



Bolton Willing to Testify in the Senate Impeachment Trial if Subpoenaed

In one of the latest developments with the impeachment inquiry against President Trump, former National Security Adviser John Bolton announced that he is willing to testify in the Senate impeachment trial if subpoenaed. Bolton had refused to participate in the House impeachment inquiry while the Trump administration and Congress battled in court for access to witnesses and documentary evidence, but is now willing to cooperate in the Senate trial after a judge dismissed the case last week. Following his impeachment in the House, the Senate would need two-thirds of members to vote in favor of the charges in order to remove President Trump from office. The Senate trial has yet to formally begin, as Democrats and Republicans continue to clash over procedure and potential witnesses.

Earlier this week, Bolton stated that he is “prepared to testify” if he is subpoenaed by the Senate in its upcoming impeachment trial of President Trump. The former National Security Adviser and top White House aide left the administration back in September and expressed that he wants to meet his “obligations” both as a citizen and as a former top presidential adviser. Bolton said that he weighed the issues of executive privilege and that after “careful consideration and study” decided that he would comply with a potential Senate subpoena. It is unclear whether his testimony would help or hurt President Trump, but the two did clash while Bolton was still a member of the Trump administration and also offered different versions regarding whether Bolton resigned or was fired. Nevertheless, he was a prominent figure and privy to the events that spearheaded the formal impeachment proceedings in the House, namely the July 2019 phone call between President Trump and his Ukrainian counterpart Zelensky.

For now, the Senate impeachment trial has yet to get under way. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has stalled on the transmission of the House-passed articles of impeachment, as Senate Republicans and Democrats are still working to hash out the rules and potential witnesses. Speaker Pelosi has stated that she is waiting on Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Minority Leader Chuck Schumer to agree on fair ground rules for the trial first. McConnell and Schumer remain at an impasse over the parameters for the upper chamber’s trial. Schumer has been pushing McConnell to allow additional witness testimony and document production, but McConnell has maintained that those issues be considered after the trial formally begins. Schumer stated that “it is now up to four Senate Republicans to support bringing in Mr. Bolton” and has also demanded that three other witnesses appear for testimony: acting White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney, top Mulvaney aide Robert Blair, and senior budget official Michael Duffey. Like Bolton, all three refused to appear for testimony during the House impeachment process.

If Bolton in particular was to offer testimony in the upcoming Senate trial, his commentary would give Congress and the public a critical first-hand account from a former Trump senior adviser who was a part of the administration for key moments related to the impeachment inquiry.