congress had appropriated for Ukraine and wrote an urgent letter with the gentleman from New York, Chairman ELIOT ENGEL, a week before the aid was released. Then and now, I believe Russian malign influence on Ukraine could be a vital component of U.S. national security. I am glad the Democrats began their three-year effort to impeach the President the day he was sworn into office. In fact, 104 of my Democratic colleagues voted for impeachment before the phone call between President Trump and Ukrainian President Zelensky ever took place.

Our constitutional order demands far more than this to remove a duly-elected President. Sixty-three million Americans voted for President Trump. With an election less than a year away, Americans should decide their elected president at the ballot box, as our Constitution requires.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, the U.S. Constitution is clear and unambiguous—impeachment of any president is permitted only for treason, bribery, high crimes and misdemeanors. The House is moving to impeach a duly-elected president for an act of bribery. The Constitution does not define bribery, nor does it establish the standard for removing a duly-elected president.

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saw to uphold the Constitution of the United States and to serve the American 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 will 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 angry with you, the Speaker of the House. I’m angry with Chairman ADAM SCHIFF. I’m angry with the Chair of the Judiciary Committee. 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. Everyone who is responsible for getting us to this point should be held accountable.

Mr. SUOZZI. Madam Speaker, tonight, I will vote for impeachment. The President threatened to withhold Congressionally approved military aid to an ally under Russian attack unless the ally, a foreign government, agreed to help the President with his campaign. That is an abuse of power. The President refused to cooperate with Congress’s constitutional duty to provide oversight. That is obstruction. As disgraceful and unbecoming 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 accountability. No process, no investigation would also seriously undermine our system of government by delegating the Congress to a less than co-equal role in the system. As difficult as this is for our country, I believe this is the right thing to do for our country.

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, the President should be impeached. His actions were an abuse of power that jeopardizes America’s national security and compromises our elections. No one is above the law, and that includes the President. By withholding $400 million Ukraine desperately needed to defend itself against Russia until Ukraine did the President’s political bidding, the President committed High Crimes and Misdemeanors for which he should be impeached under Article I, Section 2, Clause 5 and Article II, Section 4 of the Constitution.

This abuse of power is compounded by the President’s, and to serve the American 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.

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No one is above the law, not even the President.

Donald Trump indisputably violated the Constitution and is, without a shadow of a doubt, no longer fit to discharge the duties of the President of the United States of America.

I urge my colleagues to support these articles of impeachment.

Mr. Larson of Connecticut, Madam Speaker, this year, our nation finds itself in the midst of historic turmoil. President Donald J. Trump’s defiance of the Constitution and disregard for the rule of law have given Congress no other choice but to proceed with impeachment. The President has brought this on himself through his actions. As instructed by H. Res. 660, on November 19, 2019, the House Permanent Select Intelligence Committee began conducting open public hearings to ensure the American people were able to hear directly from witnesses as the committee collects and examines evidence in a fair and professional manner. This was followed by public hearings in the House Committee on the Judiciary, which allowed for an examination of the constitutional grounds for impeachment and an airing of evidence against the President.

After weeks of deposition, public hearings and additional evidence, the House Judiciary Committee concluded that President Trump violated his oath of office and, on December 11, 2019, voted to send 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, recently declared that, ‘A house divided against itself cannot stand.’ The nation’s motto is, E Pluribus Unum. President, Trump, has so flagrantly and unconstitutionally undermined the constitutional rights of the American people, including their right to due process, that the Supreme Court of the United States, comprised of nine lifetime appointees, might reasonably question the legitimacy of the current and former White House staff and members of the executive branch to defy the Congress’s subpoena power. The President, unconstitutionally, has secretly deployed special forces abroad and employed secret guidelines to target and kill innocent Americans, based on secret unconstitutionally enmeshed to block private persons or entities from responding to congressional requests or evidence for crimes committed by, e.g., Deutsche Bank. He has refused to provide Congress information about national security, or other security clearances he granted in opposition to his own FBI security experts. He has refused to prohibit his subordinates from office, it will make his subordinates from office; it will make it impossible to hold him, in a peculiar manner, responsible for any action he takes. The President has been unable to provide a legitimate reason for the purloining of the Constitution’s separation of powers, James Madison in Federalist 51, has stated, ‘Some form of government is indispensable to liberty.’ The President’s misuse of power may, as a consequence of his authority, be regarded as the most complete and effectual weapon with which any constitutional arm can arm the immediate representatives of the people, for obtaining re- duction of every grievance, and for carrying into effect every just and salutary measure.’ Article I, section 7, clause 1 requires all revenue measures to originate in the House of Representatives. In violation of the Constitution, the President has raised and expended billions of dollars by unilaterally imposing a lifetime of debt as a consequence of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, in violation of the President’s authority.

ABUSE OF THE POWERS OF THE PRESIDENT AND ABUSE OF PUBLIC TRUST: President, Donald J. Trump, has consistently and unconstitutionally undermined the constitutional rights of the American people, including their right to due process. The President has refused to provide Congress information about national security, or other security clearances he granted in opposition to his own FBI security experts. He has refused to prohibit his subordinates from office, it will make it impossible to hold him, in a peculiar manner, responsible for any action he takes. The President has been unable to provide a legitimate reason for the purloining of the Constitution’s separation of powers, James Madison in Federalist 51, has stated, ‘Some form of government is indispensable to liberty.’ The President’s misuse of power may, as a consequence of his authority, be regarded as the most complete and effectual weapon with which any constitutional arm can arm the immediate representatives of the people, for obtaining re- duction of every grievance, and for carrying into effect every just and salutary measure.’ Article I, section 7, clause 1 requires all revenue measures to originate in the House of Representatives. In violation of the Constitution, the President has raised and expended billions of dollars by unilaterally imposing a lifetime of debt as a consequence of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, in violation of the President’s authority.

ARTICLE II

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H12198

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

The Constitution, Article II, section 3, clause 2 requires Senate ratification of treaties by two-thirds majority. The text is identical as to whether treaty termination requires Senate ratification, and the Supreme Court held that the issue was a nonjusticiable political question in Goldwater v. Carter, 441 U.S. 996 (1979). But the Treaty Clause purports to require Senate approval of treaty termination. President Trump flouted the Treaty Clause in the unconstitutional and unlawful manner of George W. Bush, the American Bar Association Task Force on Professional Responsibility, and the Federalist Society in violation of the President's pledge to faithfully execute. In violation of that pledge, President Donald J. Trump has largely been brought on by the President himself, his aides, and his appointees.

Among other things, the President refused to answer specific questions related to his presidential conduct; refused to fire the special counsel; pardoned non-operating witnesses; and, urged Attorney General Covington to refuse to defend the order to better protect his presidency. In all these respects, the President was adamantly committed to obstructing Congress by arbitrarily and capriciously reviewing classified information, purporting to require Senate approval of Senate ratification, and requiring Senate approval to terminate a treaty. The President, alone, is required by the Constitution to determine the constitutionality of treaties and to determine whether a treaty has been unconstitutionally terminated.

The Constitution, Article II, section 3, clause 2 requires the President to inform the Senate of the terms of a treaty before it is signed, but to do nothing, to terminate a treaty.

The Constitution provides that treaties must be ratified by the Senate before they become law. The President is the only person able to determine whether a treaty is constitutional, and the President is the only person able to determine whether a treaty is unconstitutionally terminated.

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

For a democracy to work in a system of checks and balances, no one is above the law. The President takes an oath of allegiance to the United States Constitution; there are no exceptions for the art of the deal.

Mrs. WATSON-COLEMAN. Madam Speaker, there have been quite a few comments from the other side about how this is partisan, and this is an attack, and we’re coming after Donald Trump.

I don’t like this President. I don’t like his values, or his decision making, nor his policies or the words he chooses to use. But these articles are not about a man. They are about the ACTIONS of a man. They are about the ways in which someone elected to the highest office in this country abused that office, and violated the basic tenets of the constitutional balance of power.

I don’t want him to serve two terms, but this is about that. This is about holding the President of the United States, whoever he may be, to the same standards and expectations of that office.

I say that genuinely. I would take this same vote if any President who abused his office in that way. And any member of this body who fails to understand what this vote really means, or speaking clearly what we expect of the OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, not the person sitting in it—is deeply and horribly mistaken.

Democracy is an experiment in how the balance of power, who values the balance of power, who wants to ensure the underpinnings of the greatest democracy in the world remain strong for generations to come, will support these articles of impeachment as I intend to do.

Mr. RUIZ. Madam Speaker, as a citizen of the United States of America, the greatest experiment in democracy that our world has ever known, as the duly elected U.S. House Representative of my home communities of the Coachella Valley, San 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 $37 billion in military aid to a foreign country on an investigation into its political rival, Donald Trump abused the power of the presidency for personal political gain. He then attempted to obstruct our constitutional duty to receive the report and possibly even conduct a trial in the Senate. I am voting to remove those presidents from office.

I rise in support of H. Res. 755, a resolution impeaching Donald John Trump, President of the United States, for high crimes and misdemeanors.

I am voting to support the impeachment of Donald John Trump, President of the United States, for high crimes and misdemeanors. I am voting to remove the President of the United States from power, for a violation of the Constitution and the basic tenets of our Republic that I solemnly cast my vote today in favor of impeaching President Donald John Trump.

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 755, a resolution impeaching Donald John Trump, President of the United States, for high crimes and misdemeanors. Today is indeed a solemn day for the United States of America.

The Two Articles of Impeachment, as written and passed by the House Judiciary Committee, outline the findings of the investigations done by several committees of jurisdiction, charged with the constitutionally-mandated task of finding out the truth.

The truth is the President abused his power of office by obstructing the impeachment inquiry; solicited the interference of the Ukraine Government in the 2020 U.S. presidential election in an attempt to undermine our elections; and posed a threat to national security for political gain.

Madam Speaker, I have listened to and spoken with my constituents in my district and throughout the state of Texas. The corrupt pattern of evidence is overwhelming. Therefore, I am voting in favor of H. Res. 755, a resolution impeaching Donald John Trump, President of the United States, for high crimes and misdemeanors.

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Madam Speaker, it is a fundamental ideal of our republic that the American people receive 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 see in 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 juror the same way. I told them that ‘what someone heard from another source other than what they directly observed is not evidence.’ Rumors and hearsay are not evidence under our laws, and it certainly shouldn’t qualify as evidence in this chamber.

The evidence presented by the Majority in this case is entirely hearsay and therefore, should be inadmissible. In fact, the only direct evidence presented to this body is the transcript of President Trump’s telephone call with the Ukrainian President.

The Constitution is clear—treason, bribery, high crimes and misdemeanors are impeachable offenses, and the evidence presented today that those three impeachable offenses are present 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. DELAURIE. 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 to defend this Constitution, 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 are trying to acquit President Trump of the evidence. But the President’s unchecked actions gave the Congress no other choice.

Today, the House of Representatives is upholding its duty to protect the Constitution of the United States. Our founders set up a system of checks and balances, separation of powers, and rule of law so that no person would be above the law. That includes the President of the United States. The Constitutional recourse for “treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors” is clear: impeachment. It is a heavy price—intended only for matters of 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 needed and important foreign aid to Ukraine, as well as a meeting between the two countries’ presidents in the White House, as leverage. The President’s abuse of power has been corroborated before the Congress by brave public servants over the last few months.

Facing a Congressional investigation into these matters, President Trump directed the unscrupulous, caghapeutical, and indiscriminate defiance of subpoenas issued by the House of Representatives pursuant to its “sole Power of Investigation.” In doing so, President Trump obstructed Congress’s Constitutionally-authorizated investigation.

So, today, I 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
H12200

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and defend the constitution. That is why, today, I will vote to approve two articles of im­
peachment against this President for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress.

In order to arrive at that solemn and somber conclusion, I used many of the same skills that I acquired early on as a former pros­
cutor. By putting politics and emotions aside to focus on the underlying evidence and ap­
plying those facts to the articles of impeach­
ment, I found it clear that the President sub­
verted our national interest for his own per­
sonal and political interests. The President then repeatedly ignored and refused to cooperate with the numerous requests and subpoenas of the investigation by Congress. Moreover, the President proudly admitted this conduct and refuses to acknowledge that he did anything wrong.

I do not take pride in impeaching a sitting president of the United States. But as the U.S. Representative for the central coast of Cali­­fornia, I am uphold­ing my obligation under the United States Constitution and to protect the future of our democracy.

After an extended consideration of the President and his upcoming trial in the U.S. Senate will not stop us from getting things done. As I have proven during my limited time with Republicans, I fortu­nately work to pass legislation that re­
forms our immigration laws, especially for Dreamers, and promotes our ag­
ticulture, combats the effects of climate change, improves our health system, low­
ers 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 Cong­
gress 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 partisan Congress. The op­
opportunities for agreement have often felt lim­
ited, 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 impeach­
ment of the President of the United States must be considered as a last resort, reserved only for the most serious crimes and constit­
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itid. I have taken steps and through my con­
stituents to voice their opinions on the direc­ction of the country, the security of the

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not impeachable whilst in office, he will spare no expense or options whatever to get himself reelected.”

Article II of the resolution presents a separate change, 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 pro-vocative in its defiance and sweeping in its claims of executive privilege, I also believe there are legitimate and unresolved constitu-tional questions about the limits of executive privilege, and that before pursuing impeach-ment for this charge, the House has an obliga-tion 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 with-drew a subpoena for Charles Kupperman, a senior aide to John Bolton, and House coun-cil instead a federal court to dismiss a lawsuit that seeks to clarify Mr. Kupperman’s obligation to testify.

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 impeach-ment inquiry. Professor Black has ar-gued that executive privilege has a stronger claim in the earlier stages of the impeachment process, but that by the time of a Senate trial, it should be clearer what specific information is necessary for Congress to conclude its pro-cedings.

I believe that the House must exercise as much restraint as possible in order to avoid setting a dangerous precedent for the future. On the one hand, each of the two political par-ties has an interest in protecting the executive privilege of the White House; there are some communications that should remain confiden-tial, or at the very least not be released pub-licly 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 Con-gress is powerless to force the White House to produce them.

This tension is precisely why our system of government provides for a forum in which dis-putes between the executive and the legis-la-ture over the scope of their respective privi-leges and powers can be resolved. That forum is the judicial branch. The House can—and in other contexts has—gone to the courts to en-force 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 deny a court order to produce documents or to give testimony in an impeachment inquiry, or if he were to demonstrate an absolute de-sire to do the same, then a charge of obstruction would be appropriate. But while the president’s re-sistance toward our investigative efforts has been frustrating, it has not yet, in my view, reached the threshold of “high crime or mis-demeanor” that the Constitution demands. For that reason, I will vote against Article II of the resolution regarding obstruction of Con-gress.

To my constituents: please know that I am deeply dismayed by the circumstances sur-rounding this inquiry, likely impeachment, and coming to that of the president. Indeed, my con-cerns about our politics and the health of our democracy have only grown over the course of this process. The divisiveness of this im-peachment inquiry has been terrible for our country, just as the Framers knew it would be. I also believe, however, that the president’s ef-forts 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 get unchecked. I see it as my duty to vote in sup­port of Article I in order to send a clear mes­sage to the president, to the country, and to the world that foreign interference in American elections is not acceptable, not welcomed, and will not be tolerated. At the end of the day, I believe failure of Congress to act in a bipartisan fashion to send this message may represent the greatest threat of all to the health of our de­mocracy.

Earlier this year, I expressed my concern that a partisan impeachment would further deepen the political divisions in this country, and that the best recourse would be to rely on our electoral process to litigate our dif­ferences. But at the current moment, when the subject of the president’s actions has been so deeply divided, the next election cannot be the solution. As I square those concerns with our current mo­ment, I take solace in the words of a previous Constitution from Mr. Roosevelt’s Second District, who also confronted an impeachment vote during his first term in office. Concerned with the divisiveness of this impeachment pro­cess, a congressman from Maine’s Second District who also confronted an impeachment vote during his first term in office. Concerned with the divisiveness of this impeachment pro­cess, if they should receive a full trial in the Senate, then-Congressman William Cohen ob­served:

"It has been said that impeachment pro­ceedings will tear this country apart. To say that it will tear the country apart is a proposi­tion I cannot accept. I think what would tear the country apart would be to turn our backs on the facts and our responsibilities to ascer­tain them. That being my opinion, I would do fa­mous to be wrong. The time-honored American tradition, because they viewed him as an illegitimate President. The importance of a president and of my colleagues, this will not be the first—and possibly not even the last time they vote to impeach President Trump. Several have openly admitted they are concerned if they don’t vote to impeach the President, he will be reelected.

In conclusion, I urge all of my colleagues of this body publicly stated that this process has been two and a half years in the making. The Speaker admitted this just months after she told the American people that impeachment would need to be compelling, overwhelming and bipartisan. Yet, the only thing bipartisan about this impeachment is the opposition to it. Here are the facts:

Both President Trump and President Zelensky say there was no pressure. The call transcript shows no conditionality—or “quid pro quo”—between aid and an investiga­tion.

The Ukrainians were not aware that aid was withheld until July 25. No one wanted to get caught on tape.

ConGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

H12201

26677
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 do so in defense of both sides of the aisle to vote against this divisive impeachment.

I include the record letter from President Trump to Speaker Pelosi.

The White House
Speaker of the House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Dear Madam Speaker: I write to express my strongest and most powerful protest against the partisan impeachment crusade being pursued by the Democrats in the House of Representatives.

This impeachment represents an unprecedented and unconstitutional abuse of power by Democratic lawmakers, unequalled in nearly two and a half centuries of American legislative history.

The constitutional process introduced by the House Judiciary Committee is not recognizable under any standard of Constitutional theory, interpretation, or jurisprudence. They include no crimes, no misdemeanor, no impeachable offense, whatever you have cheapened the importance of the very dearly word, impeachment.

By proceeding with your invalid impeachment, you are violating your oath of office, your task as upholding Constitutional Exception, and you are defying open war on American Democracy.

You dare to cite the Founding Fathers in pursuit of this election-nullification scheme—yet your warped rhetoric display unfettered contempt for America's founding and your egomaniacal contempt for the world's treasured constitutional freedoms that we fight to defend.

As a member of Congress, I have taken the Oath of Office, and I promise to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

And I give you my word that I will vote 'no' and I will tell you that there was No Impeachable Offense. I will vote 'no' and I will tell you that there was No Impeachable Offense.

President Zelensky has repeatedly declared that he did nothing wrong, and that there was No Impeachable Offense. He further emphasized that it was a "wrong thing," that "I don't feel pressure," and explicitly stressed that "nobody pushed me." The Ukrainian Foreign Minister stated very clearly: "I have never seen a direct link between investigations and security assistance." He also said that there was "No Impeachment." Senator Ron Johnson of Wisconsin, a supporter of Ukraine who met privately with President Zelensky, has said: "At no time during this meeting..." I have met 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 using a wholly baseless, thinly veiled claim that has been asserted on a bipartisan basis by administrations of both political parties throughout our Nation's history. Under that standard, every American president would have been impeached many times over.

An illegal liberal professor Jonathan Turley, 33, who once supported Democrat Senator Chuck Schumer, has said: "I can't emphasize this enough..." I am going to impeach a President if he is "plagued by the corruption of the system..." It's your party that is impeaching a President. You want to impeach a President if he's "plagued by corruption of the system..."

The third claim, so-called "Abuse of Power," is a completely disingenuous, meritless, and baseless invention of your imagination. You know that I had a totally innocent conversation with the President of Ukraine, I then had a second conversation that has been misinterpreted, mischaracterized, and fraudulently misrepresented. Fortunately, there was a transcript of the conversation taken, and you know from the transcript immediately made available that the paragraph you are attacking was: "I would like you to do us a favor, though, because our country has been enormously disrespected by Ukraine, and I think you know a lot about it. I said do us a favor, not me, and you--in fact, Mr. Trump, 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's 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 his influence to conspire Ukraine into firing the prosecutor who was digging into the comedy party's son's natural gasagas. You know this because Biden bragged about it on video. Biden openly stated: "I'm telling you, Mr. President, we have 13 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, guess what, Mr. President? Even Joe Biden admitted just days ago in an interview with a foreign leader that "I asked him to work with you". Now you are trying to impeach me by falsely accusing me of doing the very thing that Joe Biden has admitted he actually did.

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As a member of Congress, I have taken the Oath of Office, and I promise to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

And I give you my word that I will vote 'no' and I will tell you that there was No Impeachable Offense. I will vote 'no' and I will tell you that there was No Impeachable Offense.
December 18, 2019

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE H12203

success of America and its citizens. But in
sisting on pushing our country, you have
decided to disgrace our country still further.
You are the one subverting America's Dura
ment because there was nothing to do, so you
decided to take the next best 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 the
official conversation.

You are the ones interfering in America's
elections. You are the ones subverting Ame
rica's Democracy. You are the ones bringing
pain and damage to our Republic for your own
selfish personal, political, and partisan gain.

Before the impeachment hoax, it was the
Russian Witch Hunt. Against all evidence, and
regardless of the truth, you and your
departments of state and intelligence agencies
dismissed the reality of Russia—its grave, malicious, and
damaging lies, a falsehood like no other you
forced our Nation through turmoil and tor
ment over a wholly fabricated story. Illeg­
ally purchased from a foreign power by Hil
ton of Fiona to silence dissent in a FISA court,
and launched;

Instead, President Trump was made a
scapegoat for the mistakes of others. His
true accomplishments and policies were
smothered, the truth about the vast array of
wrongdoing was swept under the rug,
and the only focus was on his personal
political missteps. It is a shame that the
American people were deceived in this way.

When the Mueller investigation found no col
fusion, some Members of Congress, like
House Impeachment Leader Adam Schiff,
knowingly promoted this falsehood and used
similar tactics to engineer this impeachment
inquiry. This is unacceptable.

For the above reason, I voted to censure
President Donald J. Trump and vote against
these articles of impeachment.

We know this impeachment is a sham. They
say it is impeachment by a sham. They say
that we know it is a sham. They know that
it is a sham.

All of us know this shameful impeachment
process is nothing more than an illegal, par
liamentary proceeding. It is a mockery of
democracy. Yet, when the monstrous lie
was made public, it was immediately disavow
ed by the entire Republican Party. This is not
a somber affair. You are making a mockery of
impeachment. It is a sham. You are ille­
legally and reluctantly, so intelligently per­
secution.

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 witch-hunt fantasy and get back to work
for the American People. While I have
no expectation that you will do so, I write
this letter to you for the purpose of history
and to put my thoughts on a permanent and
incredible record.

One hundred years from now, when people
look back at this affair, I want them to un
derstand it, so that it can never happen to another President again.

Sincerely yours,

Donald J. Trump,
President of the United States of America.

Mr. POSEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to op
pose the articles of impeachment that have
been produced by this flawed process, which
was based on hearsay and testimony largely
collected from a closed-door, one-sided inves	igation.

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 quick quid pro quo and confirmed that the
 bjćon to Ukraine was released without the
launching of any investigation that the Presi
dent's detractors say he was seeking.

The two articles of impeachment in the res
titution—abuse of power and obstruction of
Congress—are broad and cite no specific crimes that the President committed. The
House Democrats are using the entire im
peachment effort behind headlines grounded
on absolutely no evidence of a crime.

However, last week we had a look at some
totaling 20,000+ words, including testimony
and hearings, compiled by the
House Intelligence Committee. There was
insufficient evidence for any of the
proposed articles of impeachment.

This is a sad day for America. This im
peachment is the worst case of partisan poli
cy, policy, in the history of our Republic.

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, no one enter
tees Congress hoping to impeach the presi
dent. But when duty demands it, we have no
other choice. Our founders included in the
Constitution a provision for impeachment, a
provision to be used only in the face of the
gravest threats to our democratic republic.

Deciding how to vote cannot be accurately
portrayed in tweets or sound bites, so I would
like to share with you my considerations.

Unlike many others in the Democratic Party,
I was, at first, hesitant about impeachment. As
someone who has worked together with Presi
dent Trump, I was loath to take such action.
But as I learned more about the evidence,
I came to the conclusion that impeachment was
necessary.

These policies were wrong, but they were
not impeachable offenses. Our democracy
depends on good governance, and I respect the
office of the presidency.

Pressure began early this year for me to call
for impeachment. The billionaire Tom Steyer
ran advertisements in The Detroit News and The Detroit Free Press and on news websites and social media calling for impeachment. People in my district had strong opinions everywhere I went, from the grocery store and farmers markets to church and my bagel place.

At the time, my constituents were focused on the Mueller report into Russian interference in the 2016 election, which they hoped would provide a case for impeachment. But it wasn’t clear. What the report did reveal—a finding that was often overlooked in the focus on the Trump campaign’s contacts with Russians—is that Moscow is trying to divide our country.

Then, in October, came reports that Mr. Trump and his administration withheld congressionally approved military aid to Ukraine while asking for a foreign government to investigate one of his political rivals. An inspector general appointed by Mr. Trump found that there was a credible, urgent and potentially immediate danger 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 connected to the executive branch. The whistle-blower report required Congress to investigate the facts and follow the issue.

News outlets seem to assume that House Democrats and Republicans have been as obsessed with impeachment as they are, and that every single Democrat had 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 studies on the impeachment inquiry.

I read testimonies from firsthand witnesses, parsed the majority and dissenting opinions from the main committees’ reports and listened to the voices on both sides. I spent weeks reading the Federalist Papers and papers from both the Nixon and Clinton impeachment processes.

But the end, I was convinced: The facts showed that President Trump and his administration put politics over country by asking a foreign government to investigate a political rival while withholding military aid that affects our national security.

I did not downplay the power of our system to address federal deficiencies in our democracy. Yes. Future generations and historians will judge us if we did not address these dangers. I will cast my vote to protect our democracy, our constitu­
cion and markups, meetings and events with con­stituents. I read testimonies from firsthand witnesses, parsed the majority and dissenting opinions from the main committees’ reports and listened to the voices on both sides. I spent weeks reading the Federalist Papers and papers from both the Nixon and Clinton impeachment processes.

By the end, I was convinced: The facts showed that President Trump and his administration put politics over country by asking a foreign government to investigate a political rival while withholding military aid that affects our national security.

I find it remarkable that while these proceedings have been conducted, President Trump continues to maintain a posture that the American people are not worth guarding against threats to our national security. Failing to address it would also condone the existence of a threat to our national security.

I will cast my vote to protect our democracy, our con­stitution and markups, meetings and events with con­stituents. I read testimonies from firsthand witnesses, parsed the majority and dissenting opinions from the main committees’ reports and listened to the voices on both sides. I spent weeks reading the Federalist Papers and papers from both the Nixon and Clinton impeachment processes.

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I find it remarkable that while these proceedings have been conducted, President Trump continues to maintain a posture that the American people are not worth guarding against threats to our national security. Failing to address it would also condone the existence of a threat to our national security.
security, and ensure our democracy is not corrupted by a foreign power. For every Member of Congress, holding the President of the United States accountable to the Constitution and protecting our most fundamental democratic values is not a political decision based on loyalty or partisan affiliation. In fact, it is an inherent duty upon which we have sworn a sacred oath.

The sole person responsible for precipitating this impeachment process is President Donald J. Trump. President Trump’s willful, flagrant, and corrupt misconduct is a betrayal of the public trust. At this historic and sober moment, the American people understand that as a nation of laws there can be no person, not even the President of the United States, who is above the law. Let these articles of impeachment also serve as a clear and unambiguous message to all politicians and to all people that 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.

President Trump committed numerous crimes. He conditioned two official acts, hun­dreds of millions of dollars in military aid to our ally Ukraine because it is both morally right and in our national interest to stand with them in their fight to preserve their independence against Russian aggression. I was one of the members of Congress who advocated and voted for the two articles of impeachment against President Trump. I decided to support the President’s impeachment after a judicious consid­eration of the facts established by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI) and the House Committee on the Judiciary, as well as reflecting upon my constitutional responsibilities as a Member of Congress. I would note that the constitutional remedy for high crimes and mis­demeanors—such as abuse of power—is impeachment. Regrettably, the President’s severe misconduct with respect to Ukraine showed a complete dis­regard for our Constitution, our demo­cratic system of government, and the security of our nation and our allies. The President left the House with little choice but to faithfully discharge its duty.

As the Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, I believe that it is unconscionable that an American leader would use nearly $400 million in military aid appro­priated by Congress—and signed into law by the President himself—as leverage for personal gain.

There are fundamental reasons why U.S. law provided these desperately needed funds to Ukraine. I would emphasize that, in 2014, Russia invaded Ukraine and illegally annexed the Crimean peninsula 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 extol its complete range of constitutional preroga­tives and maintain the balance of power that has existed for 232 years.

Finally, I would highlight that the administration’s complete repudiation of the constitutionally prescribed legal authorities stands in stark con­trast to the courage and patriotism demonstrated by the whistleblower who filed a formal complaint with the Intelligence Community 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, I am 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 is out. Pursuant to House Resolution 767, the previous question is ordered on the House floor.

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

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 ayes and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic de­vice, and the Clerk reported the result: 226 to 197, answered “present,” not voting 3, as follows:

[House Roll Call 11205]
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

December 18, 2019

H12206

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I demand a recorded vote. The SPEAKER. This is a 5-minute vote. The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 229, noes 195, as answered "present" 1, not voting 3, as follows:

[A Roll Call Vote was taken.]

Mr. CLOUD changed his vote from "yea" to "nay." So Article II was agreed to. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded. A motion to reconsider Article II was laid on the table.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Cheryl L. Johnson, Clerk of the House, reported and truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was therewith signed by the Speaker on Tuesday, December 17, 2019:

H.R. 3003. An act to rescind mandatory funding programs for historically black colleges and universities and other minority-serving institutions, and for other purposes.