

U.S. Sen. Johnson: Statement On Acquittal Votes

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WASHINGTON — U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) issued the following statement after voting to acquit President Trump at the conclusion of the Senate impeachment trial:

“I am glad that this unfortunate chapter in American history is over. The strength of our republic lies in the fact that, more often than not, we settle our political differences at the ballot box, not on the streets or battlefield — and not through impeachment.

“Just last year, Speaker Pelosi said that any impeachment ‘would have to be so clearly bipartisan in terms of acceptance of it.’ And in 1998, Rep. Nadler, currently a House impeachment manager, said, ‘There must never be ... an impeachment substantially supported by one of our major political parties and largely opposed by the other. ... Such an impeachment would lack legitimacy, would produce divisiveness and bitterness in our politics for years to come.’

“And yet that’s exactly what House Democrats passed. I truly wish Speaker Pelosi, Chairman Nadler, and their House colleagues would have followed their own advice.

“Impeachment should be reserved for the most serious of offenses where the risk to our democracy simply cannot wait for the voters’ next decision. That was not the case here.

“Instead, the greater damage to our democracy would be to ratify a highly partisan House impeachment process that lacked due process and sought to impose a duty on the Senate to repair the House’s flawed product. Caving to House managers’ demands would have set a dangerous precedent and dramatically altered the constitutional order, further weaponizing impeachment and encouraging more of them.

“Now that the trial is over, I sincerely hope everyone involved has renewed appreciation for the genius of our founding fathers and for the separation of powers they incorporated into the U.S. Constitution. I also hope all the players in this national travesty go forward with a greater sense of humility and recognition of the limits the Constitution places on their respective offices.

“I am concerned about the divisiveness and bitterness that Chairman Nadler warned us about. We are a divided nation, and it often seems the lines are only hardening and growing farther apart. But hope lies in finding what binds us together — our love of freedom, our faith, our families.

“We serve those who elect us. It is appropriate and necessary to engage in discussion and debate to sway public opinion, but in the end, it is essential that we rely upon, respect, and accept the public’s electoral decisions.

In addition to an [extended statement](#), Sen. Johnson introduced two documents into the Senate record: his November 18, 2019 letter responding to a request from Reps. Jim Jordan (R-Ohio) and Devin Nunes (R-Calif.) to share his firsthand knowledge about the U.S.-Ukraine relationship as part of the House Democrats’ impeachment proceedings, and a January 22, 2020 Real Clear Investigations report.