

to the darkest places that a mind can go, and I have shed more tears than I thought were possible.

I have hidden from the world because I am terrified of facing the people that I let down. But I made it through because the people who loved me most dragged me back into the light and reminded me that I was stronger than that.

To those of you who were by my side in my worst moments—you know who you are—I love you. I am so grateful, and I will never forget.

And I am here today because so many of the people I let down—people close to me, supporters, colleagues, people I have never even met—told me to stand back up and that, despite all of my faults, they still believed in me and they were still counting on me. And I realized that hiding away and disappearing would be the one unforgivable sin.

I will never shirk my responsibility for this sudden ending to my time here, but I have to say more because this is bigger than me.

I am leaving now because of a double standard.

I am leaving because I no longer want to be used as a bargaining chip.

I am leaving because I didn't want to be peddled by papers and blogs and websites, used by shameless operatives for the dirtiest gutter politics that I have ever seen and the rightwing media to drive clicks and expand their audience by distributing intimate photos of me taken without my knowledge, let alone my consent, for the sexual entertainment of millions.

I am leaving because of a misogynistic culture that gleefully consumed my naked pictures, capitalized on my sexuality, and enabled my abusive ex to continue that abuse, this time with the entire country watching.

I am leaving because of the thousands of vile, threatening emails, calls, and texts that made me fear for my life and the lives of the people that I care about.

Today is the first time I have left my apartment since the photos taken without my consent were released, and I am scared.

I am leaving because, for the sake of my community, my staff, my family, and myself, I can't allow this to continue, because I have been told that people were angry when I stood strong after the first article was posted and that they had hundreds more photos and text messages that they would release bit by bit until they broke me down to nothing, while they used my faults and my past to distract from the things that matter most.

I am leaving because there is only one investigation that deserves the attention of this country, and that is the one that we voted on today.

Today, I ask you all to stand with me and commit to creating a future where this no longer happens to women and girls.

Yes, I am stepping down, but I refuse to let this experience scare off other

women who dare to take risks, who dare to step into this light, and who dare to be powerful.

It might feel like they have won in the short term, but they can't in the long term. We cannot let them.

The way to overcome this setback is for women to keep showing up, to keep running for office, and to keep stepping up as leaders; because the more we show up, the less power they have.

I am leaving, but we have men who have been credibly accused of intentional acts of sexual violence and remain in boardrooms, on the Supreme Court, in this very body, and, worst of all, in the Oval Office.

So, the fight goes on to create the change that every woman and girl in this country deserves. Here in the Halls of Congress, the fight will go on without me.

I trust so many of my colleagues to be strong on this front while I move on to one of the many other battlefields, because we have an entire culture that has to change, and we see it in stark clarity today:

The forces of revenge by a bitter, jealous man, cyber exploitation and sexual shaming that target our gender, and a large segment of society that fears and hates powerful women have combined to push a young woman out of power and say that she doesn't belong here; yet a man who brags about his sexual predation, who has had dozens of women come forward to accuse him of sexual assault, who pushes policies that are uniquely harmful to women, and who has filled the courts with judges who proudly rule to deprive women of the most fundamental right to control their own bodies sits in the highest office of the land.

And so today, as my last vote, I voted on impeachment proceedings, not just because of corruption, obstruction of justice, or gross misconduct, but because of the deepest abuse of power, including the abuse of power over women.

Today, as my final act, I voted to move forward with the impeachment of Donald Trump on behalf of the women of the United States of America. We will not stand down; we will not be broken; and we will not be silenced. We will rise, and we will make tomorrow better than today.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time for now, but not forever.

ISSUES OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, it is an honor to be here on the floor of the House of Representatives this 502nd anniversary of Reformation Day.

Madam Speaker, prior to discussing immigration policy and the other issues of the day, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARRINGTON).

Mr. ARRINGTON. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his leadership on the Budget Committee, and I thank him for his patriotism, his love of this country, and for his desire to do what is right for our country, first and foremost.

Madam Speaker, today was a sad day, I believe, for our country. We have got, now, round two of this phony impeachment process.

It is purely political. It is not based in facts, not based in the pursuit of truth and justice. There is no openness; there is no fairness; and there is, really, no credibility.

The American people are not buying this bologna, not a single bit.

That is why we are seeing round two of putting lipstick on a pig, as we say in Texas. But, listen, the nature of this phony process is what it is, no matter how you dress it up.

It is sad because we are allowing this institution to be degraded. We are making a mockery out of this Chamber, the serious business of this country, and the serious nature of impeachment.

I would say, first and foremost, that the claim that this President has committed a high crime, treason, or impeachable offense is absurd, really.

From the outset, I would say that this is a baseless claim that only firsthand knowledge, the only primary source of evidence, is his conversation with President Zelensky. Unlike the cherry-picked leaks from Chairman SCHIFF, he let it be known what he said, what their conversation was about, in the full sunshine, for all the public to see.

And it was clear that the President not only didn't have a quid pro quo, the President not only didn't commit some impeachable offense, for heaven's sake, he was ensuring that taxpayer dollars, as the fiduciary, the chief fiduciary of this country, weren't going to be wasted or abused or misspent on anything except for what they were intended for and that every stone would be turned over to root out graft and corruption.

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Now, that is not just appropriate; that is to be commended for any chief executive, especially for our President.

I think that this process is purely political and aimed, again, not at truth and justice, but at a distraction from what is not happening on trade, on prescription drugs, and a whole host of things that we have to address if we are going to have a real impact on our fellow countrymen and move this country forward.

I think it is a distraction from the socialist policies that have been advanced through this Chamber that have no chance of having any real effect on mainstream America.

I think, ultimately, it is to discredit this President; and instead of actually doing battle for hearts and minds the old-fashioned way in the public squares and at the ballot box, they are doing it

by weaponizing this serious constitutional provision of impeachment.

Again, it is a sad day. But what I would say in closing, to my dear friend from Wisconsin, is that it is one thing to take the oxygen out of this Chamber for actually doing things that are going to have a real impact and make a real difference in the lives of our fellow Americans, it is one thing to take this President down yet another rabbit hole, another Russian collusion hoax, but another thing to do irreparable harm to our democracy.

The Presidency, how is it ever going to be the same after this? How will a President ever have a phone call with a foreign leader where they can have the candor that is necessary to build relationships and to do the people's business.

Madam Speaker, I say to my fellow Americans: This isn't about truth and justice. This is about fear and hate, hate for our President and for what he stands for, for his agenda, and fear that they can't beat him at the ballot box, so they are going to do it by weaponizing our congressional oversight responsibility and abusing the power of this great institution for their political objectives. I say that is wholly un-American.

For my children's sake, they are doing irreparable harm to not only the Presidency, but to all of our democratic institutions. If you lose that, you lose the ability to govern, Republican or Democrat; you lose the ability to govern functionally for the American people.

What a sad day. History will judge cruelly those who participated in this instead of doing it the old-fashioned American way, from house to house in the neighborhoods, in the public squares, and at the ballot box.

God save our great country, and God help us all if this political railroad job and farce continues any longer.

I thank my friend from Wisconsin for yielding to me. I am grateful for the opportunity.

God bless America, and go, West Texas.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

I realized that a lot of what has been said here the last few days focuses on an impeachment inquiry, and one has to ask oneself why we have so many people who have been wanting to try to impeach President Trump immediately.

It was, obviously, a very important vote today, but it is the fourth vote I have taken, I believe, since President Trump has been sworn in on impeachment. So far, nothing has turned up. I don't expect anything to turn up in the future.

But I think one of the motivations for this impeachment inquiry is to keep other stories off the page, to keep other stories out of the mainstream media. And that is why, today, I want to address what I think is the biggest threat to America in the short term

and a threat, unless we deal with it, which will ultimately destroy our country, and that is the threat of illegal immigration, of people flowing across the southern border.

I have been at the southern border three times this year to see for myself what Border Patrol and other people in charge of securing our border have to put up with, and I would like to say that they have done a tremendous job.

Yesterday, in this building, while so many people were focused on the impeachment inquiry, we had a hearing in the subcommittee of the Oversight and Reform Committee in which Ken Cuccinelli, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services office head, and Matthew Albence, Acting Director of ICE, were testifying before our subcommittee.

It was interesting, the appalling comments that they had to put up with from Members of this House, being called white supremacists, just doing their job trying to secure the border. Those are the type of things that every American should be aware of what is going on in this building.

But I would like to update people on the good job that President Trump has been able to do in the last 6 months, why he has been able to do this job, and the hatred which it has brought our President.

In May, over 145,000 people were processed trying to get into this country, and we allowed over 100,000 people in this country.

About a year ago, there was a study put out by MIT and Yale which increased the estimated number of people in this country illegally from 10 to 11 million to 20 to 22 million people. That is a lot of people.

Obviously, we could not forever go on, May after May after May, in which 100,000 people were allowed in this country.

That, by the way, is in addition to people who sneak in the country without being detected because we have no wall and we have not adequately funded our Border Patrol. I think experts believe another 10,000 people probably came in, at least 10,000 came into this country in May undetected.

Since that time, President Trump has reached agreements with Mexico, in part by threatening tariffs, in part by just general suasion, and we have reduced the number of people coming into this country from over 100,000 in May to, I am told by the Border Patrol, perhaps under 5,000 in September after processing 40,000 to 50,000. This is because President Trump reached an agreement with Mexico that they will hold asylum seekers down there.

He has reached out and reached agreements or received help from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, in addition to Mexico, in not only keeping more of their citizens there, but if people try to leave other countries for asylum, more are being kept in places like Mexico, El Salvador, and Honduras.

I want to point out, too, that this is not something that Congress helped

him with. These are things that he has had to do on his own.

There are other things that he is trying to do that Congress should be taking up, but isn't.

He has been trying to keep people from coming into this country if they are a public charge. We have enough people who we are taking care of in our country—some through their own fault, some through no fault of their own—on various welfare programs.

President Trump tried to say: Hey, we will maybe take people who are working. We will take people who want to come here legally. But courts, including a prominent judge appointed by President Clinton, struck that down. So President Trump was denied the opportunity to prevent people from coming here who are going to be a public charge.

President Trump is still waiting—and I hope he does—to do something about birthright citizenship, another situation that I saw when I was on the border in which, obviously, America, being 1 of only 2 of the 40 wealthiest countries in the world to say, if you have a child here, you get to be a citizen.

His Border Patrol has been acting with inadequate funding. They have had, up until recently, 2,000 vacancies. They could use more people in addition to that.

We are in the process of building 500 miles of wall. It is not going to be enough. But we like to believe we are going to be able to get that done by the end of December.

But, in any event, after doing all of these actions, we have done a much better job—I would say the best job we have had in years—of holding down the number of immigrants in this country.

Like I said, the sad thing is, largely, this is President Trump acting on his own while Congress tries to remove the immigration crisis from the headlines by spending day after day talking about impeachment, trying to chase some rumor down, or maybe somebody operating under the guidance of a Congressman making charges against President Trump.

But I will just ask the American public to keep their eye on the ball, and that ball is immigration. We cannot go back to the days of 100,000 people being allowed in this country every month.

We have to make sure that the policies that President Trump has implemented in the last 5 months continue to be implemented.

We have to demand from Congress action on the variety of things that they should be doing instead of filling up the press with stories on impeachment.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 1678. An Act to express United States support for Taiwan's diplomatic alliances