

I have concluded that President Donald Trump should be impeached.

I do not arrive at this conclusion lightly. The power of impeachment granted to Congress by our Founding Fathers should not be casually employed. In our democracy, every deference should be given to the outcome of every election.

However, after 30 months in office, President Trump has established a clear pattern of willful disregard for our Constitution and its system of checks and balances. His presidency has wrought an unprecedented and unrelenting assault on the pillars and guardrails of our democracy, including the rule of law on which our country was founded.

Instead of embracing the fundamental responsibility of every American president to unite our country, this president has unleashed a torrent of attacks on fellow citizens based on their race, gender, religion and ethnic origin.

Instead of respecting the constitutional principle that no person, including the President of the United States, is above the law or beyond accountability, this president attacks our courts and judges and stonewalls Congress in the exercise of its Article 1 oversight responsibility.

Instead of strengthening the institutional pillars of our democracy, this president is methodically tearing them down. He fired the FBI Director and made every effort to derail the Mueller investigation. He calls for the jailing of political opponents and pardons political allies. And at every turn, he demeans, attacks and discredits the free press, dangerously labeling it as the enemy of the people.

And instead of ensuring fair elections, this president and his administration have labored to limit the fundamental right of Americans to vote and welcomed the assistance of hostile foreign powers in his campaigns.

America's democracy is resilient, but it is also fragile. Its stability and progress depend on the consent of the governed, a respect for the rule of law, and the capacity of our leaders to inspire trust and confidence in each other and in the federal government.

On January 20, 2017, President-elect Donald Trump stood on the West Front of the United States Capitol, placed his left hand on two Bibles, raised his right hand, and swore to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States." I have concluded that he has failed to honor that solemn oath which, in my view, merits impeachment under our Constitution.