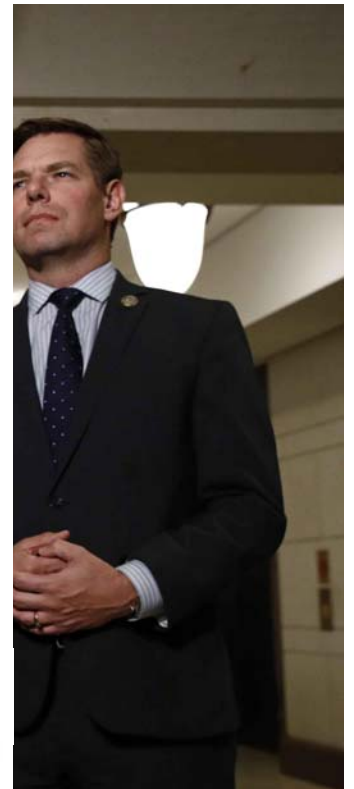




## CONGRESS

## Trump makes 'very powerful case' for impeachment based on obstruction, Schiff warns

The Intelligence Committee chairman vowed Democrats will not be slowed by legal battles in their march toward impeachment.



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By **KYLE CHENEY**

10/28/2019 11:09 AM EDT



President Donald Trump's effort to block a former national security aide from testifying in Democrats' impeachment inquiry is strengthening the case for impeachment based on obstruction of Congress, House Intelligence Chairman Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) said Monday.

Schiff also told reporters that Charles Kupperman — who skipped a Monday morning deposition and is seeking a judge's ruling on whether he has to testify

— may be held in contempt of Congress.

*Story Continued Below*

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“A private citizen cannot sue the Congress to avoid coming in when they are served a lawful subpoena,” said Schiff, who is leading the impeachment

But more significantly, Schiff said Trump’s direction that Kupperman ignore Congress’ subpoena — along with other witnesses the White House has sought to block — has formed “a very powerful case against the president for obstruction, an article of impeachment based on obstruction.”

Schiff also argued that the president is seeking to block Kupperman because he is concerned about a high-level source corroborating damning testimony that Trump pressured Ukraine to open investigations of his political rivals — and condition military aid and a White House visit on bending the European ally to his will.

Though Kupperman is seeking a court ruling on his obligation, Schiff said he doesn’t intend to allow potentially lengthy court battles to slow Congress’ march toward articles of impeachment, which many Democrats would like to see passed by the end of the year.

“We are not willing to allow the White House to engage us in a lengthy game of rope-a-dope with the courts,” he said.

Schiff's comments came shortly after Republicans derided the impeachment inquiry as a farce built on hearsay.

“Every single witness who talked to the president, each and every time they’ve said he did nothing wrong, he’s innocent of any charges.” Rep. Mark Meadows (R-N.C.) told reporters. “It’s always people who talked to people who have talked to other people who think that he might have meant this. When you get direct evidence, this president is not only innocent, but he certainly has not done anything impeachable and it’s time we bring this charade to a close.”

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