

## 36 US House Reps Want Bush Impeachment Probe

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(APN) ATLANTA — 36 US House Representatives have signed on as sponsors or co-sponsors of H. Res 635, which would create a Select Committee to look into the grounds for recommending President Bush's impeachment, Atlanta Progressive News has learned.

The two latest co-sponsors, as of Friday, were US Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr. (D-IL) and US Rep. Chaka Fattah (D-PA).

"For the House to impeach and the Senate to convict a President, the public must be fully informed and convinced by credible information that a President deserves impeachment. That means gathering the facts. Rep. Conyers' bill calls for setting up a select committee to gather information to see if there is any basis for impeachment - i.e., a violation of the Constitution - or if impeachment should even be considered. With that understanding I support H. Res. 635," Congressman Jackson said in a statement released to Atlanta Progressive News.

Rep. Fattah's Office was not able to provide comment in time for press, but was invited to send along comments to be added to the Atlanta Progressive News website when available.

"The Bush administration must be held accountable for the failures in their Iraq War policy. Congress has a Constitutional obligation to determine whether this disastrous Iraq policy is the result of deceit and deception or simply reckless incompetence. Providing the Congress and American people with the opportunity to seek the truth regarding the facts and the fabrications that led our nation into the Iraq War is why I am supporting the Conyers' resolution," US Rep. Betty McCollum, another recent co-sponsor, said in a statement prepared for Atlanta Progressive News.

An Atlanta Progressive News analysis has found that, interestingly, 29 of the 36 total co-sponsors are members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus. However, only 29 of the 62 members of the Caucus have signed on.

Atlanta Progressive News is calling out the other 33 self-described progressives who have not signed on. They are Reps. Becerra, Bordallo, Corrine Brown, Sherrod Brown, Carson, Cristenson, Cleaver, Cummings, DeFazio, DeLauro, Evans, Frank, Grijalva, Gutierrez, Tubbs Jones, Kaptur, Kilpatrick, Kucinich, Lantos, Markey, McGovern, Miller, Holmes-Norton, Pastor, Rush, Serrano, Slaughter, Solis, Thompson, Udall, Watson, Watt, and Waxman.

As noted below, two of these Progressive Caucus members who have not signed on, are in fact two of the four Democrats on the House Rules Committee, meaning they have direct influence over this bill: Slaughter and McGovern.

In the US Senate, Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Tom Harkin (D-IA) are currently the two co-

sponsors of US Senator Russ Feingold's (D-WI) bill, S. Res 398, to censure President Bush.

"There has been massive support for House Resolution 635 from a very vigorous network of grassroots activists and people committed to holding the Bush Administration accountable for its widespread abuses of power," US Rep. John Conyers (D-MI) said in a statement prepared for Atlanta Progressive News.

"The Atlanta Progressive News has reported regularly on this bill," Conyers wrote in an article on his blog.

A spokesperson for Rep. Conyers noted the Congressman is continuing in his lobbying efforts for the bill, which was first introduced in December 2005, prior to so many recent additional shocking revelations about the actions of President Bush.

It was recently revealed, for one thing, that Bush himself authorized the leak of the identity of a CIA agent, endangering US security, in retaliation for the agent's husband questioning the US's faulty intelligence on Iraq's nonexistent WMDs.

In another recent revelation, Bush was provided with evidence that the information he was propagating on Iraq was faulty.

Conyers's spokesperson also concurred there continues to be some confusion among Members of US Congress who have not yet signed on to the bill about the content of the bill. Specifically, some members have not signed on because the media has not clearly reported that the bill is not a call for impeachment, nor an impeachment inquiry, but rather is a call for the creation of a committee that would look into the possible grounds for impeachment and could make recommendations.

Meanwhile, at least twelve (12) US cities, including Arcata, Berkeley, San Francisco, and Santa Cruz, each in California; Woodstock in New York; and Battleboro, Brookfield, Dummerston, Marlboro, Newfane, Putney, and Rockingham, each in Vermont, have passed resolutions calling for Bush's impeachment, according to a running tally at [www.impeachpac.org/resolutions](http://www.impeachpac.org/resolutions).

In addition, the State Legislatures in California, Illinois, and Vermont are each considering impeachment resolutions, which, if passed, could fast track the impeachment issue to the US House.

Over 17% of US House Democrats now support the impeachment probe; over 8% of all US House Representatives now support the probe. In December 2005, there were 231 Republicans in the US House, 202 Democrats, 1 Independent, and 1 vacancy, a clerk for the US House of Representatives told Atlanta Progressive News.

The best represented states on H. Res 635 are California (8), New York (6), Illinois (3), Massachusetts (3), Minnesota (3), Georgia (2), and Wisconsin (2).

The current 36 total co-sponsors are Rep. Neil Abercrombie (D-HI), Rep. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Rep. Michael Capuano (D-MA), Rep. Lois Capps (D-CA), Rep. William Lacy Clay (D-MO), Rep. John Conyers (D-MI), Rep. Danny Davis (D-IL), Rep. Sam Farr (D-CA), Rep. Chaka Fattah (D-PA), Rep. Bob Filner (D-CA), Rep. Maurice Hinchey (D-NY), Rep. Mike Honda (D-CA), Rep. Jackson, Jr., (D-IL), Rep. Sheila Jackson-Lee (D-TX), Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA), Rep. John Lewis

(D-GA), Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), Rep. Betty McCollum (D-MN), Rep. Jim McDermott (D-WA), Rep. Cynthia McKinney (D-GA), Rep. Gwen Moore (D-WI), Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-NY), Rep. James Oberstar (D-MN), Rep. John Olver (D-MA), Rep. Major Owens (D-NY), Rep. Donald Payne (D-NJ), Rep. Charles Rangel (D-NY), Rep. Martin Sabo (D-MN), Rep. Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), Rep. Fortney Pete Stark (D-CA), Rep. John Tierney (D-MA), Rep. Nydia Velazquez (D-NY), Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA), Rep. Lynn Woolsey (D-CA), and Rep. David Wu (D-OR).

“What a lot of activists group want is the next step, which is Articles of Impeachment. You don’t have to pass this type of bill first. I think there’s a fair chance that if the list of co-sponsors grows dramatically, Conyers and others will take that next step of introducing articles of impeachment,” David Swanson of ImpeachPAC told Atlanta Progressive News.

At least two members of Congress are prepared to sign Articles of Impeachment if they were to be introduced, sources tell Atlanta Progressive News. One of the members is US Rep. John Lewis (D-GA), whose office clarified earlier Associated Press reports, by saying Lewis would indeed sign such a bill, assuming that any bill of impeachment would of course be introduced as a result of a thorough process, such as one including the investigation called for in H. Res 635.

Dave Lindorff wrote in The Baltimore Chronicle that he and Barbara Olshansky (an attorney at The Center for Constitutional Rights) will reveal in an upcoming book that “members of Congress – even firebrands like Maxine Waters (D-CA) and Cynthia McKinney (D-GA) – have been strong-armed behind the scenes by the Democratic National Committee not to introduce an impeachment bill in the House.”

Conyers’s bill was initially referred to the US House Rules Committee, which has not taken action. None of the US House Democrats on the Rules Committee have signed on as co-sponsors. The Ranking Democrat on the Committee is US Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY). Democratic members of the Committee are Alcee Hastings (D-FL), Doris Matsui (D-CA), and James McGovern (D-MA). Republicans currently outnumber Democrats on the committee by about a two-to-one ratio.

The US House Rules Committee would need to take action on H. Res 635 because it calls for the creation of a Select Committee, in other words the creation of a new committee that is not a standing committee, Jonathan Godfrey, Communications Director for US Rep. Conyers, told Atlanta Progressive News. Such a Committee would need to be staffed, Godfrey noted.

If the Democratic Party is able to retake the US House of Representatives, Rep. Conyers would become Chairman Conyers of the House Judiciary Committee, whereas he is currently the Ranking Democrat on the Committee. The Judiciary Committee would oversee any actual impeachment investigation.

If not acted on this session, the bill would have to be reintroduced next session. It is possible that a new bill could include new language regarding Bush’s approval of illegal NSA domestic wiretapping.

For now, however, sources in Washington DC tell Atlanta Progressive News that H. Res 635 is a venue for coalition among members of Congress who are willing to consider impeachment for a variety of reasons.

Even though H. Res 635 does not specifically reference the NSA domestic wiretapping issue, some Members of US Congress have found the wiretapping issue to be a compelling reason to sign on as a co-sponsor, sources say.

In other words, why introduce separate legislation to address a single issue when momentum has been built with H. Res 635?

The thing about H. Res. 635 is, it deals with impeaching Bush over a cluster of issues from misleading the public to go to war, to authorizing torture. Wiretapping was not listed as one of the reasons to investigate the grounds for Bush's impeachment in the bill because the existence of the secret, illegal wiretapping had not come to light yet when the bill was being prepared.

US Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) withdrew her name from H. Res 635 at the end of January 2006, whereas she had been listed as a cosponsor throughout January 2006. Lofgren cited a clerical error for her name having been listed in the first place. Lofgren's Office told Atlanta Progressive News the Representative learned of her being listed as a co-sponsor after reading an exclusive article by Atlanta Progressive News issued January 01, 2006.

Lofgren, and 17 other Members of Congress, wrote to President Bush in February 2006 that they wanted the wiretapping issue to be pursued by a Special Counsel, which Lofgren considers a next step in a crucial investigation, seeing as how the Republicans have been stonewalling on necessary documents and testimony to determine if Bush's domestic wiretapping program was legal.

H. Res 635 reads as its official title: "Creating a select committee to investigate the Administration's intent to go to war before congressional authorization, manipulation of pre-war intelligence, encouraging and countenancing torture, retaliating against critics, and to make recommendations regarding grounds for possible impeachment."

The Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) also just released a book, Articles of Impeachment Against President Bush. The Center is extremely influential in high-profile court fights over issues such as wiretapping, the treatment of detainees by the US, and felon voting rights.

"We have the book, we are calling for the impeachment of the President, and we're supporting Conyers's resolution," Bill Goodman, CCR Legal Director, told Atlanta Progressive News.

Rock music artist Neil Young has also released a song with the lyrics, "Let's impeach the President for lying..."

Atlanta Progressive News has provided near-exclusive - and during many times, exclusive - coverage of the progress of H. Res 635. We will continue to follow this story and any related developments.

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