

General William P. Barr in opening investigations connected to a political opponent, Vice President Joseph Biden, Jr., and a debunked conspiracy theory alleging that Ukraine—not Russia—was responsible for meddling in the 2016 election.

Just weeks before the call, President Trump withheld nearly \$400 million in critical security assistance to Ukraine, which had been overwhelmingly approved by Congress. No reason was given for the hold beyond that it was directed by the president. The hold on security assistance was lifted only after the whistleblower complaint was filed and Congress opened its inquiry.

The investigation also revealed that besides withholding military aid, the president and his allies withheld White House meetings, phone calls and trade preferences from Ukraine.

We heard from nonpartisan State Department and intelligence officials who worked for the president, and they confirmed the allegations outlined in the whistleblower reporter.

I have reviewed the evidence and followed the hearings. It is clear the president's actions were a flagrant abuse of constitutional power; it was unlawful, and it jeopardized our national security.

The president had every opportunity to present contrary evidence but did not. Instead, he chose to obstruct the inquiry, preventing top officials from testifying and withholding relevant information.

Some have argued to let the voters in the next election decide. But how can we trust an election that the president is trying to corrupt?

I grew up in this country believing no one is above the law, including the president. If any president—Democrat or Republican—had committed these offenses, I would reach the same conclusion. And I ask others how they would feel if President Obama, instead of President Trump, engaged in this conduct.

Not all bad conduct is impeachable. Being rude or mean is not impeachable. Jaywalking, petty theft or infidelity does not put our national security at risk. But asking another country to meddle in our election and withholding vital security assistance to an ally is what our founders feared and why they placed impeachment in our Constitution.

The president once said that he could stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot somebody without losing any support. Clearly, he was exaggerating, but have we become so partisan, polarized, and tribal that as long as it is someone on our "team," they can defy the law?

The president is wrong to believe this is all about him. More importantly, it is about defending the rule of law and our Constitution and what signal we send future presidents of what is acceptable behavior. In short, do we want a democracy where no one is above the law, or do we want a monarchy?

The decision of whether the president should be removed from office now rests with the Senate. In the meantime, I will continue to work across party lines, tackling issues of importance like lowering health care and prescription drug costs, ending trade wars, and combating the student loan debt crisis.

IMPEACHING DONALD JOHN
TRUMP, PRESIDENT OF THE
UNITED STATES, FOR HIGH
CRIMES AND MISDEMEANORS

SPEECH OF

HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Mr. CONAWAY. Madam Speaker, other than authorizing an act of war, impeachment is the gravest item that we as a Congress can consider. The decision to move forward with impeachment of a United States President is so consequential that it has only been done three times in our entire nation's history prior to this year, 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 this President since the day he took office. Their actions are clearly motivated by pure hatred for President Trump. This impeachment vote today is simply the next step in their long-held plan to remove him from office.

The partisan impeachment 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 these meetings, but the result of this decision was that most Members of Congress and all Americans were blocked from hearing the facts for themselves.

It's also critical to remember that the House Intelligence Committee had no business conducting the impeachment inquiry to begin with—the House Judiciary Committee is the Committee tasked with all responsibilities surrounding impeachment in the House of Representatives. The Intelligence Committee had no business running this investigation at all, let alone running it in secret. As with past impeachment investigations, the investigation should have been led by a special prosecutor or independent counsel who then would turn over their findings to the Judiciary Committee—none of this happened here.

Chairman SCHIFF repeatedly withheld crucial information from 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 outlets for spreading misinformation and falsehoods throughout the impeachment process.

The public hearings were held with complete disregard for the House Rules and decades of precedent. Republicans were not allowed to call witnesses or make basic parliamentary motions. In fact, the only witnesses allowed to testify publicly were those who fit neatly within the Democrats' predetermined narrative.

Most importantly, we have not been presented with any real evidence that proves the President is guilty of "high crimes and misdemeanors," as required by the Constitution to remove a duly-elected president. If there were criminal activity, as many Democrats have claimed, then why are there no crimes listed in the articles of impeachment?

As a member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, I have had a ringside seat for not only the impeachment proceedings, but for the years of investigations into President Trump that preceded this one. When I led the Intelligence Committee's Russia Investigation, the Democrat minority led by Rep. SCHIFF was given every opportunity to participate, and they did so. They were not treated as a minority party, where their objections and right to call witnesses were denied as the Democrats did to Republicans in this impeachment investigation. I treated them with fairness and dignity and did not cast aspersions on them by calling their loyalty to our country or motivations into question. The investigation into Russia meddling was thorough and took more than fifteen months, during which we interviewed over 70 witnesses and poured over more than 300,000 documents. This impeachment investigation, by contrast, was rushed through in less than two months, with just a handful of witnesses.

The charade of a fair proceeding was further emphasized with the Democrats' refusal to let the defendant offer evidence and produce witnesses. The defendant—President Trump—has a right to defend himself, a right which was only ceremoniously and speciously offered once the investigation and report were completed.

It is clear—the verdict in the House was predetermined.

This has been a colossal waste of taxpayer dollars and of Congress' time. However, my greatest fear is that it's not over. When Democrats found no evidence of collusion during the Russia Investigation, they pivoted to the Mueller investigation. When Special Counsel Mueller's report did not include anything Democrat's found useful, they refocused their efforts once again to hone in on a supposed scandal with Ukraine. When this inevitably fails too, what will be the next casualty in their desperate attempt to destroy a president they dislike?

We have forever weakened this body by turning impeachment into a political weapon and set a terrible precedent for all future Congresses. This impeachment scheme is nothing more than an attempt to overturn the 2016 election and to conduct taxpayer-funded opposition research and damage the President's electability heading into 2020.

The American people see right through this charade, and are fed up. It's time to stop this madness and get back to the important work the American people sent us here to do.

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SPEECH OF

HON. TONY CÁRDENAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Madam Speaker, the United States House of Representatives will vote to impeach the President.

This is one of the biggest decisions I have had to make in my seven years in Congress. Since I came to Congress, my goal has always been to help the lives of the people of the San Fernando Valley.

And in the past year, we have done just that.

We've passed legislation to lower the cost of prescription drugs, combat climate change, secure our elections, make sure our veterans have the care that they need, and that our children attend safe schools.

Impeachment was not our only goal.

This president left us no other choice.

After reading the facts, listening to the testimony of witnesses, and seeing how this President put his own personal political interests above the American people, I will vote to impeach Donald Trump.

This is not something I take pleasure in.

This is a solemn moment for our country.

This vote is about the safety of the American people and the future of our democracy. I cannot, in good conscience, ignore his outright disregard for the rule of law, his continued obstruction of Congress, and the use of his office for personal gain. President Trump's most recent abuse of power was the breaking point.

For a sitting president of the United States to actively seek the interference of a foreign government in our election by withholding critical military aid is a violation of his oath of office.

President Trump has purposefully damaged the integrity of our elections and put American lives at risk.

The founders of this great country and the authors of the Constitution created a system of checks and balances so that no single branch of government would become too powerful and abuse that power.

They devised a mechanism for removing a president from office should a person like Donald Trump, use the office for their own personal, unscrupulous reasons.

I came to my decision after reviewing the mountain of evidence and the testimony of several high-ranking White House officials who have testified and confirmed his malfeasance.

I do not take my responsibility as Representative for California's 29th District lightly. Serving the people of my district is one of the greatest honors of my life.

It is my constitutional obligation to do what is right for my district and for all of the American people.

Madam Speaker, President Trump remains a threat to our democracy and by voting to impeach, I am fulfilling my constitutional duty and living up to the oath I swore before the American people.

HONORING SYLVIA ROSEN ON HER
100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 19, 2019

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Sylvia Rosen, a New York City original who turned 100 years old this week.

Born December 14, 1919 in Manhattan, New York, Sylvia lived with her mother, sister and three brothers. In 1928, at age nine, Sylvia moved to Brooklyn where her family settled at south 9th and Roehling.

Sylvia attended elementary school at P.S. 16 in Williamsburg. Later, she attended Seward Park high school. Having grown up with

three brothers, Sylvia was a tomboy and enjoyed playing softball with friends and checkers and marbles with brothers and sisters.

After graduating high school, Sylvia attended a trade school for sewing. In 1939, Sylvia married her husband, Hyman, in a local synagogue. They moved to Independence Towers when they first opened in 1965. Although her husband passed away in 1978, Sylvia still resides in Independence Towers to this day.

Sylvia's best friends are Dina and Elsie. They live nearby and the three celebrate their birthdays together. She also has a cousin named Sylvia. They were both named after their grandma and her mother's best friend.

Madam Speaker, as Ms. Sylvia turns 100, I ask all my colleagues to join me in wishing her all the best for a joyous and momentous celebration.

RECOGNIZING MS. LISA
WILLENBERG

HON. J. FRENCH HILL

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 19, 2019

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Lisa Willenberg for being selected as the new Chancellor of the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton (UACCM).

The college was established in 1963 and Ms. Willenberg serves as the college's fourth Chancellor and the first woman in this position.

She earned her Bachelor of Business Administration from the University of Central Arkansas and Master of Education at the University of Arkansas.

Ms. Willenberg has served at Morrilton for 27 years, first as a general accountant and, in 2011, becoming Vice Chancellor for Finance and Operations—handling the college's finances, human resources, information technology and physical plant.

Under her leadership, the college has increased its fiscal reserves, improved the college's financial scoring and constructed new campus facilities to benefit the students.

Congratulations to Chancellor Lisa Willenberg on being selected for this prestigious position, and I look forward to the school's success for years to come.

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SPEECH OF

HON. DWIGHT EVANS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Mr. EVANS. Madam Speaker, I want to talk about why I am voting "Yes" on both articles of impeachment against President Trump:

Impeachment is a solemn and historic task. With the outrageous, ongoing conduct of President Trump, impeachment is necessary for upholding our oath of office and the Constitution. Benjamin Franklin said after the Con-

stitutional Convention in Philadelphia that we have 'a republic, if you can keep it.' House Democrats intend to keep it.

This impeachment process, holding the President accountable, is only possible because the House majority changed, but the root cause of it all is the President's own unconstitutional, reckless behavior. He withheld \$391 million in congressionally approved, tax-funded military aid from a free country, Ukraine, that is trying to defend itself from a dictatorship, Russia, and he did this for political gain. His action appears to have cost Ukrainian lives. He obstructed investigation and oversight by Congress, which is a co-equal, independent branch of government under the Constitution. He appears to have no shame or regret about any of this behavior, which means he is likely to repeat it unless he is held accountable.

No one is above the law in America—that is the principle the House is voting to uphold. Now the nation will be watching the Senate to see if Senators will uphold their oath to do impartial justice.

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SPEECH OF

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Mr. KEATING. Madam Speaker, the United States is based on a principle that our second President, John Adams of Massachusetts, so eloquently summed up long ago: we are a 'government of laws, not of men.'

No one, absolutely no one, stands above the law.

Over a century after President Adams uttered those words, another Massachusetts statesman, John F. Kennedy, delivered his famous "City on a Hill" speech before the General Court of Massachusetts prior to the start of his administration in 1961. President Kennedy powerfully proclaimed that 'we must always consider that we shall be a city upon a hill [and that] the eyes of all people are upon us.'

He continued, explaining that:

For of those to whom much is given, much is required. And when at some future date the high court of history sits in judgment on each one of us—recording whether in our brief span of service we fulfilled our responsibilities to the state—our success or failure, in whatever office we may hold, will be measured by the answers to four questions:

First, were we truly men of courage—with the courage to stand up to one's enemies—and the courage to stand up, when necessary, to one's associates—the courage to resist public pressure, as well as private greed?

Secondly, were we truly men of judgment—with perceptive judgment of the future as well as the past—of our own mistakes as well as the mistakes of others—with enough wisdom to know that we did not know, and enough candor to admit it?

Third, were we truly men of integrity—men who never ran out on either the principles in which they believed or the people who believed in them—men who believed in us—men whom neither financial gain nor political ambition could ever divert from the fulfillment of our sacred trust?