

Shimkus Statement on Impeachment Votes

by Chris Rhodes, Reporter
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Collinsville, Illinois — Congressman John Shimkus (R, Illinois-15) released the following statement regarding today's votes by the House of Representatives to impeach President Donald Trump:

"Long before today's votes were scheduled, my wife Karen and I made arrangements to visit our son Joshua in Tanzania where he's serving in the Peace Corps. At the White House last week I informed President Trump that I would not be present for these votes, and he was supportive of me visiting my son. I told him I did not support his impeachment, and I have requested that this statement of my reasons for opposing both articles of impeachment be entered into the Congressional Record.

"I've been to Ukraine twice this year. I was an observer of the second round of the Presidential election on April 21, 2019. I returned with a bipartisan Congressional delegation from September 28 through October 5, 2019 right in the middle of this supposed controversy.

"We met with many people. We met with our embassy leadership. We also met with the Ukrainian Foreign Minister and Minister of Defense. We had a chance to visit our soldiers who are helping in the training mission of the Ukrainian military. During that time, we met with the military leadership of both countries. Finally, we met with members of the Ukrainian parliament. During all these meetings no one mentioned a quid pro quo.

"What I also know is this: The Trump Administration provided the long-overdue aid to Ukraine, including lethal Javelin anti-tank missiles, that had been authorized by Congress but withheld by the previous administration in their misguided efforts to appease Russia. Other assistance to Ukraine was temporarily delayed this year following the election of a new president — a political outsider we knew little about.

“The new president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, also addressed this issue several times. He has rejected the accusation that any quid pro quo or any pressure was applied to him or the Ukrainian government. The aid was also released prior to the Ukrainian government being pulled into this political controversy. These observations convince me that the first article of impeachment, 'abuse of power,' is not credible.

“My experience in Congress, including during the impeachment of President Clinton, likewise convinces me the second article of impeachment, 'obstruction of congress,' is not a credible charge.

“Constant tension exists between our legislative and executive branches of government. Every president I’ve served with has said at one time or another he is empowered to do this or to withhold that. When Congress disagrees, we have at times taken those questions of executive authority or privilege to our third branch of government: the courts. But the Democrats haven't even given President Trump an opportunity to defend his executive privilege through the courts, and they're demanding that he just give up his constitutional powers under Article II.

“I’m disappointed to miss these votes but not embarrassed. I’m embarrassed that they are even happening.”