

# [***How The Biden Impeachment Inquiry Could Backfire On Republicans In 18 Purple Districts***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:695K-8JR1-JBCM-F4F7-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Highlight:** Several of the 18 Republican representatives in districts Biden won have expressed hesitance about the impeachment push.

**Body**

**Topline**

House Speaker Kevin McCarthy s (R-Calif.) announcement that House committees have opened an impeachment inquiry into President Joe Biden puts a spotlight on the 18 House Republicans who represent districts Biden won and how these vulnerable Republicans position themselves moving forward on the issue could determine whether they keep their seats in 2024 and the fate of the GOP s control over the lower chamber.

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Rep. Don Bacon, R-Neb., talks reporters after a meeting of the House Republican Conference on Tuesday, June 6, 2023. (Tom Williams/CQ-Roll Call, Inc via Getty Images)

CQ-Roll Call, Inc via Getty Images

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**Key Facts**

McCarthy circumvented a House vote on an impeachment inquiry by announcing Tuesday he directed the Ways and Means, Oversight and Judicial committees to open the probes, after previously expressing plans to hold a formal vote in the House to open an inquiry.

The move was widely seen as a way to avoid a potentially embarrassing defeat of the issue in the House, as several moderates had expressed opposition to the impeachment push championed by the right-wing (Republicans, who hold a slim 222-213 majority, can afford to lose just five votes to pass legislation).

In delaying a vote on impeachment, McCarthy also saved his most vulnerable members from a difficult vote on the issue, for now, and placated right-wingers who threatened to vote against the budget or even try to oust him as speaker if the House did not move forward with the impeachment effort.

Among the 18 Republicans who represent districts Biden won in 2020, several have been openly hesitant about impeaching Biden, including Reps. Don Bacon (Neb.), Brian Fitzpatrick (Pa.) and Mike Lawler (N.Y.).

Their reasons vary: Bacon and Lawler have flat-out said the evidence against Biden doesn t exist right now to merit an impeachment, while Fitzpatrick has expressed extreme skepticism about impeachment generally, equating it to essentially a vote of no confidence in the British Parliament.

Other vulnerable Republicans, including New York Reps. George Santos and Anthony D Esposito, told thethey support the inquiry, but want to see a deeper fact-finding process before they make a decision on articles of impeachment: A cheap impeachment degrades the significance of impeachment standards, Santos, well-known for being criminally charged with fraud, told the paper.

While McCarthy punted an impeachment vote for the time being, he could still bring a vote on an inquiry to the floor at a later date (as then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi did during former President Donald Trump s 2019 impeachment), and now that the process has been started, it s unlikely it will end without the House filing articles of impeachment against Biden as failing to do so would signal innocence on Biden s behalf.

These are the 13 other Republicans in Biden-won districts: Reps. David Schweikert (Ariz.), Juan Ciscomani (Ariz.), John Duarte (Calif.), David Valadao (Calif.), Mike Garcia (Calif.), Young Kim (Calif.), Michelle Steel (Calif.), Tom Kean Jr. (N.J.), Nick LaLota (N.Y.), Marc Molinaro (N.Y.), Brandon Williams (N.Y.), Lori Chavez-DeRemer (Ore.) and Jen Kiggans (Va.).

**Tangent**

Democratic operatives have been eyeing the 18 vulnerable Republicans since the midterm election and have closely watched their votes on a number of partisan issues, including McCarthy s speaker election, the debt ceiling battle and their responses to Trump s indictments. The Democratic-aligned Congressional Integrity Project last month launched adigital ad campaignin the 18 districts accusing them of sitting idly as MAGA Republicans are wasting dollars on partisan stunts instead of tackling issues that the American people care about. The group also recently commissioneda poll from the left-leaning Public Policy Polling firm that found 56% of voters in those districts believe an impeachment inquiry would be a partisan political stunt, while 55% said the effort would be designed to benefit Trump, compared to 41% who said it would be aimed at fact-finding.

**Key Background**

McCarthy announced the impeachment inquiry after the House in July voted to send a resolution that would have brought articles of impeachment against Biden to committee. At the time, McCarthy said the effort was premature, but in recent months, right-wing House members have ramped up their pressure campaigns to force the issue and have rolled out additional evidence to support their claims. The effort centers around unfounded allegations that Biden used his influence to financially benefit himself and his family members, particularly his son Hunter Biden in his foreign business dealings. Among the most incendiary accusations are an FBI report detailing an interview with an informant who claimed the president and his son were bribed by a Ukrainian energy company executive and allegations that the Justice Department offered Hunter Biden special treatment in its prosecution of him on tax and gun charges because he is the president s son. McCarthy and the chairs of the committees leading the impeachment probe have expressed hope that formalizing the inquiry will allow them to obtain more information in their investigation, such as bank records from Hunter Biden and Joe Biden s brother, James. The president has repeatedly denied wrongdoing.

**Further Reading**

Biden Impeachment Inquiry: Here s How The Process Could Play Out And How It Could End (Forbes)

White House Blasts GOP Impeachment Inquiry: Extreme ***Politics*** At Its Worst (Forbes)

Biden Impeachment Inquiry: All The Allegations Against The President Leveled By House GOP, Explained(Forbes)

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