

# Los Angeles Times

## Letters to the Editor: Why impeachment is political theater: Republicans won't budge on Trump

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In sizing up President Trump's options for dealing with impeachment, Gene Healy of the Cato Institute aptly notes that impeachment targets do not enjoy the same constitutional rights as defendants in criminal trials.

On the other hand, as Healy notes, no definitive burden of proof applies at any stage of the impeachment process, including the Senate trial. Thus, each senator decides what level of proof is needed to convict.

Democratic senators might well require proof beyond a reasonable doubt, as in criminal trials. GOP senators might insist on proof beyond any doubt whatsoever.

With partisan-motivated levels of proof allowed, the impeachment process amounts to political theater. So, impeachment proponents must hope that the evidence presented in public proceedings will prove so overwhelming as to convict Trump in the court of public opinion.

This is possible, but not likely.

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