

Impeachment dam breaking as Pelosi deputies tip hand: 'We've already begun'

While House Speaker Nancy Pelosi is urging caution and patience in response to those in her party clamoring for impeachment proceedings against President Trump, her top deputies are signaling it's only a matter of time before they begin.

South Carolina Rep. Jim Clyburn, the third-highest-ranking Democrat in the House, said in an interview Sunday that he believes impeachment proceedings ultimately will be launched against Trump at some point in the future. He suggested Democrats are already laying the groundwork in Congress.

DEMS RAMP UP CALLS FOR TRUMP IMPEACHMENT AFTER MUELLER SPEAKS OUT ON RUSSIA PROBE

"I think we've already begun," Clyburn said on CNN's "State of the Union." "We've got all of these committees doing their work, we're having hearings."

He added: "We do believe that if we sufficiently, effectively educate the public, then we will have done our jobs, and we can move on an impeachment vote and it will stand, and maybe it will be what needs to be done to incent the Senate to act."

Last week's public statement from Robert Mueller, the special counsel who led the Russia investigation, emphasizing that his report did not exonerate the president of obstruction of justice accusations has triggered an avalanche of calls from Democrats to begin impeachment.

In a radio interview last week, House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerry Nadler, D-N.Y., whose committee would lead impeachment proceedings, said "there certainly is" justification for Congress to begin impeachment proceedings against Trump, but said it was critical for the American public to be on board before launching the process.

NADLER: THERE 'CERTAINLY' IS JUSTIFICATION TO IMPEACH TRUMP

“Impeachment is a political act, and you cannot impeach a president if the American people will not support it,” Nadler said Friday. “The American people, right now, do not support it because they do not know the story. They don’t know the facts.”

Mueller’s statement has put renewed pressure on Pelosi, who has resisted the calls and questioned the political wisdom of moving forward. During a speech at the California Democratic Party’s convention on Saturday, Pelosi was greeted with “impeach” chants from liberal activists. Pelosi has been non-committal about impeachment and said last week, “Many constituents want to impeach the president. But we want to do what is right and what gets results.”

Despite the momentum, Democrats, even with their congressional majority, still appear to have some work to do in convincing their own party. A New York Times tally says 54 House Democrats support impeachment, 58 do not support it and 123 have not committed. Michigan Rep. Justin Amash is the only House Republican to support impeachment. It takes just a simple majority of the House to impeach.

However, even if they impeach, Democrats do not appear to have the votes in the Senate – where a super majority is required and Republicans have control – to remove Trump from office.

Other top House Democrats, though, are acknowledging the long odds of success.

House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff said Sunday on ABC News’ “This Week” that impeachment “is destined for failure.”

SCHIFF SAYS IMPEACHMENT ‘IS DESTINED FOR FAILURE’

“I think we’re going to do what is right for the country, and at this point, the speaker has not reached the conclusion, and I haven’t either, that it’s the best for the country to put us through an impeachment proceeding that we know will, is, destined for failure in the Senate,” Schiff said.

The momentum inside the party comes as Trump is overseas. On Monday, he met with Queen Elizabeth II and other members of the royal family at Buckingham Palace amid D-Day commemoration ceremonies.

In a tweet on Sunday, the president ripped into Democrats for focusing on

impeachment, saying Congress needs to focus on other issues, involving the border, drug prices and infrastructure.



Donald J. Trump@realDonaldTrump

Democrats can't impeach a Republican President for crimes committed by Democrats. The facts are "pouring" in. The Greatest Witch Hunt in American History! Congress, go back to work and help us at the Border, with Drug Prices and on Infrastructure.

"Democrats can't impeach a Republican President for crimes committed by Democrats," the president tweeted, dismissing the Mueller probe as a "witch hunt."

Fox News' Brooke Singman contributed to this report.

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