

MEMO TO EDITORIAL LEADERSHIP AT U.S. NEWS MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS

From: Ian Sams, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Advisor and Spokesman for White House Counsel's Office
Date: September 12, 2023
Re: It's Time For The Media To Do More To Scrutinize House Republicans' Demonstrably False Claims That They're Basing Impeachment Stunt On

After nearly 9 months of investigating, House Republicans haven't been able to turn up any evidence of the President doing anything wrong. But House Republicans led by Marjorie Taylor Greene are nonetheless opening a baseless impeachment inquiry of President Biden – despite many House Republicans openly admitting there is no evidence on which to support it.

Impeachment is grave, rare, and historic. The Constitution requires "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors."

But House Republicans are publicly stating they have uncovered none of these things:

- [Republican Rep. Ken Buck \(Colorado\)](#) said that "the time for impeachment is the time when there's evidence linking President Biden, if there's evidence linking President Biden to a high crime or misdemeanor" but that the evidence "doesn't exist right now." He has also [said](#) "I don't think that evidence has been presented" connecting President Biden to wrongdoing and [that](#) "I'm not convinced that that evidence exists."
- [Republican Rep. Dave Joyce \(Ohio\)](#) told Forbes he is "not seeing facts or evidence" that would merit an impeachment inquiry.
- [Republican Rep. Dusty Johnson \(South Dakota\)](#) told CNN that "there is a constitutional and legal test that you have to meet with evidence" when it comes to impeachment and that he has "not seen that evidence."
- [Republican Rep. Don Bacon \(Nebraska\)](#) said, "I think before we move on to [an] impeachment inquiry, we should ... there should be a direct link to the president in some evidence. We should have some clear evidence of a high crime or misdemeanor, not just assuming there may be one. I think we need to have more concrete evidence to go down that path."
- [Republican Rep. French Hill \(Arkansas\)](#) told CBS that House Republicans have not "even remotely completed their work on the kind of detailed investigations and quality work" needed to proceed to an impeachment.
- [Republican Rep. Mike Lawler \(New York\)](#) said, "With respect to impeachment, we're not there yet."
- [Republican Rep. Chuck Edwards \(North Carolina\)](#) said in a House hearing, "I've heard over and over that President Biden has not been implicated or proven for any wrongdoing here, and I acknowledge that."
- [A Republican lawmaker](#) told CNN, "There's no evidence that Joe Biden got money [...] There's just no evidence of that. And they can't impeach without that evidence. And I don't think the evidence exists."
- [A senior House Republican aide](#) told Politico, "We haven't proven the case for impeachment yet. How can you start impeachment? We haven't done what you need to do to start impeachment."

CNN has [reported](#) that “there are as many as 30 [House] Republicans who don’t believe there’s enough evidence yet for impeachment.” Perhaps that is why, despite [vowing just days ago](#) that any impeachment inquiry would be opened by a vote of the House, Speaker McCarthy has gone against [his own demands in 2019](#) to open an inquiry unilaterally – flip flopping on his own commitment to a vote.

But reporting that solely focuses on process rather than substance is woefully inadequate when it comes to something as historically grave as impeachment.

It’s time for the media to ramp up its scrutiny of House Republicans for opening an impeachment inquiry based on lies. When even House Republican members are admitting that there is simply no evidence that Joe Biden did anything wrong, much less impeachable, that should set off alarm bells for news organizations.

For years, Republicans in Congress have tried to muddy the waters by attracting media coverage of their allegations, and as they choose to move forward with impeachment, it is the responsibility of the independent press to treat their claims with the appropriate scrutiny. Covering impeachment as a process story – *Republicans say X, but the White House says Y* – is a disservice to the American public who relies on the independent press to hold those in power accountable.

And in the modern media environment, where every day liars and hucksters peddle disinformation and lies everywhere from Facebook to Fox, process stories that fail to unpack the illegitimacy of the claims on which House Republicans are basing all their actions only serve to generate confusion, put false premises in people’s feeds, and obscure the truth.

House Republican leaders should be held accountable for the fact that they are lurching toward impeachment over allegations that are not only unfounded but, in virtually all cases, have been actively *disproven* – including by witnesses and documents in their own investigations, as well as years-old congressional probes and even the former President’s first impeachment inquiry.

As you begin to cover the House GOP’s impeachment push more intensely, enclosed you will find a 14-page appendix that comprehensively addresses the 7 key lies House Republicans are suggesting they are basing an impeachment on. We hope this document helps provide you with factual information useful in your reporting on their unprecedented, unfounded claims underlying an impeachment inquiry without any evidence of wrongdoing.