



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 29, 2019

The Honorable James McGovern
Chairman
Committee on Rules
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 2015

Dear Chairman McGovern:

On September 24, 2019—35 days ago—Speaker Pelosi unilaterally announced that the House of Representatives would initiate an inquiry into impeaching President Trump.¹ Since then, Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff has been conducting a closed-door inquiry from his Capitol basement bunker, selectively leaking cherry-picked information that paints misleading public narratives. While we strongly believe this impeachment inquiry should be transparent, we are disappointed that Democrats are now rushing and breaking House rules in an attempt to retroactively legitimize their illegitimate impeachment inquiry.

As announced yesterday, you will introduce an as-yet secret resolution sometime today, the Rules Committee will hold a markup tomorrow, and the House Democrats will force the full House to vote the following day.² Closed-door legislation does not cure the defects of a closed-door inquiry. Under the House Rules you championed at the beginning of this Congress, major legislation is required to be posted 72 hours in advance of a vote.³ Yet, here, on the gravest and most solemn work the House can do, you are forcing the House to consider a resolution with text that is still not available two days before the vote.

Without text, we know nothing about the Democrats' intended impeachment process. Your website describes the resolution as “directing certain committees to continue their ongoing investigation.”⁴ Chairman Schiff does not need a resolution to continue leaking selective facts from his basement bunker. We can only assume, therefore, that this resolution is necessary to allow Democrats to subvert the ordinary legislative process. Reportedly, the resolution will allow the Committees to “side step traditional time limits” and allow unelected congressional staff additional time during public hearings to question witnesses.⁵

¹ Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Pelosi Remarks Announcing Impeachment Inquiry (Sept. 24, 2019).

² Sara Ferris, et. al., *Democrats prepare to take impeachment probe public*, Politico, Oct. 28, 2019.

³ H. Comm on Rules, 116th Cong., *Restoring Congress for the People: New Congress New Rules*.

⁴ Rules (Oct. 29, 2019), rules.house.gov.

⁵ Ferris, *supra* note 2.

The Honorable James McGovern

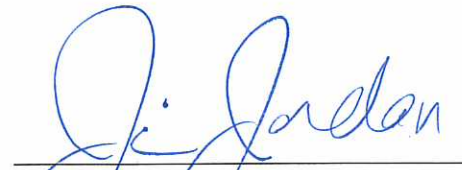
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Further, your proposed impeachment process will circumvent the Democrats' rule requiring that major legislation receive a legislative hearing. In fact, you were the one who recommended the rule for legislative hearings.⁶ Described as a "return to regular order," your rules package required "bills that go through the Rules Committee to have a hearing."⁷ This resolution, which affects every American, should receive a legislative hearing so that Members and their constituents understand Speaker Pelosi's impeachment process and how it compares to past precedent.

At the beginning of this Congress, you said "I want my legacy to be that I was fair. We didn't rig the process and we moved good things forward."⁸ The Democrats' entire impeachment process is fundamentally unfair. It is rigged. The American people see through this partisan charade. No matter how hard you try to legitimize this sham impeachment inquiry, it cannot hide the Democrats' goal of relitigating the results of the 2016 presidential election.


Sincerely,



Jim Jordan
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Reform



Michael T. McCaul
Ranking Member
Committee on Foreign Affairs



Devin Nunes
Ranking Member
Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

cc: The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney
Acting Chairwoman
Committee on Oversight and Reform

The Honorable Eliot Engel
Chairman
Committee on Foreign Affairs

The Honorable Adam Schiff
Chairman
Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

⁶ *Restoring Congress for the People: New Congress New Rules*, supra note 2, at 7.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ Brendan Deady & Marc Filippino, *Rep. Jim McGovern Vows To Restore Normal Debate Rules As Rules Committee Chair*, *WGBH News*, Jan. 3, 2019.