



### [Impeachment Process Stalls in the Lead Up to the U.S. Senate Trial](#)

The impeachment process is on pause after the U.S. House of Representatives voted last week to approve two articles of impeachment against President Trump, one for abuse of power and the second for obstruction of Congress. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has delayed sending the articles to the U.S. Senate in an effort to maintain leverage for Senate Democrats as they lay out procedures for the trial in the upper chamber of Congress. One of the demands from Democrats is that Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell call witnesses that President Trump refused to provide during the course of the House investigation and trial. The stalemate over the impeachment trial in the U.S. Senate appears set to continue over the holidays and into the start of the new year.

Following last week's votes to approve both articles of impeachment put forth against President Trump, House Democratic leaders stated that they would hold off on sending the articles to the U.S. Senate until they believed a fair structure was put in place for the upcoming trial in the upper chamber of Congress. This sentiment was echoed by Senate Democrats, including Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), who said recently that he believes the House Speaker is doing "exactly the right thing by focusing a spotlight on the need to have a fair trial in the U.S. Senate." In an effort to ensure this takes place, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer has called for several witnesses – including former National Security Adviser John Bolton and White House Acting Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney – to testify in the Senate trial. "Until we hear from the witnesses, until we get the documents, the American people will correctly assume that those blocking their testimony were aiding and abetting a cover up, plain and simple," Schumer said at a recent news conference. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has contended that she is waiting for Schumer and McConnell to cut a deal on the shape of the trial before naming her impeachment managers, who will present the case in the Senate and transmit the articles of impeachment.

So far, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has not obliged to the request for witnesses, arguing that it is solely the Senate's job to try the case handed over to it by the House. However, McConnell has stated that Republicans have not ruled out the possibility of calling witnesses in the eventual Senate trial. He has described Pelosi's decision to hold up the articles of impeachment as "absurd" and lashed out at those criticizing Republicans who have already said they will acquit President Trump, after McConnell himself explicitly confessed that he is "not impartial" and is coordinating directly with Trump's counsel ahead of the trial. Ultimately, McConnell has said that "We're at an impasse. We can't do anything until the Speaker sends the papers over – so everybody enjoy the holidays."

McConnell and Schumer met last week but could not break their deadlock, and there is no indication that they will meet again soon before the start of the new year, with members of Congress spread out across the nation for the holiday period.