US House in historic vote to impeach Trump

I DID NOTHING WRONG, HE SAYS; PELOSI CALLS HIM THREAT TO US

WASHINGTON

Republicans and Democrats clashed fiercely yesterday as the House of Representatives barreled toward a historic vote to impeach President Donald Trump, defying a pair of changes that would make him the third president in history to face removal by the Senate for “high crimes and misdemeanors.”

The epic debate on the House floor reflected the deep polarization gripping US politics in the Trump era, but the outcome was considered certain. Majority Democrats were expected to push through two impeachment articles, abuse of power and obstruction of Congress, over the vehement protests of Republicans. The changes stemmed from Trump’s attempts to use the powers of the US government to pressure Ukraine to investigate his political rivals.

Test vote: 228-197

A vote yesterday morning to lay the ground rules for the proceeding, signalled that the final outcome — like the debate itself — would fall almost purely along partisan lines, with nearly every Democrat in favour of impeaching Trump. The test vote was 228-197, with just two Democrats voting with Republicans in opposition. It began six hours of passionate back-and-forth between Democrats and Republicans, as they weighed over whether to charge the president with offences that could lead to his ouster less than a year before he faces re-election.

As the debate started, US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi called Trump an ongoing threat to American democracy who left Congress no choice but to impeach him.

On the House floor, Pelosi read the US Pledge of Allegiance, then said, “today we are here to defend democracy for the people,” to applause from fellow Democrats, lawmakers.

“Can you believe that I will be impeached today by the Radical Left, Do Nothing Democrats, AND I DID NOTHING WROUNG!” Trump wrote on Twitter before the debate.

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