

## **Congresswoman Madeleine Dean Testimony for Judiciary Committee Member Day**

Thank you, Chairman Nadler and Ranking Member Jordan for hosting today's Member Day hearing.

I've had the pleasure of serving on the Judiciary Committee for the last 3 years — where we've done important work on behalf of our constituents, our rule of law, and our nation.

And in these last 3 years, I can confidently say this Committee and its staff have met the moment.

How?

Well, our first hearing was on the urgent issue of gun violence — the first hearing on gun violence in decades. We listened to victims and passed universal background check bills to protect communities from senseless gun violence.

We worked to change the conversation on addiction — to treat it as the disease that it is. To save lives by passing legislation to end the criminalization of addiction and to tackle the issue of opioid overdose.

And we advanced legislation to protect the sanctity of the right to vote as 17 Republican led states across this country implemented restrictive voting laws.

This Committee had tough conversations — we didn't descend into cult-like chaos in fealty to one man.

One man who disregarded our rule of law, and could not grasp that the Constitution did not give him unlimited power to pressure foreign leaders to support his election; to openly violate the emoluments clause; and to incite a deadly insurrection because his ego could not accept defeat at the ballot box.

Through the chaos, this Committee has fought to protect our precious Constitution and honor our rule of law.

So, yes, because of his blatant disregard for our democracy, he joined a short list of Presidents who were impeached by this body. He found a way to historically distinguish himself and be impeached — twice. Impeachment is a tool to uphold and defend the Constitution. Not a toy to be taken lightly.

Contrary to what my colleagues on the other side of the aisle may say, there is no comparison to former President Trump's behavior and President Biden's behavior.

Leading up to the first impeachment proceedings, we saw a repeated attempt by former President Trump to discredit our democracy and a clear abuse of power. To quote impeachment manager Rep. Schiff, “[President Trump] compromised our elections, and [...] he will do so again [...] Truth matters little to him [...] decency matters not at all.”

He obstructed our ability to conduct oversight, and abused the power of his office. The president threatened the American peoples’ right to a Fair election — the very foundation of our democracy.

That’s why we were called to impeach. I am alarmed, but not surprised, by the *laissez faire* attitude around Congressional subpoenas demonstrated this week by former Trump administration officials.

A select few of my Republican colleagues displayed courage and actually spoke out against the actions of President Trump. However, there is an appalling silence from far too many across the aisle who scream over masks, but are silent over treason.

For those of you who still doubt the validity of the impeachment, ask yourself this, “Who called upon the mob? Who continually spread the big lie — declaring that the election was stolen? Who urged his supporters to ‘stop the steal?’”

The repeated talking points of former President Trump and his allies threatened our democracy through foreign interference, and when we survived, he turned to an actual assault on the buildings we are sitting in today.

January 6th will forever be a stain on our nation’s history. As the violent mob descended on the Capitol, I sat in the gallery — with no idea of what would happen next. As they banged on the doors and chanted, I feared for my life — and the lives of my colleagues, Democrat **and** Republican.

He desecrated the office when he invested in the big lie, enticed his supporters with it, and ultimately incited them to the violence that we witnessed here on January 6th.

That’s why we were tasked again with impeaching former President Trump – to uphold the sacred oath we took — and to present the facts to the American people.

Again, the facts revealed a distinct pattern of behavior — a complete disregard for his duty as Commander in Chief, a disregard for the oath he took, and a disregard for the Constitution of the United States. Facts far too many of my Republican colleagues gleefully ignore for political gain as they proudly call themselves Patriotic Constitutionalsists.

As Republican President Teddy Roosevelt said: “Patriotism means to stand by the country. It does not mean to stand by the president or any other public official.”

So, my colleagues and I will continue the patriotic fight to protect our democracy by uncovering the truth. My Congressional Subpoena Compliance and Enforcement Act was included in the

Protecting Our Democracy Act to apply civil action by Congress against any person who received, but ignore a congressional subpoena. We cannot allow individuals to lift themselves above the rule of law.

When reflecting on our work the last three years I think of the words of our late dear colleague Elijah Cummings: “When we’re dancing with the angels, the question will be asked: What did we do to make sure we kept our democracy intact?”

We’ve spent the last three years trying to keep it intact. I urge my colleagues across the aisle to join us.

This Committee confronted a grave and tumultuous time. And through it, we created legislation that will protect our democracy and our future generations.

And we will continue to pass vital legislation to address the issues that plague our communities.