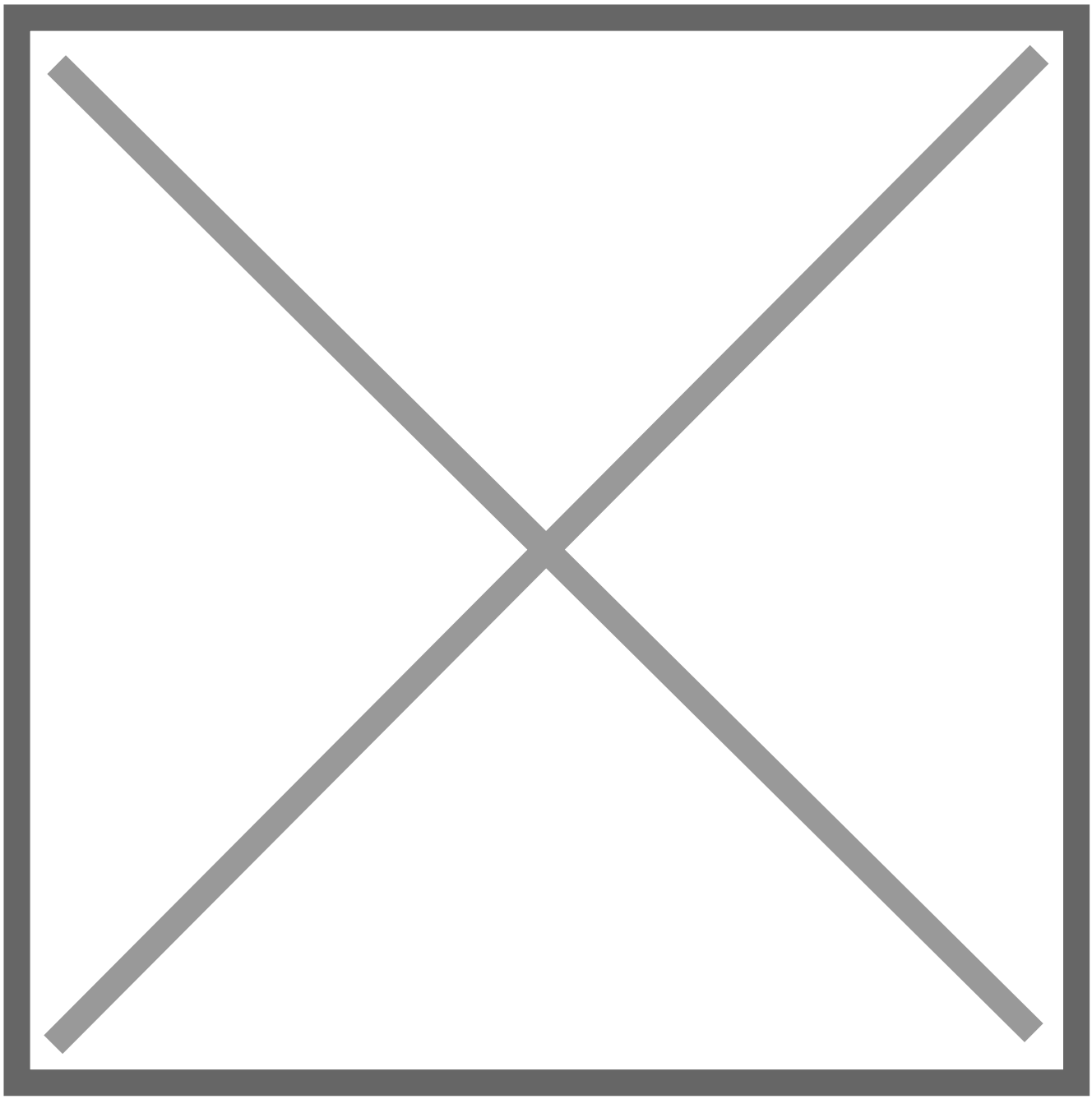
News



A demonstrator in Washington holds an "Impeach" sign outside the U.S. Capitol in Washington Jan. 11, 2021. (CNS photo/Reuters/Erin Scott)



by Catholic News Service

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House Democrats introduced a single article of impeachment, charging President Donald Trump with "incitement of insurrection" for his role in a riot at the U.S. Capitol Jan. 6.

The introduction Jan. 11 sets the stage for a vote from the House of Representatives in the coming days. If passed, Trump would be the first president to be impeached twice.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-California, said a vote would be taken if Vice President Mike Pence does not seek to remove Trump under the 25th Amendment by Jan. 13.

The introduction occurred during a brief pro-forma session. Pelosi and other Democrats have said the move was necessary to hold Trump accountable for his actions and to prevent the possibility of further damage to democracy.

During the morning session, Democrats also attempted to pass by unanimous consent a second resolution urging Pence to invoke the 25th Amendment to relieve Trump of his duties until his term ends Jan. 20. However, Rep. Alex Mooney, R-West Virginia, objected to the measure, ending such a step.

Democratic representatives David Cicilline of Rhode Island, Ted Lieu of California and Jamie Raskin of Maryland introduced the impeachment article. As of late Jan. 10, more than 200 House members had signed on as co-sponsors.

It cited Trump's repeated false and unbacked claims that he won the November election. It also referenced his speech to supporters during a Jan. 6 rally near the White House after which participants marched to the Capitol. A large contingent breached security, disrupting the constitutionally directed action to affirm Joe Biden

as president and causing members of Congress to go into lockdown.

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The impeachment article also described Trump's Jan. 2 call with the Georgia Republican secretary of state urging the official to "find" enough votes for the president to win the state.

"In all this, President Trump gravely endangered the security of the United States and its institutions of Government," the resolution says. "He threatened the integrity of the democratic system, interfered with the peaceful transition of power, and imperiled a coequal branch of Government. He thereby betrayed his trust as President, to the manifest injury of the people of the United States."

Pelosi said in a letter to the Democratic caucus Jan. 10 that a vote on the impeachment resolution would be taken if Pence did not invoke the 25th Amendment, indicating a timeline for action in the House.

A provision of the 25th Amendment allows the vice president to convene the Cabinet to determine the president's suitability to remain in office. A majority of the Cabinet would be needed to write to Congress stating that the president was unable to carry out the duties of the office. The vice president would then become acting president.

The sitting president can refute the assessment and return to power unless the vice president and a majority of the Cabinet again make another declaration to Congress. Representatives and senators then have 21 days to determine whether to remove the president. Two-thirds of members of both chambers must agree to the actual removal from office of a sitting president.

The quick pace in the House reflects Democrats' anger over the action of rioters. Some want the impeachment vote to occur quickly, but Biden has cautioned that he did not want an impeaching resolution to slow confirmation hearings on his incoming Cabinet members or delay his wide-ranging legislative agenda.