



December 17, 2019

Dear Members of Congress,

We write on behalf of the 130,000 members of Common Defense, a national, grassroots organization committed to engaging, training, and mobilizing veterans of the U.S. military to advocate for the core American values we swore to uphold and defend. Over the last few weeks, our veterans have traveled across the country with our partner, Defend American Democracy, to call on our elected officials to hold the president accountable for placing our national security interests and democracy at risk. We have served our country, and many of us have fought and bled on foreign soil throughout the world. When we enlisted, we swore an oath to “support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic” and to “bear true faith and allegiance” to our nation’s founding document.

The president, and members of Congress, swore a similar oath. And it is that oath that is at the center of the impeachment debate.

Public service is a fundamental aspect of the American way of life. As veterans, we have done our part to protect our country from adversaries and defend the constitutional rights of all Americans. We expect that our representatives in Congress would do theirs; the oath of office they took is no different than the oath we swore when we joined the military.

With hundreds of pages of documents and hours of testimony from dozens of witnesses, the impeachment inquiry has proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that the president betrayed his oath of office. That he abused his power by withholding military aid from an ally to extract a personal favor. And then, when Congress tried to do its duty, he stood in the way—refusing to cooperate in an investigation Congress is empowered by the Constitution to undertake.

Now you have a choice: will you uphold *your* oath of office—standing with the veterans who swore to protect and defend the Constitution—against a commander in chief who has betrayed his?

We went to war, not knowing if we would come home, not knowing if we would see our families again, not knowing what would happen, but we knew one thing for sure. We knew we believed so strongly in the values of the United States that we were willing to give our lives.

We are asking you, our democratically elected representatives in government, to do your part to defend the Constitution and the values it represents. You swore the same oath that we did and with that oath comes a responsibility to defend our great American democracy—from threats both foreign and domestic.

We upheld our oath, now it is your turn to uphold yours.

In solidarity,

Jose Vasquez  
US Army Veteran  
Executive Director, Common Defense