



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on September 18, 2013

President Obama Losing Support from his Own

As President Obama's poll numbers continue to drop, even his most ardent supporters are getting weary, [according to the New York Times](#). Unhappiness over the president's position on issues such as the National Security Agency's surveillance policies, the "red line" controversy over Syria with its threatened military intervention, and the White House support for Larry Summers for Chairman of the Fed which ended abruptly over the weekend have combined to weaken his support even in his liberal base.



A leading curmudgeon, Independent Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, who usually votes with Democrats, said that he and other independents are increasingly unlikely to follow wherever the president leads:

I think you're going to see more independents say, 'Mr. President, we look forward to working with you, but we're not simply going to accept your leadership ... we're not going to follow you. You're going to have to work with us.'

One measure of support, or lack thereof, is how closely Democrats hew to the White House line. House Democrats voted with Obama 90 percent of the time in 2009 but just 77 percent of the time in 2012. And of course that doesn't reflect the president's current troubles in Syria or with Summers.

Public-opinion polls also reflect his weakening support, where his present approval rating by the *Times* has dropped to 46 percent compared to 58 percent for Clinton and 62 percent for Reagan at the same point in their administrations.

Ironically, on the very day that the *Times* article appeared, Glenn Beck [called for the impeachment of the president](#):

I personally am calling to impeach the President of the United States. This is impeachable. He is arming known terrorists [in Syria]....

We did not get into bed with Hitler to defeat Japan.

Impeachment was one issue often raised at town hall meetings during Congress' summer recess. [While speaking at a town hall meeting](#) in Oklahoma in August, Republican Senator Tom Coburn was asked if he would support impeachment of the president. [He responded](#), "I think there's some intended violation of the law in this administration.... Those are serious things ... I don't have the legal background to know if that rises to high crimes and misdemeanors, but I think they're getting perilously close."

Rep. Bill Flores (R-Texas) [went further](#). At a town hall meeting on September 5, Flores was asked where he stood on the issue:

I look at the president. I think he's violated the Constitution. I think he's violated the law. I think he's abused his power....

If the House had an impeachment vote it would probably impeach the president.



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When Rep. Blake Farenthold (R-Texas) responded to the question on impeachment, he said, “I’ll give you a real frank answer about that: If we were to impeach the president tomorrow, you could probably get the votes in the House of Representatives to do it.”

The timing, therefore, of the publishing of [Impeachable Offenses](#) by Aaron Klein and Brenda Elliott on August 27, both *New York Times* bestselling authors, couldn’t have been better. [Klein said](#) his purpose in writing the book was not to advocate for impeachment but instead to provide the impeachable evidence and let the people decide:

I’m trying to present the case journalistically and allow the public to decide. I personally think, yes, there is a strong case for impeachment proceedings on multiple fronts.

[Our book] is about individual liberty. It’s about the rule of law. It’s about whether the separation of powers [in the Constitution] means anything or not.

The standard for impeachment, as spelled out in Article II, Section 4 of the Constitution, is: “The President, Vice President, and all civil Officers of the United States shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other High Crimes and Misdemeanors.” The process is that the House presents a bill for impeachment which, if it passes, is then sent to the Senate where the impeachment trial takes place.

The definition of “high crimes and misdemeanors” is exceedingly broad, and includes perjury of oath, abuse of authority, bribery, intimidation, misuse of assets, failure to supervise, dereliction of duty, conduct unbecoming, and refusal to obey a lawful order. As noted by [a report issued by the Judiciary Committee](#) following the Watergate crisis, the phrase was intended to be very broad, to include “for whatever reason whatsoever” so that it covers any and all crimes that abuse the office.

For author Klein, his task was easy in building the case for impeachment of the president. There was ObamaCare where the president committed a crime against his office by bypassing Congress when he worked hard at “changing the implementation of key sections of Obamacare without Congressional oversight.” There was immigration where his executive orders usurped Congressional authority. There was Benghazi, and Fast and Furious, and the Surveillance State, and Bribery ... the list goes on.

It remains to be seen if the unhappiness being more and more publicly expressed by Obama’s supporters is just the tip of the iceberg of anger being increasingly voiced by his opponents and whether it will result in a bill of impeachment being offered on the floor of the House.

It wouldn’t be the first time. Since 1789 the House has initiated impeachment proceedings 62 times, with actual impeachments having taken place 19 times, including two previous presidents: Andrew Johnson and Bill Clinton.

Photo of President Barack Obama: AP Images

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