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**House of Representatives**  
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October 10, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
H-232 The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

During the impeachment proceedings against President Richard Nixon, I watched along with the rest of the country, completely transfixed by the hearings. The country is equally transfixed now, but is at a complete disadvantage by the way you are running this inquiry.

Hearings are being conducted in secret; Democrats are selectively leaking false information that is sometimes blatantly contrary to witness testimony; you are now even considering having secret witnesses. The American public are receiving reports on this impeachment inquiry that are based on misinformation. This is a process that needs to be open for public scrutiny. Something so incredibly important as removing the President of the United States and undoing our electoral proceedings cannot be done in secret.

I was present at the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence interview of Ambassador Kurt Volker. Some of the leaks by the Democratic Members and staff are in direct contradiction with Volker's testimony. Nothing in that testimony was classified, and yet it was conducted behind closed doors and a transcript has yet to be released. The American public absolutely should have been able to watch that testimony. I fail to see any reason why it was held in secret. This represents an attempt by you to totally control what information the American public is receiving in reporting on this impeachment inquiry. The American public deserve to witness these hearings, not just receive anonymous secondhand reports.

Now your committees are discussing holding not only secret hearings, but interviewing secret witnesses. You are robbing the American public of their right to judge for themselves the veracity and credibility of these witnesses and this investigation. The American public is also unable in this process to judge the professionalism, predisposition, and bias of the questioners in this inquiry. It is unfathomable and unacceptable.

Now, reportedly, just this week in federal court, your lawyer, which you appointed to argue on behalf of the U.S. House of Representatives, told a Chief Judge in U.S. District Court that the President did not have to commit a crime to be impeached.<sup>1</sup> The Constitution is clear: “The President...shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, **and** Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.” A crime must be committed. However, your legal counsel is now trying to argue blatantly against the Constitution.

You have said the country is in a constitutional crisis. You are right, Madam Speaker, we are, and it is by your design and creation.

You alone have asserted the authority to open an impeachment inquiry into the President of the United States and you have conducted it in secret. It is your duty as the Speaker of the House of Representatives and your duty to this country to allow the public to see how this inquiry is being conducted. I am requesting that you immediately direct your committees to cease holding secret hearings and bar them from hosting secret witnesses in this impeachment inquiry. The American public deserves to see this impeachment firsthand for themselves, not just what you, your colleagues, and your staff anonymously leak about it.

Madam Speaker, also, very serious questions have arisen concerning the inception of this impeachment inquiry. It has now been confirmed that Adam Schiff, through his staff, had direct contact with the whistleblower prior to the official complaint being filed, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. §3033(k)(5).<sup>2</sup> The American public has a right to know the extent to which you, your colleagues, and your staff have been involved in secret discussions with the complainant on which you based your unilateral assertion of authority to commence impeachment proceedings.

Madam Speaker, I remember firsthand watching the Nixon impeachment hearings. Your impeachment inquiry, in sharp contrast, is being conducted in secret hearings, with potentially secret witnesses, and has a secret inception. The American public and our constitutional processes deserve transparency.

Sincerely,



Michael R. Turner  
Member of Congress

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<sup>1</sup> Polantz, Katelyn. “Impeachment Probe Goes beyond Ukraine to Lying and Obstruction of Justice, House Lawyer Says.” CNN, CNN, 8 Oct. 2019, <https://www.cnn.com/2019/10/08/politics/house-impeachment-hearing/index.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Barnes, Julian E., et al. “Schiff Got Early Account of Accusations as Whistle-Blower’s Concerns Grew.” New York Times, New York Times, 2 Oct. 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/02/us/politics/adam-schiff-whistleblower.html>.