



AMERICANS FOR LIMITED GOVERNMENT

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Feb. 11, 2021

House Committee on Ethics
1015 Longworth House Office Building (LHOB)
Washington, DC 20515

To whom it may concern:

On Feb. 9, the House impeachment managers played a highly edited video of former President Donald Trump's speech at the Save America Rally on Jan. 6 that was [still being made](#) when the storming of the U.S. Capitol occurred. It included several quotes from the speech:

"We will stop the steal. Today, I will lay out just some of the evidence proving that we won this election and we won it by a landslide. This was not a close election. And after this we're going to walk down and I'll be there with you. We're going to walk down... to the Capitol."

"The Constitution says you have to protect our country and you have to protect our Constitution. And you can't vote on fraud, and fraud breaks up everything, doesn't it? When you catch somebody in a fraud, you're allowed to go by very different rules. So, I hope Mike has the courage to do what he has to do."

"So, we're going to walk down Pennsylvania Avenue – I love Pennsylvania Avenue – and we're going to the Capitol and we're going to try and give them the kind of pride and boldness that they need to take back our country." ¹

The intent of the edited video is to persuade the Senate that Trump was inciting violence by playing clips of the speech, interspersed with rioting at the U.S. Capitol building. But it takes many of these quotes out of context to deliberately misconstrue their meaning, including "you're allowed to go by very different rules." The House managers want to say that's an explicit call for violence, but actually, it was a call for Congress and former Vice President Mike Pence to send the election back to the state legislatures to decide. The full quote read:

"It's a disgrace that the United States of America, tens of millions of people are allowed to go vote without so much as even showing identification. In no state is

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cspcoA3t7do>

there any question or effort made to verify the identity, citizenship, residency, or eligibility of the votes cast. The Republicans have to get tougher. You're not going to have a Republican party if you don't get tougher. They want to play so straight, they want to play so, 'Sir, yes, the United States, the constitution doesn't allow me to send them back to the States.' Well, I say, 'Yes, it does because the constitution says you have to protect our country and you have to protect our constitution and you can't vote on fraud,' and fraud breaks up everything, doesn't it? When you catch somebody in a fraud, you're allowed to go by very different rules. So I hope Mike has the courage to do what he has to do. And I hope he doesn't listen to the RINOs and the stupid people that he's listening to."

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In addition, the House failed to play the part of the speech where Trump explicitly called on the crowd to "peacefully" make their voices heard:

"We have come to demand that Congress do the right thing and only count the electors who have been lawfully slated, lawfully slated. I know that everyone here will soon be marching over to the Capitol building to peacefully and patriotically make your voices heard. Today we will see whether Republicans stand strong for integrity of our elections, but whether or not they stand strong for our country, our country." 3

Section 3(y) of the Rules of the 117th House of Representatives states clearly that "The Committee on Ethics is directed to report to the House, not later than December 31, 2021, any recommended amendments to the Code of Official Conduct, as well as any accompanying regulations, intended to address the circumstances and instances, if any, for which a Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, or employee of the House may be subject to discipline for the dissemination by electronic means, including by social media, of any image, video, or audio file that has been distorted or manipulated with the intent to mislead the public." 4

The House impeachment managers including U.S. Rep. Jamie Raskin of Maryland, U.S. Rep. Diana DeGette of Colorado, U.S. Rep. David Cicilline of Rhode Island, U.S. Rep. Joaquin Castro of Texas, U.S. Rep. Eric Swalwell of California, U.S. Rep. Ted Lieu of California, U.S. Del. Stacey Plaskett of the U.S. Virgin Islands, U.S. Rep. Madeleine Dean of Pennsylvania and U.S. Rep. Joe Neguse of Colorado should be investigated for "dissemination by electronic means, including by social media, of any image, video, or audio file that has been distorted or manipulated with the intent to mislead the public."

² <https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/donald-trump-speech-save-america-rally-transcript-january-6>

³ Id.

⁴ <https://rules.house.gov/sites/democrats.rules.house.gov/files/BILLS-117hresPIH-hres7.pdf#page=34>

Moreover, Should the committee recommend changes to the Code of Official Conduct to include a prohibition on distributing “distorted or manipulated with the intent to mislead the public” audio or video, then it is incumbent on the committee to also address how the impeachment managers took the Trump speech on Jan. 6 and deliberately took it out of context to infer a meaning that was not there in its wider context, and sanction members appropriately in accordance with House Rules.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Manning". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'R' and a distinct flourish at the end of the name.

Richard Manning
President
Americans for Limited Government