

school board in 1983. It was always a personal pleasure to be in his company over the years. He always inspired me to go beyond expectations and do everything possible to make this world a better place. Engaging and demanding, Rev. Smith was a noble champion for justice.

While San Diego has lost a giant, I believe that his life's work will serve as a legacy and example for future generations to come. Madam Speaker, I ask that you please join me in remembering and commemorating the great life of Rev. George Walker Smith.

JOEL LEWIS RECEIVES THE
ALUMNI HALL OF FAME AWARD

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2020

Mr. COOK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service and commitment of Joel Lewis, who received the 2020 Alumni Hall of Fame Award from the Victor Valley College Foundation on February 22, 2020.

A dedicated educational advocate, Joel Lewis has made constant efforts to give back and mentor various students from Victor Valley College (VVC). As an educator at Apple Valley High School, Joel distinguishes himself with unrivaled dedication and energy for his job. His passion for teaching and coaching is constantly on display as he often goes above and beyond for under-served and developmentally challenged students. He has coached for seven seasons at Apple Valley High School (AVHS) and three seasons at VVC. As a coach to economically disadvantaged students, he has personally managed numerous booster events and donation drives for AVHS Basketball. He credits much of his success to his wife and children, his life-long friends, and his students. In 2010, Joel and his family adopted their son, after seeing his struggles and that he had nowhere else to go. Through mentorship, patience, and love, he became the valedictorian of Apple Valley High School and went on to study at Georgetown University.

On behalf of the United States House of Representatives, I would like to congratulate Joel Lewis on this award. Joel has led an incredible life filled with service and dedication to his students and community, and he is most deserving of this award.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE
OF RONALD EDWARD KNOTT

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2020

Mr. BERGMAN. Madam Speaker, it is my honor to recognize the life of Ronald Edward Knott, who passed away at the age of 73 after a lifetime of service to his fellow Americans. Through his extreme courage and selflessness, Ronald became an indispensable part of the state of Michigan.

Ronald was born on September 24, 1946. Upon graduating from Walled Lake High School, Ronald joined the United States

Airforce, where he served two tours in Vietnam as a mechanic. Following his military service, Ron married his wife Dawn and began a career at General Motors. Ron retired from GM in 1987 and moved to Mio, where he and Dawn opened Knott's Dairy Barn. Throughout his professional career and into retirement, Ron's dedication to service remained stronger than ever—including service as Commander of the Wixom VFW Post 3952 and the Mio VFW Post 4126. Ron also served as Historian for Mio American Legion Post 348 and as Southeast Michigan District Commander. Ron passed away on February 5, 2020. He is missed dearly by his family and friends, and his legacy will undoubtedly live on for generations for come. Ronald's tireless devotion to the public good touched the lives of countless Michiganders, and the impact of his work cannot be overstated.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of Michigan's First Congressional District, I ask you to join me in honoring the life of Ronald Edward Knott. His legacy will forever live on in his family and through the countless lives he bettered through his service.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE NAMI
WASHTENAW COUNTY'S THE AD-
VOCATE GALA: TAKING OFF THE
MASK

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2020

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize NAMI Washtenaw County and celebrate its 2020 Advocate Gala: Taking Off the Mask. NAMI's lasting commitment to supporting mental health in our community is worthy of commendation.

NAMI Washtenaw County is a nonprofit dedicated to improving the lives of those living with mental health conditions. Established by a group of concerned parents of children with mental health conditions, NAMI Washtenaw County was created in 1984 to address our community's mental health needs. Since its humble beginnings, NAMI Washtenaw County has grown significantly and continues to provide critical mental health educational programs, support groups, and advocacy work that address mental health concerns and work to correct the stigmas that are so often attached. Today, NAMI Washtenaw County ensures thousands of individuals, families, and educators connect with the support and information they need.

The Taking Off the Mask Gala exemplifies NAMI Washtenaw County's continued commitment to addressing mental condition concerns. Although mental conditions impact the lives of many, people remain afraid, unwilling, or embarrassed to talk about mental health in fear of the stigma that is attached. Thanks to NAMI Washtenaw County's dedication, tonight's gala will help lift these damaging stigmas and uncover the stories of people living with mental health conditions that are often hidden behind masks. The gala will explore everyday hopes and struggles that come with caring for someone living with a mental health condition and encourage attendees to create an open future without stigma, judgement, or embarrassment.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring NAMI Washtenaw County as it

hosts its Taking Off the Mask Gala. NAMI Washtenaw County continues to be critical resource to many, and its unrelenting commitment to improving the lives of those living with mental conditions makes a real and lasting difference in our community. We are grateful for NAMI Washtenaw County's meaningful impact and wish it continued success in the years ahead.

REFLECTIONS ON SENATE JUDG-
MENT NOT TO CONVICT AND RE-
MOVE THE IMPEACHED PRESI-
DENT FOR ABUSE OF POWER
AND OBSTRUCTION OF CON-
GRESS

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2020

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, February 5, 2020, the United States Senate determined not to convict and remove from office Donald John Trump, President of the United States, who was impeached by the House for high crimes and misdemeanors, a decision I firmly believe will be judged harshly by history for all time.

I voted for the two articles of impeachment contained in H. Res. 755, the resolution of the House of Representatives and I rise to discuss in detail the overwhelming evidence assembled by the Committee on the Judiciary and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, which clearly warranted the conclusion that the President abused the powers placed in him in trust by the Constitution and the American people by endeavoring to coerce a foreign government to announce a phony corruption investigation of his perceived chief election rival so he could remain in office and continue his misconduct.

The President clearly abused his power by putting his personal interests above the national interest and jeopardizing the national security of the United States and, making it a perfect trifecta, enlisting the aid of a foreign power to sabotage the 2020 presidential election.

When this scheme was discovered and made public, the President launched an all-out campaign to impede the ability of Congress to learn all the facts and hold the persons responsible accountable by dishonoring lawful subpoenas, refusing to provide requested information, and directing his subordinates in the Executive Branch not to testify or cooperate with Congress.

The House impeachment managers proved these actions to the country and the world beyond dispute and clearly showed how the evidence warranted the President's conviction and removal by the Senate.

Madam Speaker, it is beneficial to the public and for history to review the material facts that have led to where we are.

In February 2014, Russia annexed Crimea, a stunning display of military aggression unseen since the end of World War II when the maps of post-war Europe were drawn.

Five months later, on July 17, 2014, the Russia-backed Donbass People's Militia (DPM), an organization consisting of pro-Russian separatists who have taken up arms against the Ukrainian Armed Forces and the

Government of Ukraine, shot down Malaysian Airlines Flight 17, killing all 298 persons on board, including 80 children and 15 crew members.

Presidential candidate Donald Trump would later dispute Russia's incursion into Ukraine in a nationally televised interview on July 31, 2016, when he said of Russian President Vladimir Putin:

He's not going into Ukraine, OK, just so you understand. He's not going to go into Ukraine, all right? You can mark it down. You can put it down. You can take it anywhere you want.

In contrast, the United States, the European Union, and the international community, standing in solidarity with Ukraine, strongly condemned Russia's act of aggression and expelled it from membership in the G-8, the organization of the nation's eight richest, industrialized countries.

In June 2016, at the Republican National Convention held in Cleveland, Ohio to nominate Donald Trump as its presidential candidate, the Platform Committee of the Republican Party made but a single change in the party's 2016 platform and that was to water down the platform to make the Republican Party more amenable and sympathetic to Russia and its interests in reestablishing dominance over Ukraine.

In November 2016, Donald Trump was narrowly elected the 45th President of the United States, surprisingly winning the Electoral College 306-224, despite losing the national popular vote by a record 2,833,220 votes to the Democratic presidential candidate, Hillary Rodham Clinton, the former U.S. Secretary of State and U.S. Senator from New York.

On January 6, 2017, President-elect Donald John Trump was provided the unanimous assessment of the United States that concluded that Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered an influence campaign in 2016 aimed at the U.S. presidential election in which Russia's goals were to undermine public faith in the U.S. democratic process, denigrate Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton, the determined and resolute foe of Vladimir Putin, and facilitate the election of Vladimir Putin's preferred candidate, Donald John Trump.

Russia's interference in the election processes of democratic countries is not new but a continuation of the "Translator Project," an ongoing information warfare effort launched by Vladimir Putin in 2014 to use social media to manipulate public opinion and voters in western democracies.

Instead of supporting the unanimous assessment of the United States Intelligence Community, the President consistently attacked and sought to discredit and undermine the agencies and officials responsible for detecting and assessing Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election as well as those responsible for investigating and bringing to justice the conspirators who committed crimes against the United States.

Between March 23, 2018 and February 15, 2019, the Congress appropriated \$391 million in security assistance and foreign military financing support to Ukraine as follows: \$26.5 million FMF funding on March 23, 2018; \$250 million on September 28, 2018; and \$115 million on February 15, 2019.

As documented in the March 2019 Report On The Investigation Into Russian Interference

In The 2016 Presidential Election submitted by Special Counsel Robert S. Mueller III, the Trump presidential campaign benefited from Russia's "sweeping and systematic" interference in the 2016 election through a sophisticated social media campaign coordinated by Russian intelligence officers and by releasing documents stolen from Democratic National Committee computers and the Clinton campaign.

While the Special Counsel's report could not conclusively find evidence of a criminal conspiracy between entities or persons aligned with Russia and the Trump campaign, the report noted that the Special Counsel identified ten instances of unlawful conduct by the President that could constitute obstruction of justice but as an employee of the Justice Department the Special Counsel was bound to abide by the Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel 1974 Memorandum which prohibits charging a President with a crime while he is in office.

On April 21, 2019, presidential candidate Volodymyr Zelensky was elected President of Ukraine, winning nearly 70 percent of the vote in the runoff election.

On April 25, 2019, Joseph Robinette Biden, Jr., a distinguished former U.S. Senator and Vice-President of the United States under President Barack Obama, announced his candidacy for President of the United States.

On May 6, 2019, the United States Ambassador to Ukraine, Marie Louise Yovanovitch, was removed from her duty station and recalled to the United States, culminating a months-long smear campaign conceived and coordinated by Rudolph Giuliani, the former mayor of the City of New York, acting in his capacity as the current President's personal attorney.

On May 9, 2019, the New York Times reported that Rudy Giuliani was planning to travel to Ukraine to prevail upon the new president of that country to launch an investigation into alleged corruption by former Vice-President Biden, his son Hunter Biden, and to ignore the widely debunked and discredited conspiracy theory that it was Ukraine, not Russia, that interfered in the 2016 presidential election in "sweeping and systematic fashion."

Four days later, on May 13, 2019, U.S. Attorney General William P. Barr announced that the U.S. Department of Justice was undertaking an investigation into the origins of interference in the 2016 election.

Madam Speaker, it should be noted that the Trump Administration decision to shift responsibility for 2016 election interference from Russia to Ukraine is contrary to the assessment rendered unanimously by the U.S. Intelligence Community and furthers the 'active measures' conspiracy theory hatched in Moscow by Russian President Vladimir Putin and the oligarchic regime governing the Russia Federation.

In fact, a story published December 19, 2019 in the Washington Post, reports that senior advisors to the President believe he was influenced to perpetuate this crackpot conspiracy theory by Vladimir Putin.

On May 20, 2019, Volodymyr Zelensky was inaugurated as only the sixth democratically elected President of Ukraine but it was noteworthy that the American delegation attending the inauguration was not headed by Vice-President MIKE PENCE as originally scheduled but by U.S. Energy Secretary Rick Perry, who replaced the Vice-President at the President's

direction and included lower-level functionaries Kurt Volker, Special Representative for Ukraine Negotiations; Gordon Sondland, Ambassador to the European Union and a large donor to the Trump Inauguration Committee; and Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Vindman, Director of European Affairs at the National Security Council.

Two weeks later, in a nationally televised interview broadcast June 13, 2019 on ABC News, the President stated that he would accept damaging information against an electoral rival from a foreign government, a position disowned in a public statement issued later that day by the Chair of the U.S. Federal Elections Commission, which reemphasized to all candidates and voters that accepting political help from a foreign government would be illegal and a violation of federal election law.

On July 24, 2019, in testimony before the Committee on the Judiciary, on which I sit as the third senior member of the majority, Special Counsel Robert S. Mueller III affirmed the findings and conclusions in his voluminous report, including that the "Russian government interfered in the 2016 presidential election in sweeping and systematic fashion."

The very next day, on July 25, 2019, the President spoke with President Zelensky by telephone in a much-anticipated telephone conversation.

In that call, President Zelensky advised the President that Ukraine was ready to purchase needed Javelin missiles from the United States to defend itself from ongoing armed aggression by Russia.

In his immediate response to President Zelensky's request for military assistance, the President replied: "I would like for you to do us a favor, though" and announce the launch of a corruption investigation against his most feared and formidable electoral rival, former Vice-President Biden, his son Hunter Biden, and the alleged involvement of Ukraine in the 2016 election for President of the United States.

The 'favor' the President wished of the Ukraine President was to be performed not to further United States national security policy since the national security community was unanimous in its collective support of Ukraine in its struggle against Russian military encroachment but to benefit the President personally and politically in his capacity as a candidate for reelection to the office he currently occupies.

On August 12, 2019, a whistleblower complaint was filed with the Inspector General of the Intelligence community, Michael Atkinson, who after receiving the complaint followed applicable procedure and notified in writing the Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Intelligence Committee that the whistleblower's complaint was 'deemed credible' and "related to one of the most important and significant of the [Director of National Intelligence]'s responsibilities to the American people."

On September 11, 2019, after many months, the White House's hold on needed military aid desperately needed by Ukraine was lifted as inexplicably and as swiftly as it was imposed.

Indeed, the only material change in circumstances that had occurred between the imposition and lifting of the hold was the fact that the President and his Administration was now aware that Congress and the public had learned that congressionally appropriated security assistance to an ally under attack by our

adversary was being withheld by the President for no apparent national security reason and that Congress had not been notified of the withholding by the Administration.

In September 2019, Members of the House of Representatives were alerted to a complaint filed by a whistleblower within the Intelligence Community.

The complaint alleged that on a July 25, 2019 call with the President of Ukraine, the President of the United States sought to withhold \$391 million in desperately needed foreign military aid to Ukraine unless and until it—either through procurement or manufacture—produced political dirt against former Vice-President Biden, who was perceived to pose the greatest threat to the current President's reelection in 2020.

On September 24, 2019, Speaker NANCY PELOSI announced the commencement of an impeachment inquiry.

A key witness was Ambassador William Taylor, one of West Point's most distinguished alumna, a Vietnam combat veteran, and the former Ambassador and then chargé d'affaires of the United States Embassy in Ukraine, who testified under oath that he told Gordon Sondland, our Ambassador to the European Union that it was "crazy" to withhold security assistance to Ukraine for a political campaign.

Ambassador Taylor also testified that one of his staff members in the Embassy in Ukraine advised him on July 26, 2019, the day after the President's telephone call with President Zelensky, that he clearly overheard a conversation that day between Ambassador Sondland and the President in which the latter asked Ambassador Sondland whether President Zelensky was "going to do the investigation."

That staffer, David Holmes, affirmed the correctness of Ambassador Taylor's account and went on to testify that in response to the President's question, Ambassador Sondland replied to the President that "[Zelensky] is going to do it" and that President Zelensky "will do anything you ask him to."

When Mr. Holmes asked Ambassador Sondland about the President's commitment to Ukraine, he testified that Ambassador Sondland replied that the President "does not give a [expletive] about Ukraine and that the President only cares about big stuff . . . that benefits the President, like the Biden investigation, that Mr. Giuliani was pushing."

Indispensable to carrying out the plan to announce the launch of a phony corruption investigation into former Vice-President Biden was the removal of the then United States Ambassador to Ukraine, Marie Yovanovitch, the longest serving female member of the diplomatic corps, and an American diplomat with a demonstrated expertise and distinguished record of fighting corruption and leading Ukraine away from its notorious past when it was a satellite of the Soviet Union.

So, led by Rudy Giuliani, the President's personal lawyer, a smear campaign was conducted against Ambassador Yovanovitch, accusing her falsely of impugning the President and allegedly abetting corruption in Ukraine.

This led directly to the Ambassador being recalled from her duty station and referenced in the July 25, 2019 telephone call where the President stated to President Zelensky that "[Ambassador Yovanovitch] from the United States, the woman, was bad news and the people she was dealing with in the Ukraine

were bad news" and that "she's going to go through some things."

David Hale, who as Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs was the third ranking official in the State Department, testified that he witnessed the smear campaign against Ambassador Yovanovitch and urged his departmental superiors to place a full-page advertisement in local Ukrainian press in support of Ambassador Yovanovitch, but this suggestion was refused.

In her appearance before the Intelligence Committee, Ambassador Yovanovitch testified that she was aghast that she was personally mentioned in a telephone call between the President and the President of Ukraine and stated that she felt threatened and intimidated when she heard the President remark that she was "going to go through some things."

Ambassador Yovanovitch relived this fear in real time when she learned the President was live tweeting disparaging things about her as she testified, implying, for example, that she was somehow in part responsible for the 1993 situation in Mogadishu, Somalia.

Three Administration officials with direct knowledge of the July 25, 2019 telephone call testified under oath before the Intelligence Committee: Jennifer Williams, a State Department foreign service officer to the Office of Vice-President MIKE PENCE; and Lt. Col. Alexander Vindman, NSC Director of European Affairs, who was born in the Ukraine on the anniversary of D-Day, immigrated to the United States with his father and twin brother when he was three years old, was later commissioned an officer in the United States Army and deployed overseas to South Korea, Germany, and Iraq, where he was wounded in combat operations and awarded the Purple Heart.

Ms. Williams characterized the President's conduct on the telephone call as "unusual," inappropriate, and partisan in nature.

Lt. Col. Vindman was gravely concerned because the President of the United States was requesting a foreign country to investigate an American citizen, an act so contrary to national policy and interest that he immediately reported the matter to a senior counsel lawyer on the National Security Council.

The third person witnessing the call was Tim Morrison, who at the time of the July 25, 2019 telephone call was Senior Director for Europe and Russia on the National Security Council and a former Republican congressional professional staff member, who testified that the President's behavior on the telephone call gave him a "sinking feeling" because it could easily be characterized as pursuing partisan political interests.

Mr. Morrison testified that he contacted NSC counsel and sought to have the record of the telephone call hidden on a secure server to avoid discovery by official Washington.

The testimony of Gordon Sondland, appointed by the President as the Ambassador to the European Union and a million-dollar Trump donor, was chilling, especially his testimony that "everyone was in the loop."

Ambassador Sondland testified that he communicated directly with the President who directed him to work on the Ukraine matter with Rudy Giuliani, who had no official role with the U.S. government.

Ambassador Sondland stated under oath that Rudy Giuliani pressured the Ukraine government to investigate Burisma, a Ukrainian

gas company that had Hunter Biden, the former vice-president's son as one of its board members.

Further, Ambassador Sondland testified that the President conditioned a White House meeting with President Zelensky and the release of security assistance on his announcement of an investigation designed to blame any 2016 presidential election interference on Ukraine and thus undermine the unanimous assessment of the American Intelligence Community that Russia interfered in the 2016 election to benefit candidate Trump and harm candidate Clinton.

In addition, according to Ambassador Sondland, the highly sought and desired White House visit and security assistance was conditioned on the announcement by President Zelensky of an investigation into his perceived chief domestic political rival, former Vice-President Joseph R. Biden.

It takes no great leap in logic to divine that the President's intent and purpose here was to replicate his 2016 campaign formula from 2016: invite foreign meddling, point to an investigation, and exploit it by rumor and innuendo on social media.

Ambassador Sondland asked rhetorically, "Was there a quid pro quo?" and then said: "As I testified previously, with regard to the requested White House call and White House meeting, the answer is yes."

And according to Ambassador Sondland, "[e]veryone was in the loop," including Secretary of State Mike Pompeo; acting White House chief of staff Mick Mulvaney; Mulvaney's senior adviser, Rob Blair; Secretary Pompeo's counselor, Ulrich Brechbuehl; Lisa Kenna, the State Department executive secretary; National Security Advisor John Bolton, Trump's national security adviser at the time; Bolton's Deputy National Security Advisor Fiona Hill; and NRC senior official Timothy Morrison, and even Vice President MIKE PENCE who Ambassador Sondland testified he told in September 2019 that the Ukraine aid appeared to be stalled because of the demand for investigations.

Finally, Dr. Fiona Hill, who preceded Tim Morrison in the Trump Administration as National Intelligence Officer for Russia and Eurasia testified that after speaking with and listening to Ambassador Sondland she came to understand that United States policy for Ukraine had diverged into one track pursuing standard United States policy objectives of promoting democracy and the rule of law, fighting corruption, and protecting Ukraine from Russia; and another track solely concerned with achieving the more narrow personal and political goal of the President to prevail upon the new Ukrainian president to commit publicly to announcing an investigation of supposed interference by Ukraine in the 2016 presidential election as well as a manufactured wrongdoing by former Vice-President Joseph Biden.

Dr. Hill testified that her direct supervisor, NSA Advisor John Bolton, characterized this second track as a "drug deal" which she stated to Ambassador Sondland that "I do think this is all going to blow up. And here we are."

Madam Speaker, I will further discuss what message this evidence sends to us loud and clear.

FURTHER REFLECTIONS ON SENATE JUDGMENT NOT TO CON-VICT AND REMOVE THE IM-PEACHED PRESIDENT FOR ABUSE OF POWER AND OB-STRUCTION OF CONGRESS

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2020

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, February 5, 2020, the United States Senate determined not to convict and remove from office Donald John Trump, President of the United States, who was impeached by the House for high crimes and misdemeanors; a decision I firmly believe will be judged harshly by history for all time.

Madam Speaker it is important to understand the seriousness of a determination by the House to exercise the power of impeachment, which under Article I, Section 2, Clause 5 of the Constitution is vested solely in the House of Representatives.

The purpose of impeachment is not to punish the person but to protect the people by removing from office an individual whose misconduct and behavior is so dangerous that it imperils the liberty of the people, the security of the nation, or the vitality of the governmental system.

In short, impeachment is the passionate outcry (*crie de coeur*) of a people alarmed at a pattern of abuses and usurpations that evidence a desire to reduce them to accept absolute despotism or establish tyrannical rule.

The impeachment power is vested in the House of Representatives because it is the body designed by the Framers to be the physical, direct, and immediate representatives of the People, reflecting all of their passions and hopes and fears and concerns.

So, when 'The People' who established the Constitution are acting to preserve and protect their governmental system and their security, there is no higher or countervailing authority to which they must yield.

A refusal by any authority subordinate to 'The People,' including the President of the United States, to cooperate with, or honor a request for information from the House of Representatives when it is exercising its sole power of impeachment is simply another way of saying that the person in question is exalting his or her interests over the sovereign interests of the people, the ultimate repository of all political power in a democratic republic such as the United States.

The impeachment inquiry initiated pursuant to H. Res. 660 by the House of Representatives systematically and methodically revealed the manner in which the President misused the power and authority of his office to extort a beleaguered and besieged ally to conspire with him to sabotage the 2016 presidential election so that he could retain the office he holds and continue to abuse its powers.

Every material allegation set forth in the whistleblower's complaint has been verified, corroborated, or affirmed by a host of witnesses who overcame opposition and threats by the White House and courageously testified from which three unassailable conclusions can be drawn.

First, the President violated his oath of office by placing his personal and political inter-

est above the national interest by scheming to get Ukraine to announce a phony investigation against a potential election opponent.

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

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

The evidence showed that the President of the United States abused the powers vested in him in the way the Framers most feared and worked hardest to protect against.

What this means in short is that the evidence showed that the President committed the trifecta of the most cardinal political sins that can be committed in a democratic republic.

If American elections are not free, fair, and uninfluenced by foreign actors, then the democracy is extinguished and citizens are reduced to subjects ruled by an authority dependent not on the consent of the governed, but on the assistance and beneficence of unaccountable foreign actors.

The testimony and evidence led to and supported a conclusion that the President abused his power to extort a foreign nation to conspire with him to sabotage an American election and undermine democracy so he could retain his office to abuse his powers.

Madam Speaker, Ukraine is not just another country but a bulwark for the West against Russia, its imperialism, its autocratic tendencies; Ukraine is an ally on the frontline of the United States' containment policy toward Russian expansion that has been in place since 1947.

Thus, withholding desperately needed security assistance to Ukraine not only harms that nation but endangers the security of more than 325 million Americans.

The conduct of the President adduced by the evidence illustrates the reason for the doomsday clause in Article I, section 2, clause 5 as the ultimate protector of a people and system of government in which America is to be ruled by American leaders selected by American voters without the assistance of non-Americans.

Madam Speaker, the hallmarks of a democratic system of government are: (1) an independent judiciary; (2) civilian control of the military; (3) free and independent political parties; (4) fealty to the rule of law; (5) freedom of speech and of assembly; and (6) a free and independent press.

But the lynchpin of a functioning and real democracy is free and fair elections.

As I stated earlier, if American elections are not free, fair, and uninfluenced by foreign actors, then the democracy is extinguished and citizens are reduced to subjects ruled by an authority dependent not on the consent of the governed, but on the assistance and beneficence of unaccountable foreign actors.

The Framers wanted to ensure that the President's allegiance would always be to the nation, which is why the text of the presidential oath is the only one specified in the Constitution and why the Emoluments Clause (Article 1, Section 9, clause 8) prohibits the President from accepting any title of nobility or

thing of value from any King, Prince, or foreign state without the consent of Congress.

The first President of the United States, George Washington, counseling in his famous 1796 Farewell Address to beware of foreign entanglements, said the government sometimes acts to make "the nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, ambition, and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes perhaps the liberty, of nations, has been the victim."

President Washington also pointed out the pernicious influence of foreign involvement in American elections:

And it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite nation), facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity; gilding, with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practice the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils. Such an attachment of a small or weak towards a great and powerful nation dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Madam Speaker, if we are to have government of the people, by the people, for the people, then elections must be decided by Americans, and only Americans, without the influence of foreign leaders or nations.

The only legitimate way political authority is conveyed voluntarily and consensually from the governed to the governors is through free and fair elections uncorrupted by foreign involvement.

In seeking to entangle Ukraine directly in the 2020 presidential election, the actions proved by the House Impeachment Managers showed that the President acted to further his own personal political interests and disregarded his oath registered in Heaven to "preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Instead of advancing America's interests, Russia, America's implacable foe since 1945, has been emboldened and is benefitting from every action that weakens or jeopardizes Ukraine's ability to defend itself from aggression, beginning with the lukewarm embrace of this Administration of NATO, and especially Article 5 of the NATO Treaty, which deems an attack on any NATO member country as an attack on all, a commitment that has kept the peace in Europe since the end of World War II.

The Framers understood that abuse of power is the gravest offense that can be committed in a democratic republic.

Criminal offenses, the Framers understood, could be adjudicated in the judicial system, policy disagreements could be worked out in the political system, and concerns over maladministration could be addressed and decided or corrected in the electoral system.

But acts that by their nature injure the very system of government itself are different, or sui generis, and require a different and more immediate remedy, and that is the removal