

# Republicans advance articles of impeachment against Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas

Jacob Crosse, Barry Grey  
31 January 2024

In an 18-15 party line vote early Wednesday morning, Republicans on the House Homeland Security Committee advanced two articles of impeachment against Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas.

The impeachment articles accuse Mayorkas of “willful and systemic refusal to comply with the law” and “breaching the public trust.” The first charge is based on the claim that Mayorkas is deliberately refusing to enforce existing laws to halt the flow of refugees into the US from Mexico. The second is based on the assertion that he has lied to Congress and the American people.

The partisan impeachment drive, if successful, would mark the first impeachment of a Cabinet secretary in nearly 150 years. The last impeachment of a Cabinet official took place in 1876 against Secretary of War William Belknap on charges of corruption. Belknap resigned before he was acquitted by the Senate.

Should Mayorkas be impeached by the Republican-controlled House, there is virtually no chance of him being convicted and removed from office by the Democratic-controlled Senate. That, however, does not negate the significance of Wednesday’s vote.

The move to impeach Mayorkas by the Republicans is an expression of the breakdown of bourgeois democratic norms and another sign that the American constitutional order is collapsing. It both underscores and intensifies the explosive crisis-ridden conditions under which the 2024 elections in the US are taking place.

Nothing has been resolved since then-President Donald Trump headed up a nearly successful fascist attack on the US Capitol on January 6, 2021 to block the certification of Biden’s victory and maintain himself in power as president-dictator. Far from it. The coup-leader Trump is now the likely Republican candidate in what is shaping up as a rematch with Biden, who is overseeing the Israeli

genocide in Gaza and a rapidly expanding war in the Middle East, along with an escalating war against Russia in Ukraine.

With a majority of voters telling pollsters they are disgusted by the choice between two despised politicians, moves are underway to exclude Trump from the ballot in some Democratic-controlled states and Republican-controlled states are defending Texas’ usurpation of federal authority over the US-Mexico border.

Trump and the bulk of the Republican leadership are promoting the narrative that the increased flow of migrants across the southern border is a foreign “invasion,” and both Mayorkas and his boss Biden are enabling the invaders by handcuffing the US border police and undermining US sovereignty. The implication, stated more or less openly, is that Biden and the Democrats are traitors, in cahoots with America’s enemies and Mexican drug cartels, which are using illegal “aliens” to flood the US with fentanyl.

This fascistic narrative is supplemented by the antisemitic and xenophobic “Great Replacement Theory”—promoted by both top Republican officials and the head of the US Border Patrol union—which claims that the Democrats are flooding the country with aliens to undercut white Americans and permanently shift political power to the “globalist” Democratic Party.

The Republican Party, dominated by Trump, is unabashedly using impeachment, a procedure reserved under the Constitution for officials accused of “high crimes and misdemeanors” such as treason or bribery, for partisan political ends.

The drive to impeach Mayorkas is an extension of Trump’s xenophobic election campaign, centered on anti-immigrant chauvinism. The response of Biden and the Democrats is to adopt in all essentials the anti-immigrant

program of the Republicans.

Wednesday's vote by the House Homeland Security Committee on articles of impeachment against Mayorkas came in the midst of negotiations in the Senate between the White House and leading Senate Republicans on a bipartisan border deal, as part of Republican support in the Senate for Biden's \$110 billion supplemental funding request, which includes \$60 billion for Ukraine's war against Russia. The request would also provide \$14 billion in military aid to Israel, in the midst of the Zionist regime's genocide in Gaza, billions more in military aid to Taiwan and other US allies in the Indo-Pacific directed against China and \$14 billion to further militarize the US-Mexico border.

There is virtually no limit to the anti-democratic measures Biden and the Democrats are prepared to accept in return for funding of the war in Ukraine, the overriding concern of the Biden administration. This was made explicit in a statement issued by the White House last Friday.

In the statement, Biden pledged to "shut down the border" should Republicans grant him new authorities under the bipartisan border agreement being finalized in the Senate. While leading Senate Republicans are praising the deal, calling it the most restrictive border policy in decades, Trump has denounced it and demanded that it be rejected by the Republican-controlled House. He has made no bones about the fact that he wants no deal on the border with Biden, whatever the consequences for the Ukraine military, because he wants to use the "alien invasion" as the central issue in his election campaign.

House Republicans, including the fascistic House Speaker Mike Johnson, have declared any Senate bill "dead on arrival" in the lower legislative chamber. A House impeachment of Mayorkas, followed by a Senate trial in the midst of the election campaign, is part of the propaganda drive mapped out by the GOP and its faction of the ruling class.

Ahead of the House Homeland Security Committee hearing, which began Tuesday morning and dragged on for 15 hours, Speaker Johnson reiterated his support for the impeachment of Mayorkas and pledged to hold an impeachment vote by the full House as soon as possible. Johnson claimed that Mayorkas "willfully undermined American laws, made false statements and handicapped law enforcement."

Rep. Elise Stefanik called the impeachment of Mayorkas "long overdue." Stefanik has spearheaded the witch-hunt against university presidents for insufficiently

clamping down on anti-genocide and pro-Palestinian protests. She has slandered students and faculty opposed to Israel's fascist government, accusing them of antisemitism.

This did not prevent her from spewing Great Replacement Theory dogma on the floor of the House. Stefanik claimed that Mayorkas, the son of a Cuban Jew, was "responsible" for the "devastation and destruction" of "countless American families" by allowing a "full fledged invasion" of "illegal immigrants pouring across our borders."

Despite the overwhelming support for impeachment among House Republicans, the result of a floor vote remains uncertain due to the very slim Republican majority in the chamber. Two GOP defections would likely doom the impeachment bill to defeat.

Throughout the marathon House Homeland Security Committee hearing, Democrats quoted a letter issued by Mayorkas the day before. In the letter, Mayorkas noted that since May 12, 2023, his department had "removed or returned more than 500,000 individuals," and that "total removals since mid-May 2023 exceed removals in every full fiscal year since 2015."

Mayorkas boasted that "daily removals and returns are nearly double what they were compared to the pre-pandemic average."

In his opening statement, the ranking Democratic member of the committee, Bennie Thompson, touted the right-wing record of Mayorkas and the Biden administration, noting that under Mayorkas the border police have "removed record levels of migrants" and "detained more people than Congress has provided funding for."

Thompson denounced the Republicans for not supporting the \$110 billion supplemental national security package, saying that "they are turning their backs on border agents and officers." He called on his "Republican colleagues" to "get serious" and negotiate "border security legislation with the White House and Senate."



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://www.wsws.org/contact)**