



# WHAT WILL IT TAKE?

**A GUIDE TO  
IMPEACHMENT**

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**By the People** is a grassroots campaign to activate the millions of Americans who want President Trump impeached and removed from power. We are powered by volunteers across the country who are dedicated to fighting for an America that prioritizes the freedom and dignity of all of its people. Indeed, many of us and our families came to America to escape the very conditions that the Trump administration is inflicting upon this country.

We are inspired by the great, people-powered movements around the world and in our nation's history that have overthrown dictators and taken down unjust laws. We are taking responsibility for expanding the impeachment movement to include a mass popular uprising that uses creative, disruptive nonviolent action to force our representatives to act in our national interest. There is significant popular support in this country for protecting our democracy and impeaching the President. It is our job to turn this passive popular support into an active popular uprising.

# Why impeach Trump?

Donald Trump has broken the law, violated the Constitution, and has put the safety and future of this country at risk. Every day he is allowed to remain in office is a dangerous day for the people who call this country home. Far from upholding this nation's laws, Trump has used the country's highest office to commit high crimes and misdemeanors. In such circumstances as these, American democracy offers a Constitutional remedy for a president who openly refuses to follow the law: impeachment.

The Mueller investigation has confirmed what we already knew: that Trump is a corrupt liar who values despots and dollars over the lives and rights of Americans. In addition to what the investigation has revealed, Trump and his administration regularly commit impeachable offenses in plain sight – including abusing his authority, enriching himself at our expense, and undermining the Constitution's equal protection clause. (See: [10 grounds for impeachment](#) for the full Constitutional case.)

If he's not held accountable, Trump will continue to move the line of what we consider acceptable, and all future Presidents will know that they can abuse their power and endanger our lives with impunity. A failure to hold Trump accountable leaves the door wide open for the next criminal, racist, bigot, or despot to take his place. We cannot continue to react to each individual tweet and scandal, or hope that elections or investigations alone will do the work for us.

Congress has a Constitutional duty to begin an impeachment inquiry. This is not about Democrats or Republicans; it's about challenging criminal & unconstitutional wrongdoing from the highest office. Trump has already been allowed to stay in office for far too long. By now it's clear that Congress will not act to remove Trump unless we make it a political necessity for them to do so. They will only act when there is a groundswell of pressure coming from millions united around the demand for impeachment.

**This is a guide on how we, the people, can create that movement.**

## 5 truths that we hold to be self-evident

1. The Trump administration has committed high crimes and misdemeanors.
2. If we don't remove him now, this will become the new normal.
3. Impeachment is how we stop what we cannot tolerate.
4. The only thing that can remove the Trump administration is us, the American people.
5. We must take responsibility for building a country that works for all of us. Impeachment is the first step.

***A note to immigrants and noncitizens:** America must protect the freedom and dignity of all who call it home. Everyone is welcome in this movement – regardless of citizenship status.*

*"O, let America be America again— The land that never has been yet—And yet must be—the land where every man is free."*

*— Langston Hughes*

# What will it take?

**The only thing that's powerful enough to stop Trump is us – the American people.**

Trump has openly violated the Constitution and the law, and he has actively put our safety and freedoms at risk. If this is true, then why is he still in office? Because we have allowed it. Trump's power depends on the people and institutions who give him cooperation and approval. He only has as much power as we give him – which means we can also take his power away.

The United States is not the first nation to confront an abusive leader. For generations, people power has been used around the world to nonviolently remove authoritarian leaders. No matter how powerful the ruler may seem, they depend on the people for their legitimacy. In our own country, many of our proudest achievements happened because a significant portion of the public rose up around a clear demand – whether it was to achieve voting rights, to end legal segregation, or to stop the Vietnam war. We must do the same for impeachment.

For our movement, the goal is clear: to remove the Trump administration from power through the means defined in our Constitution. Here's what it will take to finally get Trump out of office:

**Phase 1:** Initiate an impeachment inquiry in the House Judiciary Committee

**Phase 2:** A majority of the House passes articles of impeachment

**Phase 3:** Stigmatize Trump's brand so that two-thirds of the Senate supports removal from office OR he loses the election

*We are now in Phase 1, and our goal is for the House to start an inquiry into whether or not Trump has abused his executive power and violated his oath of office. In March 2019, we claimed a huge victory when Rep. Rashida Tlaib introduced House Resolution 257 (HR257) to authorize an impeachment inquiry. Now, we need a groundswell of public support to convince the majority of the House to vote YES to begin an impeachment inquiry.*

**We must make the call for impeachment so widespread that Congress has no choice but to join us.**

Although the majority of Congress does not yet support impeachment, history tells us that nonviolent social movements can quickly change the tide of public opinion and shape national decisions.

It is not, however, simply a matter of asking our elected officials to do the right thing. While our goal is to gain support from our representatives, we can expect that they will only do so when it makes political sense for them. Although we may not be wealthy political donors or corporate lobbyists, we still have the ability to change that calculation.

*“Because eventually the decision here is going to be impeach or not impeach. Members of Congress, Democrats and Republicans, are going to be informed a lot by their constituents. And so our jury – and it should be – is the American people.”*

*– Rudy Giuliani*

We know that when the people lead, politicians follow. When there is a widespread and urgent demand – when students, pastors, moms, business leaders, donors, government officials, and others across the country are all calling for impeachment – Members of Congress will follow the will of the public. If enough people who they rely on for support demand it, they will see that it is a bigger risk to stand with Trump than to support impeachment. As external pressure builds, those who hold the levers of power will begin to question whether their ongoing obedience is a betrayal of their Constitutional oath. Large segments of the public will conclude that until Trump is impeached, business as usual cannot continue.

But what will it take for Congress to feel the heat? This will only work if we get masses of people engaged, involved, and activated in a variety of ways.

## **We know that we are winning when more people are taking action or moving to our side.**

In groundbreaking research, Dr. Erica Chenoweth and Dr. Maria Stephan looked at the dozens of international campaigns against corrupt and abusive leaders that took place between 1900 and 2006. They found that any movement that gained the active and sustained participation of 3.5% of the population was guaranteed to succeed. This means that if we can get an active minority of the American population engaged in sustained, nonviolent resistance, we can impeach Trump.

By activating a small and impassioned segment of society, nonviolent movements can have great influence over the hearts and minds of the majority of the public. Our activities must always speak to the broader public. In order to win, we must turn support for impeachment into a mainstream opinion.

Here's what it will take to win our first phase:

- 1. Active support:** taking public action
- 2. Passive support:** supporting an impeachment inquiry

But this won't happen all at once. It is easy to get discouraged when, after one or two protests, we don't see immediate results. But we rarely see change from any one protest. Winning depends on persistently expanding our support. To move issues on a national scale, movements require participation from tens or even hundreds of thousands of people.

That's why we've designed a clear plan to ignite millions of Americans. Not just through online petitions or through one big march, but by strategic, coordinated, and consistent mass mobilization.

How do millions of people take action around a unified goal? We don't do everything in the same place, or at the same time. We show up, and show up again. We take action hundreds of times in dozens of different ways. We form small teams to engage our local communities. Those with more experience or specific skills lend their support to newer activists, and we share our learnings across teams and across cities. And sometimes, we come together in one place to combine our voices in a massive way. When enough people join in, our movement will become unstoppable.

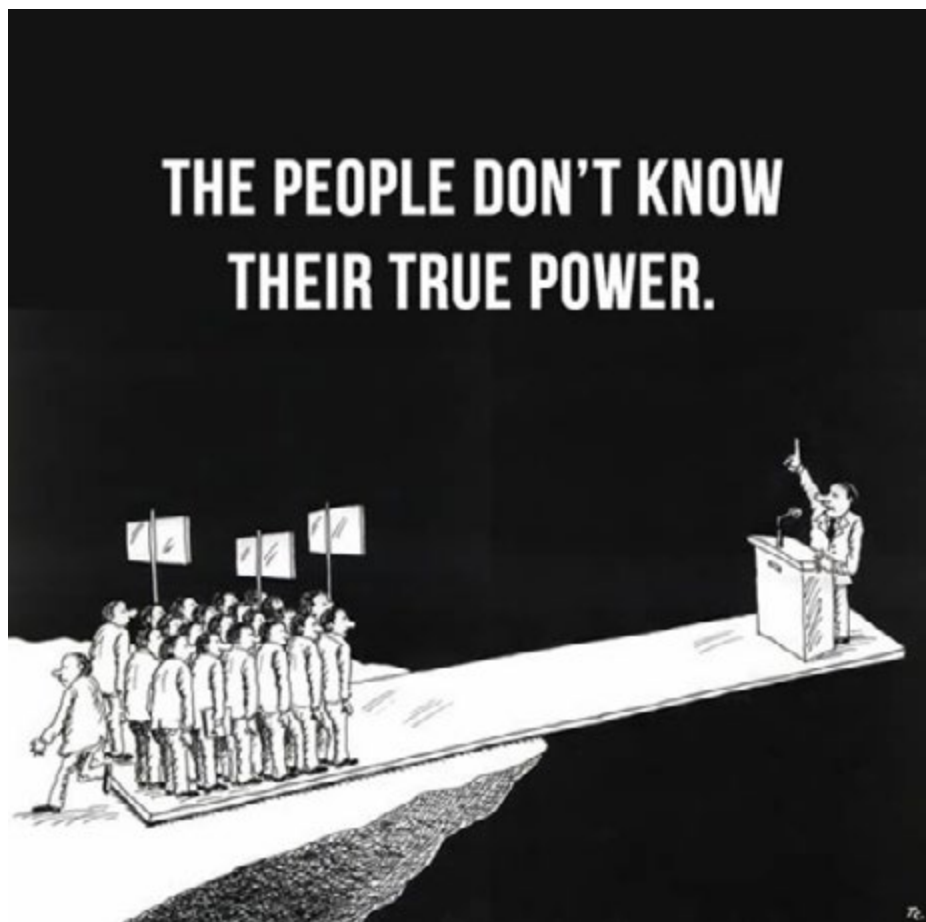
**ACTIVE SUPPORT**  
+  
**PASSIVE SUPPORT**  
=  
**CONGRESS VOTES**  
**TO IMPEACH**

## **When we set out to shake the foundations, we cannot always predict which walls will buckle and fall.**

Of course, there are many other things besides public protests that will need to happen before we win. Our representatives will need to have political courage. Impeachment hearings will need to be conducted with vigor and transparency. Those who have stood by Trump thus far will need to confront the lies and corruption. It will take persistence and from all of us to make sure these things happen. Lawyers, advocates, and others with power and expertise will all play a role in seeing this through.

But we cannot place too much faith in the ability of leaders to do the right thing on their own. We must push back against the ubiquitous notion that change only comes from within the formal channels of politics. When the current conditions are not sufficient to produce the change we want to see, there is little alternative but to alter the political climate. History tells us that mass public outcry from everyday people has the potential to dramatically alter the political landscape. Indeed, many of us have seen this in our own lifetimes.

At the outset of every social movement, there are those who say change cannot happen. But we, the people, are the most powerful force in American politics.



# What can I do?

Our phase 1 goal is to spark enough popular support in the public that House leadership is compelled to start an impeachment inquiry into Trump. As of May 2019, over 10 million people have signed a petition calling for impeachment. We have a lot of people on our side. So why is Congress still waiting?

We need to make impeachment urgent and impossible to ignore. The first step is to demonstrate that thousands of us not only support impeachment but are willing to do something about it. This requires all of us to get off the sidelines and get into the streets. Signing petitions and calling your reps are a great first step. What we hear from politicians time and time again is that real people showing up in force changes their minds and propels them in to action.

So, we've laid out an action plan. Here are three ways that you can contribute to the movement right away:

## 1 Join a mass call

Our movement's strength will be in its diversity. People of all ages, races, and political parties will stand together. But in order to combine our power, we must follow the same basic strategy. Mass calls help everyone get on the same page, with a common message, a common means, and a common goal. This empowers you to take participation into your own hands and bring the movement to your community. Visit [impeachmentguide.com](http://impeachmentguide.com) for updated call times.

## 2 Take to the streets

What does it actually take to topple dictators and oust 'wannabe' authoritarians? It takes people in the streets. The 2016 impeachment of corrupt South Korean President Park Gen-Hay took four months of huge crowds averaging over a million people who descended upon the capital and compelled action from wavering politicians.

We, the people, must hit the streets and enter the halls of power in the thousands. Don't be fooled by those who claim that marches and rallies don't make a difference; all great movements started with the simple but effective logic of people power. Public demonstrations can be big or small. You can get creative and drop a banner over a highway or on your college campus. Anything that is going to get the attention of your neighbors and elected officials to understand this is a priority.

## 3 Donate to the movement

If you can't participate in an action, you can donate resources to the movement. This can be any kind of resource — money, time, space, or expertise. You can donate money to pay for bail for those who are bravely risking arrest, or purchase supplies for a local action. You can lend a special skill like video production or graphic design. You can buy pizza for protesters or host a planning meeting in your living room. There are countless ways to support behind the scenes.

# What next?

## Start or join an affinity group

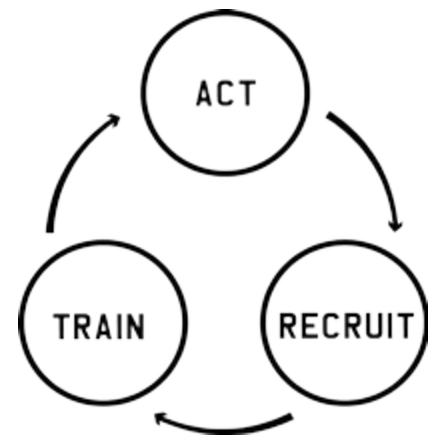
The strongest building blocks for our movement are small teams. Your team could include your closest friends, your neighbors, someone you met at a protest, people from your religious community, or people you've interacted with online. Also, if you are already part of an existing small group (i.e. student club, Indivisible chapter), you are welcome to take on the activities and campaigns of By the People within your existing group. Anyone may affiliate and take action with us as long as they follow our shared principles (see: next section).

Some examples of affinity groups are:

- Students for Impeachment
- New Yorkers for Impeachment
- Puerto Ricans for Impeachment

## Follow the cycle

If you're ever unsure what to do next, just follow the Act-Recruit-Train cycle. This framework shows how to grow your group.



### **Step one: Act**

In order to win we must bring the demand for impeachment front and center – it needs to be visible. See above section for opportunities to take action locally or participate in our mass mobilizations. Or, just get creative – you know your community best. Make impeachment go viral!

### **Step two: Recruit**

We know from the research that participation matters. Every single action is an opportunity to recruit new supporters. The best way to keep a team running and utilize everyone's skills is to give everyone a role, big or small.

### **Step three: Train**

There is nothing better to arm a multitude of volunteers than training. Trainings often make the difference between a social movement that digs in for the long haul and one that is merely a flash in the pan. Trainings help everyone get on the same page, with a common message, a common means, and a common goal. This empowers people to take participation into their own hands. We are offering online trainings every week at multiple levels – for newcomers and for those looking to deepen their leadership.

### **REPEAT!**



# Our shared principles

By the People is made up of people from many walks of life. These principles are our basic agreements and help us work together. Anyone may affiliate and take action with us as long as they follow these principles and values. We hold each other accountable to the following:

**We keep our eyes on the prize.** Our goal is to remove the Trump administration from office -- a necessary first step in creating a country that works for all of us who call it home. Impeachment is the tool our Constitution gives us to remove dangerous leaders from office, and we have to come together and use it.

**We build people power.** We don't wait for our elected decision-makers to do the right thing. We demonstrate the will of the people by inviting our neighbors, family, friends, and co-workers to take a moral stand. Growing the movement is vital to reaching our goal.

**We honor our diversity.** People of every background, identity, and circumstance are welcome to join the movement. We come from many different perspectives and beliefs, and are impacted in different ways by this administration. Yet, we are unified in action toward our shared goal. We believe all people -- no matter their race, class, gender, or political party -- will be safer if the Trump administration is removed. We work together toward this vision, knowing our differences makes us stronger.

**We stand for the dignity of all.** We take care of ourselves and each other. We believe that each of us deserves respect, love, joy, and rest, and we understand that each individual's wellbeing is integral to our strength as a movement. We know that we will all make mistakes, and we believe in each other's ability to grow and learn. We will ask for forgiveness and offer it as we deepen bonds that connect us. We have each others' backs, ask for help when we need it, and share our successes with other.

**We are taking responsibility.** We, the People, have a duty to protect and support each other amidst the chaos and injustice of the Trump administration. As the Trump administration and its supporters call for more division and instability, we exemplify a stable for liberty and justice.

**We are a nonviolent movement.** We practice nonviolence in our action and communication. Our goal is to increase safety and reduce harm in our communities, so we embody that in our behavior. In the tradition of nonviolent movements around the globe, we use creative protest and bold nonviolent action to move us towards our goal. We pledge not to cause harm to others, knowing this is the best way to grow a powerful mass movement. We reject all projects or campaign that seek to remove the Trump administration through violence.

**We're one piece of a larger puzzle.** The role of By the People is to activate public support for impeachment. There are many others advancing impeachment or working to minimize the damage being inflicted on our communities. We take responsibility for the role we play, while honoring other strategies for change.

**We need all hands on deck.** This movement invites each one of us to play our part. We all have roles to play, big and small. As long as our action support our shared goal and are in line with our shared principles, we don't need permission or approval to participate in the movement. We will only win if *We the People* raise our voices and find our role in the movement.



*"At the outset of every social movement, there are those who say change cannot happen. But we, the people, are the most powerful force in American politics."*

To sign up or access more resources and information, visit [bythepeople.us](https://bythepeople.us)