

Brazilian Senators about to Vote on Impeaching President Dilma Rousseff Face Corruption Charges

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Twelve of the 21 members of a special committee recommending Rousseff's impeachment to the Senate face charges of corruption and other crimes.

Brazil's Senate is expected to soon give the green light to the [impeachment process](#) against President Dilma Rousseff, paving the way for a blow to democracy by handing control over to Vice President Michel Temer, a corrupt official barred from running for public office for the next eight years. But the senators in the special commission with the power to decide the president's fate lay bare the crisis in Brazil's political establishment and hypocrisy of the impeachment bid.

Of the 21-members committee set to vote on Friday on whether to recommend Rousseff's impeachment, over half, or 12 officials, face charges for corruption and other crimes, according to data from Transparencia Brasil analyzed by teleSUR.

Five senators, making up nearly one quarter of the committee, are involved in the Petrobras state oil corruption probe known as [Operation Car Wash](#) that has been at the center of the country's fraud scandals for the past two years.

Of the 12 senators on the committee facing charges, eight members are in favor of impeaching the president, according to both pro-impeachment and pro-democracy mapping projects tracking support from both sides of the political divide. Three of the five implicated in the Car Wash scandal, including the committee rapporteur Antonio Anastasia, are slated to vote in favor of impeachment.

The other four officials, including two involved in the Car Wash probe, are expected to vote against impeachment, with one official possibly undecided according to some sources.

Two of the senators in the committee linked to corruption or crimes are part of the largest bloc, the conservative Brazilian Democratic Movement Party or PMDB, the party of the leader of the impeachment attempt, [Eduardo Cunha](#), who was suspended from his post as speaker of the lower house on Thursday over charges of [intimidating lawmakers and hampering anti-corruption probes](#).

Two more are part of the opposition bloc led by the right-wing Brazilian Social Democracy Party or PSDB. Another two are part of Rousseff's ruling Workers' Party or PT. The remaining six committee members facing charges are from six different parties.

The corruption and crime-riddled Senate committee mirrors the legal challenges plaguing

the Senate at large, where 37 of the body's 65 officials face charges for corruption or other serious crimes, according to research published by the Los Angeles Times.

The more than three dozen dubious officials include Senate head Renan Calheiros of the PMDB, who oversaw the ballot to set up the special committee and will also preside over the Senate's final vote on the impeachment next week. Calheiros is a target of the Car Wash investigation and faces charges for corruption, bribery, money laundering, and other crimes.

After Friday's vote in the Senate committee, which is expected to pass a recommendation to continue impeachment proceedings against Rousseff, Senate chief Calheiros will have 48 hours to oversee a vote in the Senate. A majority of at least 45 out of the 65-seat Senate are expected to vote in favor of the impeachment process.

If the vote passes in the Senate, Rousseff will be suspended from office for six months for investigations to be carried out on route to possible impeachment.

In the case of suspension or eventual impeachment, Vice President Michel Temer of the PMDB, banned from running for public office for eight years and embroiled in massive corruption scandals, will take over Brazil's top office.

Despite the attempt by pro-impeachment lawmakers to paint the bid to remove the president from office as a campaign against corruption, Rousseff is not accused of any financial impropriety or personal enrichment, unlike many of her key political rivals including Cunha and Temer.

The [hypocrisy](#) lays bare the fact that claimed anti-corruption goals of the impeachment attempt is really just a convenient way to capitalize on Brazil's political crisis to roll out a conservative grab for power that can't be won at the ballot box.

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