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**CONGRESSMAN JENKINS STATEMENT ON JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
IMPEACHMENT VOTE**

WASHINGTON: Today, the House Judiciary Committee voted to send an Article of Impeachment to the House of Representatives concerning the allegation of perjury. After the vote, Congressman William L. Jenkins (R-TN) released the following statement:

"The House Committee on the Judiciary has just concluded an undertaking which the committee did not invite --- a solemn responsibility that was thrust upon us after 430 members of the House of Representatives voted for an inquiry of impeachment of one magnitude or another.

We were there to consider the conduct of the President of the United States. It is important to note that neither the committee nor the Congress initiated or encouraged the conduct that brought us to this solemn matter. The conduct was solely that of the accused.

Initially, this conduct was a private matter that was met with reactions ranging from forgiveness to condemnation. Later, it gravitated to giving false testimony, under oath, in a civil deposition and before a federal grand jury.

During the course of the hearings that were held by the committee, members heard sworn factual testimony, and sworn testimony from witnesses with a wide range of opinions. Most of these witnesses were very capable and well-prepared. One witness recounted her own false testimony about a strikingly similar personal relationship that led to her conviction for obstruction of justice. In contrast, another witness appeared intent on dictating to the committee, declaring in advance the historical condemnation of the committee and the entire Congress.

Defense lawyers in this case have constantly attacked the special counsel and his investigators. They have attacked the Judiciary Committee in their review of the referral from the special counsel. They have attacked the committee in accomplishing the task assigned to the committee by the full House of Representatives in *House Resolution 581*. It was not until the last day of the hearings - and then only for a very few minutes - that defense counsel provided any factual evidence that the accused did not engage in the conduct charged or that the conduct did not constitute perjury, obstruction of justice, or abuse of power.

Wide-ranging testimony was given to the committee about the burden of proof required to send this matter to the full House of Representatives. In my mind, the evidence presented was sufficient to vote some Articles of Impeachment to the House of Representatives. And, to fail to do so would deny the citizens of this country, through their elected representatives, their voice and their vote on this divisive issue.

From all of this, the committee had to decide if the President committed perjury, obstructed justice, and/or abused the power of his office, and then decide if these charges constitute grounds for impeachment.

Throughout the proceeding, many expressions of concern were voiced about the Presidency itself. I shared those concerns, and I have for decades. Since 1960,

- One President has been tragically assassinated.
- One President was driven out of office and did not seek re-election.
- One President was forced to resign.
- Three good Presidents were voted out of office after one full or partial term of office.
- Only one President, thus far - in almost four decades - has served two full terms.

The Presidency is under attack. But amid this concern there has been little mention that Presidents themselves can strengthen the Presidency - by conducting themselves in a manner that brings pride, admiration, and confidence to the minds of all of our citizens.

The conclusions of the House Judiciary Committee were not unanimous. However, a majority of the members of the committee have voted to send Articles of Impeachment to the House of Representatives. Now that we are near a final conclusion to this matter, whatever the final outcome may be, it is my hope that we will have a renewed and increased spirit of cooperation. We can now focus our efforts:

- to protect and strengthen Social Security
- to make our health care system more compatible to and more considerate of patients and their physicians
- to ensure that we have a strong national defense
- to ensure that our children receive a good education

After all, we started this great republic with a goal set out in the Preamble to the Constitution: "To form a more perfect union, *to establish justice*, to ensure domestic tranquility, to provide for the common defense, to promote the general welfare, and to secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity."

If there is a vote in the House of Representatives to impeach it will not be the end of our Republic.

Although our system is fragile, it has survived:

- impeachment
- two world wars - numerous other conflicts
- the Great Depression
- and a bitter Civil War.

The country survived these things partly because we believe that we all, and the least among us, are entitled to a measure of dignity and to be dealt with fairly, and to not be overwhelmed by the most powerful among us.

In order to continue that belief, those who have the mantle of leadership - who have power and privileges beyond the knowledge of the average citizen and beyond the belief of some who have knowledge - must be expected to meet basic responsibilities. Among those responsibilities is to tell the truth under oath, as every citizen is required to do.

If these responsibilities are not met, the average ordinary American is overwhelmed. Our survival will be in question. For those invested with great power and privilege, it seems the simple code to follow is this: To whom much is given, much is expected in return."