

Politics



Pelosi tamps down talk of impeachment



“If and when the time comes for impeachment, it will have to be something that has such a crescendo in a bipartisan way,” House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) said on CBS News on Sunday. (Shawn Thew/EPA-EFE/Shutterstock) (Shawn Thew/EPA-EFE/REX/Shutterstock)

By **Brian Fung**

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House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) sought to quell a rising furor Sunday over whether Democratic lawmakers will seek to impeach President Trump, saying in an interview on CBS News’s “Sunday Morning” that the public has yet to hear the conclusions of special counsel Robert S. Mueller III’s investigation.

Democrats are unlikely to pursue a path of impeachment without Republican backing, Pelosi hinted. That could hinge significantly on whether Mueller’s probe uncovers concrete evidence of wrongdoing.

“If and when the time comes for impeachment,” she said, “it will have to be something that has such a crescendo in a bipartisan way.”

Pelosi’s remarks were echoed Sunday by House Majority Leader Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.), who said calls for Trump’s impeachment were a “distraction” from Democrats’ “substantive agenda.”

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“I don’t think an impeachment process is inevitable, and that’s not what we’re focused on,” Hoyer told NBC’s “Meet the Press.”

Pelosi’s remarks come amid days of Democratic infighting after newly elected Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.) vowed at a progressive gathering on Thursday to “impeach the motherf-----,” referring to Trump.

‘We’re gonna impeach the motherf---’: Rep. Rashida Tlaib on Trump



Hours after being sworn in Jan. 3, Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.) drew criticism for using profanity while calling for President Trump’s impeachment. (Drea Cornejo/The Washington Post)

Many of Tlaib’s colleagues have cautioned against moving too quickly toward impeachment. Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.) on Sunday told ABC News that impeaching Trump would be “an unbelievably serious undertaking.”

“We need to be very deliberate, very careful and very serious about how we do this,” he said. “We need to see Mueller’s report, and we need to make a very, very strong case if there is one to be made.”

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Others said that while House lawmakers could “line up the votes,” a bid for impeachment would be fruitless without Republican support in the Senate.

“If the Republican senators, at least some of them, are not on board, then all you have is a failed impeachment, and I don’t think that benefits the country,” Rep. Adam B. Schiff (D-Calif.), chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, said Sunday on CNN.

In Washington, a [wave of shock](#) accompanied Tlaib’s use of profanity. Sen. Doug Jones (D-Ala.) told CNN on Sunday that even his most progressive constituents “know better” than to use “the coarse language the president uses in public.” For her part, Pelosi said Friday that although she did not agree with Tlaib’s choice of words, it was not “anything worse” than what Trump has said.

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But Mick Mulvaney, Trump’s acting chief of staff, rejected the idea that Trump has helped coarsen the public discourse.

“I don’t think anybody blames the president for the coarsening of the language,” Mulvaney told CNN on Sunday.

Still, some of Tlaib’s colleagues have come to her defense. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.), a fellow freshman, [tweeted](#) Saturday, “I got your back,” and accused Republicans of working themselves into “faux-outrage.”

“Republican hypocrisy at its finest: saying that Trump admitting to sexual assault on tape is just ‘locker room talk,’ but scandalizing themselves into faux-outrage when my sis says a curse word in a bar,” Ocasio-Cortez tweeted.

And on Sunday, Schiff [tweeted](#) that “no one has done more to debase our political discourse, or fill the public square with vulgar insults and bile, than Donald J. Trump.”

Karoun Demirjian contributed to this report.

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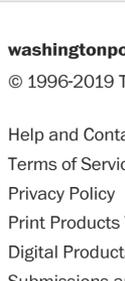
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