

Impeachment of Donald Trump heads to full House of Representatives vote



Washington, December 13 (RHC)-- In a major repudiation of President Donald Trump's conduct, the House Judiciary Committee voted Friday to send articles of impeachment to the full House, marking only the fourth time a U.S. president has faced such a move.

Friday's push toward impeaching the president set the stage for a historic vote by the House next week.

Although Democrats are facing at least two defections within their caucus on the politically fraught vote, it is now almost a foregone conclusion that the Democratically-controlled House will impeach Trump.

Members will consider two charges against Trump approved by the committee Friday. The first article of impeachment accuses the President of abusing his power by withholding military aid and a White House meeting while pressuring Ukraine's President to investigate his political rival. The second accuses Trump of obstructing Congress by thwarting the House's investigative efforts.

That vote sets the course for proceedings in the Republican-led Senate where the President had hoped to see an expansive trial that he believed would exonerate him from what he views as a sham proceeding against him.

But even as Trump's lead White House counsel Pat Cipollone met with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell on Capitol Hill Thursday to discuss those details, all indications pointed toward a short and swift Senate trial that would quickly dispatch the charges against the President.

While no final decisions have been made, McConnell and Cipollone agreed that when a trial begins, the House Democratic impeachment managers would have an opportunity to present, followed by Trump's lawyers presenting the President's defense, sources said.

Two senators told reporters that McConnell is leaning toward a procedural framework that would allow senators to fully acquit the President, clearing Trump of all charges against him, instead of simply dismissing them. The Constitution requires 67 votes to convict the President and remove him from office. There is no evidence that Democrats can get anywhere close to that number.

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