

# House Set to Vote on Making Biden Impeachment Probe Official

*Republicans say procedural step needed to pry information from the president; Democrats decry it as political move*

**By Kristina Peterson and C. Ryan Barber**  
**Wall Street Journal**

WASHINGTON—The House is set to vote Wednesday on formally [opening an impeachment probe](#) into President Biden, as Republicans ratchet up their contentious investigation entering an election year.

House Republicans, who aim to muscle through the resolution along party lines, said opening a formal inquiry into the president and his [family members' overseas business dealings](#) would help them gain access to more information, even though they cautioned it might not lead to Biden's impeachment.

"The impeachment inquiry is necessary now," House Speaker Mike Johnson (R., La.) told reporters Tuesday, "because we've come to this impasse where following the facts where they lead is hitting a stone wall because the White House is impeding that investigation."

The White House has said Republicans have failed to find any evidence of wrongdoing by Biden and are using claims of obstruction to justify their probe.

The vote on the impeachment inquiry falls on the same day House Republicans set for Hunter Biden to appear for closed-door testimony on alleged links between his foreign business dealings and his father. In response to the subpoena last month, Hunter Biden said he was willing to testify, but only publicly so that Republicans couldn't selectively leak portions of his statements. House leaders said the president's son couldn't dictate the terms of his testimony and threatened to hold him in contempt if he failed to appear.

Cameras are set up in the House Oversight Committee's hearing room to film the closed-door deposition, and Republicans have prepared hundreds of questions for the president's son. But it wasn't clear as of late Tuesday whether Hunter Biden would appear or defy the House and risk contempt proceedings that could result in a referral to the Justice Department for criminal prosecution.

Through their monthslong inquiry, House Republicans have searched for evidence backing their allegations that the president accepted bribes and corruptly profited from his family's business pursuits. While they have obtained testimony that [Joe Biden](#) occasionally met with his son's business associates, they haven't uncovered support for those claims or established that he profited from his family's overseas endeavors.

Ahead of Wednesday's expected House vote, the White House pointed to remarks in which Republican senators said they didn't see evidence supporting impeachment.

House Republicans can lose no more than three votes on the impeachment authorization following the [expulsion of New York Rep. George Santos](#) earlier this month. While vulnerable Republicans in competitive districts said they would support the procedural step Wednesday, they made clear that vote didn't imply they were locked into voting to impeach Biden at the end of the investigation.

"We need to have a formal inquiry to get the information. And I do not directly think this is going to lead to an impeachment," said Rep. Don Bacon (R., Neb.), whose district was won by Biden in 2020. He said the current evidence suggested to him that Biden probably hadn't committed offenses that could be considered a high crime or misdemeanor warranting impeachment. However, he said, "the American people should know the kind of corruption that was within the family."

Wednesday's vote shows how far House Republican leaders have moved since early this year, when then-Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R., Calif.) resisted scheduling such a vote amid [reluctance from moderates in competitive districts](#) hoping to keep their seats in 2024.

Instead, McCarthy said that he was directing the House Oversight Committee, in tandem with a pair of other committees, [to open an impeachment inquiry](#), skipping a House vote.

Democrats lambasted Republicans for authorizing the impeachment inquiry during what is expected to be lawmakers' final week in Washington of the year, while they juggle a slew of other legislative issues, including the annual defense policy bill and negotiations on a package of aid to Ukraine and changes to border security.

"It's a total waste of time," said Rep. Jim McGovern of Massachusetts, the top Democrat on the House Rules Committee. "It's a distraction so people aren't focused on the fact that they've accomplished absolutely nothing."

[Johnson said during The Wall Street Journal's CEO Council Summit](#) Monday that Democrats were to blame for politicizing the impeachment process during their two

efforts to oust former President [Donald Trump](#). In both cases, the House impeached Trump but he was acquitted by the Senate.

While casting a future vote to impeach Biden could revive anxiety among Republicans in swing districts, a [recent Wall Street Journal poll](#) found essentially no effect on the presidential race if the House impeached Biden because of his involvement with his son's foreign business affairs.

Trump led Biden in the survey by 4 percentage points, 47% to 43%. When voters were asked how they would vote if Biden were impeached, Trump then held a 5-point lead, 46% to 41%.

"There could be nothing there," Rep. Dave Joyce (R., Ohio), said of the claims against Biden. "But there have been a lot of allegations made and I think it's important people have the facts instead of allegations so they can make intelligent decisions."

For his part, Hunter Biden faces both congressional scrutiny and growing legal peril.

Last week, [he was charged](#) with evading taxes on millions of dollars in income from foreign firms, in the second indictment against him in a span of four months. The younger Biden was previously indicted in September on felony charges alleging he lied about his drug use on a federal form he completed as part of a 2018 gun purchase.

The two indictments came in the fallout from the collapse, in July, of a plea deal in which Hunter Biden was set to admit to two misdemeanor tax offenses and avoid prosecution on a gun charge. On Monday, his lawyers urged a federal judge to dismiss the three gun charges, arguing that federal prosecutors had reneged on promises made in that plea agreement.

*Aaron Zitner contributed to this article.*