

Republican-controlled House votes for impeachment inquiry into Biden

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The political crisis within the US ruling elite deepened further on Wednesday as the House of Representatives voted to approve a formal impeachment inquiry against President Biden over alleged connections to the well-known corrupt business dealings of his son Hunter Biden.

The measure was passed in a straight party-line vote, with all 221 Republicans voting for it and all 212 Democrats who voted opposing it. One Democrat did not vote.

The vote was preceded by hours of “debate,” which consisted of mudslinging by Republicans, who cited the charges against Hunter Biden and sought to link his father to them, and hand-wringing by Democrats, who bemoaned the effort to investigate Joe Biden in an attempt to find some link to his son’s financial dealings in China and Ukraine.

As a substantive matter, the vote accomplishes little, since the investigation into Joe Biden had already been launched by then-House Speaker Kevin McCarthy three months ago, and has been conducted aggressively by several House committees, including Judiciary, under Trump attack dog Jim Jordan, and Government Oversight, under James Comer.

Neither committee has uncovered evidence of direct financial links between Joe Biden and his son’s overseas operations. Despite claims of “stonewalling,” the White House has supplied more than 100,000 pages of financial records and private communications, as well as Treasury Department financial reports.

Numerous witnesses subpoenaed by the committees have testified, including US Attorney David Weiss of Delaware, who is acting as a special counsel in the long-running investigation of Hunter Biden. Last week Weiss brought nine charges of tax violations against the younger Biden, including three felonies, before a

federal grand jury in California.

Hunter Biden has been subpoenaed by the Judiciary Committee and has agreed to testify, but only in public, claiming that any deposition given behind closed doors will be leaked selectively by the Republicans, with quotes chosen to undermine the political standing of President Biden going into the 2024 presidential election.

Only hours before the House vote, Hunter Biden staged a political stunt on Capitol Hill, presenting himself for public testimony only to have the offer rejected by Jordan, the chair of the Judiciary Committee, who insisted on a secret deposition first, declaring that the witness did not have the right to determine the forum in which he would honor the subpoena.

There is enough hypocrisy on both sides to fill an ocean.

Jordan himself defied a subpoena from the House Select Committee into the attack on the Capitol on January 6, 2021, refusing a summons to testify about his actions leading up to the attack, when he aggressively promoted the “stop the steal” campaign by Trump and his supporters. He would also have been questioned about the substance of his cellphone conversation with Trump during the attack, when he reportedly pleaded with the president to call off the mob before harm was done to congressmen and senators.

Congressional Republicans profess outrage at the financial dealings of Hunter Biden, who raked in millions trading on his father’s name when Joe Biden was vice president in the Obama administration. The elder Biden was given the main responsibility for overseeing US operations in Ukraine during the 2014 Maidan coup, in which neo-Nazi forces spearheaded

the overthrow of an elected pro-Russian president.

The Republicans took no such position on the activities of Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner, who made deals with Saudi Arabia in a payoff for his role in Trump administration policy in the Middle East, which brought *billions* in revenue to his real estate and investment companies.

On the Democratic side, all the denunciations of the flimsy and politically driven character of the impeachment drive by the Republicans apply with equal force to the Democratic Party's first impeachment of Trump, based on a single phone call to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky during the summer of 2019.

In hindsight, after nearly two years of bloody fighting in the US-backed proxy war against Russia in Ukraine, it is clear that the political content of the first Trump impeachment was identical to that of a series of Democratic initiatives against Trump during his presidency: all were tied to disputes over imperialist foreign policy.

The Democrats took no action against Trump's numerous attacks on democratic rights, particularly against immigrants, or his slashing of taxes on the rich. But they were up in arms over his abandoning the Obama administration's efforts in Ukraine. These resumed as soon as Biden entered the White House, and succeeded in provoking the reactionary invasion of Ukraine by Russian President Vladimir Putin in a war that has seriously weakened the geopolitical position of Russia.

Despite the unanimous Republican vote for an impeachment inquiry—not yet a vote to impeach Biden, whose outcome would still be in doubt—the White House and congressional Democrats will continue to pursue their goal of obtaining the collaboration of their Republican “friends” and “colleagues” for the imperialist intervention in Ukraine.

Biden hosted Ukrainian President Zelensky Tuesday and appealed once again for the Republican-controlled House to pass a supplemental spending bill providing \$106 billion for “national security.” The lion's share of this, some \$61 billion, would go to arm and finance the Ukrainian regime. The rest would go to military aid to Israel and Taiwan, and to a further buildup on the US-Mexico border, including more Border Patrol agents and more physical and electronic infrastructure.

The deal has been stalled over Republican demands for sweeping changes in border policies, including more aggressive actions against migrants claiming asylum and changes in their legal status and rights.

The main political shift that made possible the unanimous Republican vote for an impeachment inquiry was among the so-called House moderates, Republicans in districts that voted for Biden in the presidential race but elected a Republican congressman. Most of these had publicly expressed reluctance to support an inquiry during the summer, leading then-Speaker McCarthy to authorize an inquiry on his own authority, rather than taking a vote of the entire House.

After the ouster of McCarthy and his eventual replacement by ultra-right Louisiana Representative Mike Johnson, the White House sent a letter November 17 declaring that without a House vote, the impeachment probe had no legal standing. This reportedly backfired, contributing to the unanimous vote Wednesday.

Comer told Fox News that additional political pressure was placed on the Republican holdouts during the Thanksgiving recess, when they returned to their districts. They faced stepped-up demands from the fascistic pro-Trump elements who now dominate the Republican Party, who threatened to mount primary challenges against any House member who did not line up behind impeachment.

Trump has been demanding the impeachment of Biden in a string of public statements on his proprietary social media site, Truth Social. One such message called on House members to “IMPEACH the BUM, or fade into OBLIVION. THEY DID IT TO US!”

Texas Representative Troy Nehls told *USA Today* he wanted to give Trump “a little bit of ammo to fire back,” suggesting that an impeachment of Biden could be used to offset the political impact of Trump's two impeachments, as well as the 91 felony charges he now faces in a series of federal and state prosecutions, mainly for his actions leading up to and on January 6, 2021.



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