

US impeachment

Presidents who have been impeached or threatened with impeachment by the House of Representatives

"The President, Vice President and all Civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors"
U.S. Constitution, Article II, section 4



ANDREW
JOHNSON

Impeached
February 24, 1868

For sacking Secretary of War in violation of Tenure of Office Act

Not convicted by Senate but lost his party's bid to run for the next elections

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RICHARD
NIXON

Threatened with impeachment

For obstruction of justice, abuse of power and contempt of Congress for his role in the attempted cover-up of the break-in by Republican operatives of Democratic Party offices in the Watergate complex

Resigned from office August 9, 1974 before the House could vote on articles of impeachment

Source: AFP bureau/AFP Photo/history.house.gov



BILL
CLINTON

Impeached
December 19, 1998

For lying under oath to a Federal grand jury and obstruction of justice

Not convicted by Senate, remained in office until the end of his term in 2001



DONALD
TRUMP

Impeached Dec 18, 2019
Faces Senate trial

The House voted to impeach Trump on two charges:

- "abuse of power" in attempting to force Ukraine into investigating main 2020 reelection rival, Joe Biden
- "obstructing Congress" by refusing to cooperate with the impeachment investigation by blocking the testimony of subpoenaed White House aides

PROJETO "WATCHING THE WORLD" (2019)

ATUALIDADES

WATCHING THE WORLD



READING PROJECT

No. 11

Prof. Daniel Nicolás

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DECEMBER 18, 2019 Donald Trump has become the third US president in history to be impeached by the House of Representatives, setting up a trial in the Senate that will decide whether he remains in office.

TRUMP IMPEACHMENT: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PROCEEDINGS AGAINST THE US PRESIDENT

Donald Trump has become the third US president to be impeached. This is what you need to know.

WHAT IS AN IMPEACHMENT?

Impeachment is when a legislative body formally levels charges, which have to be very serious, against a high official of government, including the president.

It does not mean automatic removal from office and is only the first step towards possible removal.

It is not a criminal trial but a process to remove a high-level official, usually only a president in the US.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Mr Trump will face a trial in the Senate which is expected to start in January. The Senate is majority Republican, unlike the Democrat House of Representatives.

The Senate trial is where things would really ignite with dramatic testimony that could ultimately remove Mr Trump from office. But that's unlikely because nearly all Senate Republicans are firmly behind the president.

Proceedings are governed by an eight-page manual that says the Senate needs to hear articles of impeachment shortly after the House reports them.

Members of the House of Representatives present the prosecution case and Mr Trump's defence would be argued by his own lawyers.

Two-thirds of the Senate would need to vote against Mr Trump in order to remove him from office. This would be unprecedented.

At this point, only 16 of 47 Senate Democrats and independents publicly support impeaching the president. There is every chance that Mr Trump could be impeached and go on to win a second term in office.



HOW DID WE GET HERE?

A vocal minority had been calling for Mr Trump's impeachment pretty much since he took office. Those calls grew during Robert Mueller's investigation into Russian interference and waned at its conclusion.

It fired up again after a phone call Mr Trump had with the Ukrainian president in July. One intelligence official was so alarmed by what Mr Trump said that they blew the whistle and filed a formal complaint.

Since then, numerous testimonies have corroborated a narrative that Mr Trump pushed for the Ukrainian president to open an investigation into Joe Biden, a front-runner for the Democratic nomination for 2020.

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If true, Democrats say it would mean the US president abused the power of his office to influence a foreign country to meddle in the 2020 election.

The view among Democrats is that amounts to an impeachable offence. Mr Trump has admitted speaking about Mr Biden with Ukraine's leader but insists he acted appropriately.

DOES THE PUBLIC WANT IMPEACHMENT?

Washington is consumed by impeachment. But very often, what Capitol Hill is obsessed with is not what voters care most about.

There is some indication this time though that people at home are watching what happens closely. Let's face it, Congress has the potential to oust the man the public chose to put in office.



Some recent polls show Mr Trump has a loyal core. In most surveys, opposition to impeachment among Republicans remains above 90%. His most ardent followers are white evangelicals.

But in the places that matter the most, he's looking a lot more vulnerable. According to a Times and Siena College poll, where voters in the six closest states carried by the president in 2016, 50% of registered voters supported the impeachment investigation and 45% opposed it.

Impeachment, even if it was to happen, certainly doesn't equal removal. In that Times/Sienna poll of swing states, a majority also opposed removing Mr Trump from office - 53% to 43%.

Ultimately, the public look as divided as Congress.



IS THERE ANYTHING IN THE JOE BIDEN CLAIMS?

After Ukraine's 2014 revolution, then vice president Biden became Barack Obama's point-man, visiting frequently as he was tasked with tackling corruption.

Around that time his son Hunter took a lucrative position on the board of the country's largest private gas company, Burisma. At the time it raised concerns of a possible conflict of interest.

Mr Biden argued that his son was a private citizen who made his own decisions. The Obama administration actually supported an investigation into Burisma because the owner had close ties to the recently ousted president.

Separately Mr Biden threatened to cut off US aid if a top prosecutor who was seen as failing to investigate corruption was not removed from office. Mr Trump's supporters say Mr Biden was actually doing this so that his son would not be investigated.

No evidence has been offered to back this claim which has been called "baseless" by the Biden camp.