

REPUBLICANS PLAN TO DECLARE TRUMP'S ENTIRE BUSINESS MODEL A HIGH CRIME AND MISDEMEANOR

The Republicans have decided that the perfect time to kick off an impeachment is just before their own incompetence leads to a government shutdown, which will lead to millions of government workers and service members either getting laid off, or working without pay, will strain food support for poor families and limit food inspections, and will result in holdups for people traveling by air.

The GOP really does plan to launch a no-evidence impeachment while Rome burns.

Yesterday, House Ways and Means released another document dump from purported whistleblowers Gary Shapley and Joseph Ziegler. I'm wading through those now, but even a cursory review shows that Shapley makes claims that go beyond what his colleagues backed, at times delving into bad faith.

In advance of a hearing featuring Fox News pundit Jonathan Turley, Republicans released their justification for an impeachment inquiry.

It is nothing short of batshit insane.

That's true, first of all, because they plan to impeach Joe Biden for actions his son took while Joe wasn't even in government. One of their latest new fetishes is that in 2019, Hunter Biden used his father's address as a permanent address and got legal financial transfers at it.

Again, much of this impeachment is about Joe Biden being a Dad.

Crazier still, the premise of this impeachment is that Hunter Biden traded on the family brand

and he and his associates (including James Biden, but also a bunch of people who made far more money) made a paltry \$24 million by doing so.

In other words, just days after a judge ruled that Trump and *two of his sons* had wildly inflated his own value – including by adding a brand premium to his properties!!! – continuing into the years he was President, Republicans want to impeach Joe Biden because business interests Joe Biden wasn't part of tried to do that on a far, far smaller scale.

Republicans are impeaching Joe Biden because his son had business interests with a Chinese company, the most salacious interactions of which occurred the year *after* the Obama Administration, even though Trump's own daughter benefited from her own family's brand and her nepotistic job in the White House to obtain trademarks from the *government* of China during some of the same years.

The Chinese government granted 18 trademarks to companies linked to President Donald Trump and his daughter Ivanka Trump over the last two months, Chinese public records show, raising concerns about conflicts of interest in the White House.

In October, China's Trademark Office granted provisional approval for 16 trademarks to Ivanka Trump Marks LLC, bringing to 34 the total number of marks China has greenlighted this year, according to the office's online database. The new approvals cover Ivanka-branded fashion gear including sunglasses, handbags, shoes and jewelry, as well as beauty services and voting machines.

The approvals came three months after Ivanka Trump announced she was dissolving her namesake brand to focus on government work.

China also granted provisional approval for two “Trump” trademarks to DTTM Operations LLC, headquartered at Trump Tower on Fifth Avenue in New York. They cover branded restaurant, bar and hotel services, as well as clothing and shoes.

And Trump’s own tax returns – released after a years-long fight – revealed that in the same year Republicans are obsessing about Hunter over, 2017, Trump’s company made \$17.5 million in China, far more than Hunter made personally during this entire period.

Mr. Trump’s plans in China have been largely driven by a different company, Trump International Hotels Management – the one with a Chinese bank account.

The company has direct ownership of THC China Development, but is also involved in management of other Trump-branded properties around the world, and it is not possible to discern from its tax records how much of its financial activity is China-related. It normally reports a few million dollars in annual income and deductible expenses.

In 2017, the company reported an unusually large spike in revenue – some \$17.5 million, more than the previous five years’ combined. It was accompanied by a \$15.1 million withdrawal by Mr. Trump from the company’s capital account.

Republicans want to make the bread and butter of Trump’s corporate existence a High Crime and Misdemeanor.

Democrats should use this opportunity to show that Trump is the one who should have been under a five year tax investigation, Trump is the one who should be impeached for using his position in the White House to enrich himself, his daughter, and her spouse.

In an interview after yesterday's House Ways and Means roll out, Richard Neal raised several problems with the impeachment inquiry. Notably, Ways and Means Chair Jason Smith – who was humiliated at his own press conference yesterday – has never made a 6103 request to the IRS to officially release these documents, as Neal himself did in the protracted effort to get Trump's tax returns. It's not clear any of this – especially Shapley and Ziegler going back to get files from IRS servers after they have been removed from the investigation – is legal.

As families face severe financial crisis because of Republican incompetence, Kevin McCarthy, Jim Jordan, James Comer, and the recently-humiliated Jason Smith are going to pursue an impeachment premised on the notion that Trump's entire business model is a High Crime and Misdemeanor.