

and Democrats are ready to pass it today as is. But now we have a few Republican Senators who want to sidetrack it with last-minute amendments, including proposals that are not in the interest of working families and will kill any chance this bill has of becoming law. For example, one of the amendments strips out an important provision the House made sure to include, while another one tries to jam back in a proposal that the House took out before it passed it so it could pass by an overwhelming margin.

Well, let me be clear. Democrats don't think families relying on this relief should have to wait while Republicans try to chip away at it. We want to pass this bill today as it is, which is why I would like to ask the Senator from Pennsylvania to modify his unanimous consent request; that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 1994, which is at the desk, the SECURE Act, the bipartisan House bill; and that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator from Pennsylvania so modify his request?

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I just will say briefly that this is very disappointing. What we are hearing from our Democratic colleagues is that the Senate is supposed to be a rubberstamp for what the House has done. We are not supposed to consider and deliberate ourselves as a body. We are not supposed to, apparently, entertain amendments—equal numbers from both sides—to attempt to reflect our constituents' interests and get to a legislative solution that would inevitably have broad bipartisan support. I am very disappointed.

Of course, I would reiterate, no Republican has ever asked for a guaranteed outcome on any amendment. All we are asking for is a vote, and apparently that is asking too much, according to our Democratic colleagues. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Is there an objection to the original request?

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, it is very disappointing on this side that there is an objection to this bill that addresses so many important issues. It has broad bipartisan support. Instead of working to pass this bill in front of us today, some Senators have focused on tacking on amendments that don't help families and do not make this a better bill; therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IMPEACHMENT

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I rise today to discuss the impeachment inquiry currently underway in the House.

First, I want to recognize the courageous public servants who have testified in the House in recent weeks in defense of U.S. national security and in defense of the rule of law and our democratic institutions. I will cite just four: Lieutenant Colonel Vindman, Ambassador Yovanovitch, Ambassador Taylor, and Ambassador McKinley.

Despite the two decades of military service by Lieutenant Colonel Vindman and the Purple Heart he earned for his sacrifice for our country in Iraq, his character has faced brutal attacks from cable news and from some current and former Members of Congress.

As former U.S. Ambassador to Russia Michael McFaul put it in a Washington Post column last week, "Such smear tactics are revolting and un-American. [Lt. Col.] Vindman has served our country with honor and distinction, both on and off the battlefield. . . . And he is a patriot—as you would expect from someone with his outstanding resume."

So said former Ambassador McFaul, and I agree with him. I think most Americans would agree with him.

Lieutenant Colonel Vindman is just one of the many brave patriots who have testified as part of this impeachment inquiry.

Ambassador Yovanovitch has dedicated over 30 years to U.S. foreign service. She has rightfully earned the respect and credibility that she has within the U.S. national security community for her anti-corruption efforts in Ukraine and for her unwavering commitment to U.S. national security interests.

Ambassador McKinley has served this country as Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State and Ambassador to Brazil, Afghanistan, Colombia, and Peru. He has demonstrated fierce loyalty to his colleagues in the State Department and to the United States itself.

Ambassador Taylor's life has been marked by his service to our Nation, from West Point to the 101st Airborne in Vietnam, to his work as Ambassador to Ukraine and other significant foreign policy roles.

We should all be inspired by these and countless other public servants who work to protect and serve the United States every day. When I reflect upon their service to our country and their integrity, I am reminded of one of the lines from "America the Beautiful": "Oh, beautiful for patriot dream That sees beyond the years." That is what these patriots are doing—trying to understand and deliberate about what their actions should be now that will help America over time, to see beyond the years. That is part of the dream of a patriot, and these individuals have demonstrated that. They have a care and a concern about our institutions, our government, our democ-

racy, our Constitution, and, of course, a concern about what their actions mean for the future.

Over the past week, the House committees leading the impeachment inquiry regarding President Trump's, in my judgment, abuse of power have publicly released the first full transcripts from several of their interviews with State officials and diplomats. The transcripts explain in rich detail how the President employed Rudy Giuliani, his personal attorney, to manage a shadow diplomacy agenda focused on personal vendettas and unfounded—and that is an understatement—conspiracy theories in Ukraine.

Ambassador Yovanovitch testified that there was a "concerted campaign" to have her removed as Ambassador to Ukraine and repeatedly discussed the threatening and bullying behavior of the President and Mr. Giuliani because of her disagreements with Mr. Giuliani. The Ambassador explained that a senior Ukrainian official expressed significant concerns regarding Mr. Giuliani's behavior and told the Ambassador that she "really needed to watch her back."

When asked whether she felt threatened after President Trump told the Ukrainian President that she was "going to go through some things," Ambassador Yovanovitch responded unequivocally "yes," meaning yes, she felt threatened.

And she indicated some of her friends were "very concerned" about her personal safety.

Just imagine that. Imagine that. A U.S. Ambassador concerned about what would happen to her next. Even those around her were concerned about her personal safety because of what a President was saying and doing—and those around him.

Later in her testimony, Ambassador Yovanovitch discussed the influence of Rudy Giuliani in Ukraine. When asked whether anyone at the State Department tried to stop Giuliani's efforts, she explained as follows:

I don't think so. I don't think they felt they could.

Now, let's turn to Ambassador Taylor. He described similar concerns about Mr. Giuliani. Referencing the investigations President Trump wanted Ukraine to pursue into his political opponent—in this case, former Vice President Joe Biden—Ambassador Taylor described that the "irregular channel" of Ukraine policy directed by Mr. Giuliani was focused on "one or two specific cases, irrespective of whether it helped solve the corruption problem" in Ukraine.

Ambassador Taylor further explained that it was his "clear understanding" that "security assistance money" for Ukraine would not be delivered until President Zelensky "committed to pursue the investigation."

Ambassador McKinley, a former senior advisor to Secretary of State Pompeo, confirmed that he resigned because of his concerns about the President's shadow diplomacy efforts

with Mr. Giuliani. When the chairman asked Mr. MCKINLEY whether he resigned in part because of efforts to use the State Department to dig up dirt on a political opponent, Mr. MCKINLEY responded:

That is fair. And if I can underscore, in 37 years in the Foreign Service and different parts of the globe and working on many controversial issues, working 10 years back in Washington, I had never seen that.

As the Washington Post reported on September 21, the President's behavior related to this Ukraine matter has revealed—in the opinion of this journalist at the Post, a reporter who has covered the President very closely—No. 1, “a President convinced of his own invincibility—apparently willing and even eager to wield the vast powers of the United States to taint a political foe and confident that no one could hold him back.”

Let me move to the whistleblower protections. Armed with this sense of invincibility, the President has directed some of his most pointed criticisms at the brave whistleblower who came forward to expose the President's call with the Ukrainian President.

On Twitter, the President has demanded to meet the whistleblower face-to-face, despite laws that clearly protect the whistleblower's right to anonymity.

Just the other day, the whistleblower's attorney confirmed that his client offered to answer written questions under oath from House Republicans as long as the questions did not compromise the individual's identity.

House Republicans immediately denounced the offer, and the President tweeted that “[w]ritten answers are not acceptable,” despite the fact that President Trump refused—refused to be interviewed by Special Counsel Mueller's team and only answered written questions during the special counsel's investigation into election interference.

Despite his own unwillingness to answer live questioning, the President has persisted in his desire to “out” the whistleblower by tweeting that “we must determine the Whistleblower's identity” and arguing that the press would be “doing the public a service” if it outed the whistleblower.

Nothing—nothing the President has done or said in his more than 2½ years as President convinces me that he has any understanding of public service or doing the public a service, depending on how you look at it.

President Trump has even demanded to know who provided the information to the whistleblower and suggested that the source was “a spy” who would have been executed “in the old days.”

These comments follow the testimony of Acting Director of National Intelligence Joseph Maguire—a former Navy SEAL with 36 years of military experience and a Presidential appointee—before the House of Representatives in September.

Mr. Maguire said the following:

[W]e must protect those who demonstrate courage to report alleged wrongdoing. . . . The Inspector General is properly protecting the complainant's identity and will not permit the complainant to be subject to any retaliation or adverse consequences for communicating the complaint to the Inspector General.

Yesterday, in floor remarks, the junior Senator from Kentucky compared the whistleblower to Edward Snowden and argued that the current concerns about the safety of the whistleblower are nothing more than “selective outrage.”

To be clear, Edward Snowden broke the law. He abused his security clearance and position of trust to leak classified information to the press. He sought safe haven in Russia, and we are unaware of any other information he may have shared that could further jeopardize national security.

The current whistleblower has strictly followed the appropriate channels of reporting, as confirmed by Director Maguire, and the individual deserves the full protection under the law.

The Senator from Kentucky referenced Edward Snowden in a conversation about blowing the whistle on President Trump's abuse of power. I hope that anyone would not make a comparison between the two cases. Threatening a witness or retaliating against a whistleblower is illegal. We know that. The President's public attacks on the whistleblower only add to the record of impeachable conduct.

His careless and extreme rhetoric not only places the whistleblower's personal safety in jeopardy, it undermines the entire whistleblower program of the intelligence community and across the government.

The intelligence community and Congress must continue to do all we can to protect the current whistleblower's identity and personal safety. The current legal protections for whistleblowers are insufficient to fully protect those who are courageous enough to come forward and report wrongdoing.

Of course, the reason we need the additional protections is the President's conduct in threatening the whistleblower. No other President has ever done this.

Congress must consider more ways to protect whistleblowers, including criminalizing the disclosure of the whistleblower's identity. It should be clear that should be a crime, if the statutes do not provide for it now.

We must use this experience to ensure that whistleblowers will be protected from threatening rhetoric and from actions by a President or any other public official meant to intimidate whistleblowers. If you are threatening a whistleblower, if you are trying to “out” them, that is always—always wrong. We do not have to worry about whether a specific statutory provision made it a crime. It is always wrong. Until this President, that was well understood by people in both parties, both Houses, and both branches.

This inquiry is not simply about President Trump's clear abuse of power. This inquiry is about our democracy and the values our Founders agreed should guide our Nation.

We owe the whistleblower, Lt. Col. Vindman, Ambassadors Yovanovitch, Taylor, and McKinley, as well as others, our deepest gratitude and our appreciation for their integrity and commitment to American values. They are real American heroes who, despite the President's bullying and harassment, have stood up in defense of our democratic institutions and the values the Founders fought to guide our Nation.

I yield the floor.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote scheduled for 1:45 p.m. start at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON NARDINI NOMINATION

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Nardini nomination?

Ms. COLLINS. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KENNEDY). Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) would have voted “Yea” and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) would have voted “Yea”.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote or change their vote?

The result was announced—yeas 86, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 352 Ex.]

YEAS—86

Alexander	Collins	Gardner
Baldwin	Coons	Graham
Barrasso	Cornyn	Grassley
Bennet	Cortez Masto	Hassan
Blackburn	Cotton	Hawley
Blumenthal	Cramer	Heinrich
Blunt	Crapo	Hirono
Boozman	Cruz	Hoehn
Brown	Daines	Hyde-Smith
Burr	Duckworth	Inhofe
Cantwell	Durbin	Johnson
Capito	Enzi	Jones
Carper	Ernst	Kaine
Casey	Feinstein	Kennedy
Cassidy	Fischer	King