

U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi is proceeding with impeachment charges against President Trump. As a member of Congress and an Idaho Representative, I understand the gravity of the situation. Every future U.S. President will be subject to the precedent Congress sets within the next few days. To remain objective, every time I review information I ask myself, "... how would I act if the President being charged was not a member of my political party?" In that spirit, and as of this writing, the following reflects my perspective.

Democrat leadership, some long-term Washington bureaucrats, and mainstream media outlets never accepted the fact that Hillary Clinton lost in 2016. They bristle at Donald Trump's style and actions as a "change-agent." Efforts to impeach him started within days of his Presidency and despite an impressive national economic policy performance, those efforts continue today. Impeachment is the objective, but a crime is needed for their justification.

Many charges have been attempted: Obstruction of Justice with Russia. Collusion with Russia. Personal Tax Fraud. Election interference. Treason. But when two and a half years' worth of investigation (Mueller) came up empty, another crime was needed.

Most recently, alleged crimes charged by an anonymous "whistleblower" form the basis for current charges. It states there was a "quid pro quo" demand by President Trump to the newly-elected Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, asking for an investigation involving a political foe in return for U.S. aid. To evaluate the validity of these charges, it is important to review the timeline of related events.

- In 2014, while then-Vice President Joe Biden was managing U.S.-Ukraine policy, his son, Hunter Biden, joined the board of the largest natural gas company in Ukraine (Burisma Holdings), for a salary of \$50,000 per month.
- In 2015, VP Biden took around a dozen trips to Ukraine. Simultaneously, Burisma Holdings was being investigated for corruption by Prosecutor Viktor Shokin.
- While speaking on a panel in 2015, VP Biden detailed one of these trips ([video here](#)). He described threatening then-Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, to withhold \$1 billion in aid to Ukraine if they did not immediately fire the Prosecutor Viktor Shokin.
- In February 2016, VP Biden had another phone call with then-President Petro Poroshenko.
- One week after this call from VP Biden, Poroshenko fired Prosecutor Shokin.
- On April 21, 2019 newly-elected Ukrainian President Zelensky won his election, on the promise that he would fight against corruption in Ukraine.
- In July 2019, President Trump [spoke on the phone](#) with the newly-elected Ukrainian President to congratulate him. On the call, President Trump raised concerns with former VP Biden's demands for termination of the Prosecutor investigating Burisma Holdings. President Zelensky expressed similar concerns and said that he planned to investigate the matter further.
- In August 2019, [a whistleblower report](#) was filed. The report accused President Trump of political motives for his concern with former VP Biden's interference in the corruption allegations of his son's employer. These allegations are based on what the whistleblower heard from a 3<sup>rd</sup> party (he or she did not listen to the call directly).

Concerns about Burisma Holdings existed long before Donald Trump or Volodymyr Zelensky were in office-- even former U.S. President Obama's administration had them under investigation. This, and other concerns, caused Zelensky to run his presidential campaign on the promise to eliminate corruption. Since elected, Zelensky has fired nearly 500 prosecutors and

launched a probe against former President Poroshenko. He even re-opened the investigation into Burisma.

The current impeachment case is built upon claims that President Trump used “quid pro quo” to demand that Zelensky continue investigations of Burisma, including justification for Hunter Biden’s board position in exchange for U.S. aid. When American taxpayer money is involved in the form of Ukrainian aid, President Trump has a responsibility to investigate any wrong doing. The fact that the investigation involves someone who later became a political opponent does not eliminate the obligation to investigate. It is also important to note that aid was in fact delivered to Ukraine, who gave nothing in return.

I was personally present during several of the impeachment hearings. Witnesses were pre-interviewed and selected solely by democrats. Nearly all of them were not involved with the phone call between Presidents Trump and Zelensky in July of 2019. Here are some testimonial exchanges with pertinent witnesses:

While questioned about the allegations of a quid pro quo charge in an Intelligence Committee hearing, EU Ambassador Gordon Sondland explained his call to President Trump, explicitly asking about the possibility of a quid pro quo: *“I finally called the President. I believe it was on the 9th of September; I can’t find the records, and they won’t provide them to me. But I believe I just asked him [Trump] an open-ended question: [...] ‘What do you want from Ukraine? I keep hearing all these different ideas and theories and this and that. What do you want?’ And it was a very short, abrupt conversation. He was not in a good mood. And he [Trump] just said, ‘I want nothing. I want nothing. I want no quid pro quo. Tell Zelensky to do the right thing.’ Something to that effect.”*

When asked whether they “assert there was an impeachable offense in [the July 25] call,” both Ambassador Ukrainian Bill Taylor and Deputy Assistant Secretary George Kent [answered, no.](#)

When asked if she had any information on President Trump’s involvement in criminal activity, former Ukrainian Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch [testified, no.](#)

National Security Council (NSC) staff member Alexander Vindman and Office of the Vice President special adviser Jennifer Williams [both said no](#) when asked if they labeled the President’s conduct as bribery.

When asked if they saw any bribery, extortion, or quid pro quo, both US Envoy Ambassador Kurt Volker, the U.S. special envoy for Ukraine negotiations, and NSC Sr. Director for Europe Tim Morrison, [said no.](#)

Additionally, President Zelensky has stated multiple times that he felt no pressure or threat from President Trump to look into this matter, specifically recently in a [Time Magazine interview](#) when he stated, *“It’s not about a quid pro quo,”* and in the [September 25th interview](#) at the United Nations Headquarters when he stated, *“nobody pushed me [to investigate].”*

The level of politicization in this inquiry is very troubling. From the whistleblower’s hiring of a known anti-Trump lawyer, to the lack of precedent followed in the process of this inquiry, political motivation has superseded fact.

In an age where heart-racing commentary is favored over less-exhilarating truth, the facts speak for themselves.