

Pelosi targeted in ethics complaint for 'mutilating' government record

Tore up copy of president's State of the Union address in public stunt



By WND Staff

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Nancy Pelosi

A leading supporter of President Trump in Congress has filed an ethics complaint against House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., for "mutilating" a government record.

The reference is to the copy of President Trump's State of the Union address that Pelosi dramatic tore in half on national television immediately after the president concluded his speech.

Pelosi has tried to justify her stunt, saying she was tearing up a bunch of lies.

But Gaetz is citing a federal law forbidding the destruction of federal documents that carries the possibility of three years in prison upon conviction.

He wrote on Wednesday to the House Committee on Ethics, chaired by Democratic Rep. Ted Deutch of Florida.

"I write to request that the House Committee on Ethics open an investigation into Speaker Nancy Pelosi's flagrant violation of decorum, as defined in clauses 1 and 2 of House Rule XXIII ('Code of Official Conduct'), and request a criminal referral for her potential violation of 18 U.S.C. paragraph 2071 (concealment, removal, or mutilation of documents), following President Trump's recent State of the Union Address on February, 4, 2020," Gaetz wrote.

"Her unseemly behavior certainly warrants censure."

He mentioned the fact that the president praised Tuskegee Airman Charles McGee, African-American student Janiyah Davis and others in the speech.

"When the president finished speaking, to thunderous applause and a standing ovation, the speaker took her copy of his prepared remarks and tore them in half, placing the remnants on the dais while President Trump went to greet lawmakers," Gaetz wrote.

"It is hard to overlook the symbolism of such a gesture – the sense that speaker Pelosi was utterly dismissive of the president's achievements, and, more importantly, the achievements of the American people. Speaker Pelosi's gesture was deeply offensive."

He said the behavior violated House rules and did not "reflect creditably on the House."

"The speaker should not let her personal feelings about the president color her behavior as a leader in the United States Congress, but ... her actions last night have brought discredit on the entire House."

He also pointed out the penalty of up to three years in jail for anyone who "mutilates, obliterates, or destroys ... any record, proceeding map, book, paper, document."

There is no question that's what happened, he insisted.



Rep. Matt Gaetz
@RepMattGaetz

BREAKING: I'm filing an ethics complaint against @SpeakerPelosi for destroying @realDonaldTrump's State of the Union speech.

Her conduct was beneath the dignity of the House, and a potential violation of law (18 USC 2071).

Nobody is above the law. She must be held accountable.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Washington, DC 20515-0901

February 5, 2020

The Honorable Theodore Deutch, Chairman
The Honorable Kenny Marchant, Ranking Member
House Committee on Ethics
1015 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Deutch and Ranking Member Marchant:

I write to request that the House Committee on Ethics open an investigation into Speaker Nancy Pelosi's flagrant violation of decorum, as defined in clauses 1 and 2 of House Rule XXIII ("Code of Official Conduct"), and request a criminal referral for her potential violation of 18 U.S.C. §2071 (Concealment, removal, or mutilation of documents), following President Trump's recent State of the Union address on February 4, 2020. Her unseemly behavior certainly warrants censure.

In the evening of February 4, 2020, President Trump fulfilled his Constitutional duty under Article II, Section 3, Clause 1, which states that the President "shall from time to time give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union."

President Trump's remarks, which received overwhelming (and frequently bipartisan) support, touched on key issues facing the American people: the economy, healthcare, education, military readiness, immigration and more. Beyond his remarks, the President's guests to the address also served to showcase the wide parity of American values. His included Charles McGee, whom the President recently promoted to Brigadier General — one of the last surviving Tuskegee Armenians, and an American hero. General McGee's grandson was also in attendance; he hopes to serve in the Space Force. Other guests included Janiyah Davis, from Philadelphia, PA. Janiyah is a fourth-grade student, whose mother, Stephanie, tried to obtain a tax credit scholarship so Janiyah could attend a better school — a wish that was finally granted last night.

Far from being an exercise in partisanship, the President's remarks were an uplifting celebration of the diversity of the American experience and the triumph of the American spirit.

When the President finished speaking, to thunderous applause and a standing ovation, the Speaker took her copy of his prepared remarks and tore them in half, placing the remnants on the dais while President Trump went to greet lawmakers.

Speakership, and on the House of Representatives as a whole. The Speaker should not let her personal feelings about the President color her behavior as a leader in the United States Congress, but last night, her actions last night have brought discredit on the entire House.

Furthermore, Speaker Pelosi's appear to be a violation 18 U.S.C. §2071, which states (emphasis added):


(a) Whoever willfully and unlawfully conceals, removes, mutilates, obliterates, or destroys, or attempts to do so, or, with intent to do so takes and carries away any record, proceeding, map, book, paper, document, or other thing, filed or deposited with any clerk or officer of any court of the United States, or in any public office, or with any judicial or public officer of the United States, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than three years, or both.

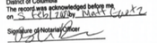
(b) Whoever, having the custody of any such record, proceeding, map, book, document, paper, or other thing, willfully and unlawfully conceals, removes, mutilates, obliterates, falsifies, or destroys the same, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than three years, or both, and shall forfeit his office, and be disqualified from holding any office under the United States. As used in this subsection, the term "office" does not include the office held by any person as a retired officer of the Armed Forces of the United States.

There is no question that Speaker Pelosi "mutilated, obliterated, or destroyed" the copy of the President's address provided to her at the beginning of the evening. The video evidence is clear and abundant, and the Speaker herself told reporters that she tore up this document because it was "the courteous thing to do given the alternatives."

Accordingly, after the House Committee on Ethics thoroughly investigates this matter and recommends Speaker Pelosi's censure, I urge you to make all appropriate referrals to the Department of Justice for further investigation and prosecution.

Sincerely,


Matt Gaetz
Member of Congress

District of Columbia
The record was photographed before me
on 2/5/2020. Matt Gaetz

Anthony Sharn Phillips - Notary Public, Washington, DC

94.1K 7:10 PM - Feb 5, 2020

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On Twitter, Gaetz wrote: "I'm filing an ethics complaint against @SpeakerPelosi for destroying @realDonaldTrump's State of the Union Speech. ... Nobody is above the law. She must be held accountable."

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