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SAVE

Democrats load "subpoena cannon" with 85+ Trump targets



Illustration: Lazaro Gamio/Axios

House Democrats plan to probe every aspect of President Trump's life and work, from family business dealings to the Space Force to his tax returns to possible "leverage" by Russia, top Democrats tell us.

What they're saying: One senior Democratic source said the new majority, which takes power in January, is preparing a "subpoena cannon," like an arena T-shirt cannon.

- Based on our reporting and other public sources, Axios' Zach Basu has assembled a list of at least 85 potential Trump-related investigation and subpoena targets for the new majority. ([See the list.](#))

Incoming House Intelligence Chairman Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) told "Axios on HBO" that he expects Trump to resist the committees' requests, demands and subpoenas — likely pushing fights over documents and testimony as far as the Supreme Court.

- **Why it matters:** The fight will test the power of the presidency, Congress and the Supreme Court.

Top Democrats, who had largely avoided the subject during the campaign, now tell us they plan to almost immediately begin exploring possible grounds for impeachment. A public report by Robert Mueller would ignite the kindling.

- **Tom Steyer**, the liberal activist who spent more than \$100 million during the campaign to build support for impeachment, said establishment leaders who are trying to postpone talk of impeachment are "the outliers": "80 percent of registered Democrats think ... we're right."

Two of the most powerful incoming chairs tell "Axios on HBO" that they are plotting action far beyond Russian interference in the 2016 elections.

1) Schiff, the top Democrat on the intelligence committee, told us he wants to help special counsel Robert Mueller, and plans to release — with some redactions of classified material — transcripts of dozens of interviews the committee conducted during its own Russia probe.

- **Schiff says** these transcripts contain numerous possible contradictions with other testimony and facts that have come to light, meaning possible legal jeopardy for the witnesses, who have included White House officials and alumni.
- **"I want to make sure** that Bob Mueller has the advantage of the evidence that we've been able to gather," Schiff said. "But equally important: that Bob Mueller is in a position to determine whether people knowingly committed perjury before our committee."
- **Asked if there are** real questions about contradictions between the testimony of Roger Stone, a close ally of the Trump campaign, and emails that have surfaced since then, Schiff said: "That is certainly the case."
- **Schiff said:** "We're going to want to look at what leverage the Russians may have over the president of the United States."
- [See a clip.](#)

2) Incoming House Appropriations Chair Nita Lowey of New York, a close ally of House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, said "yes" to each of a long list of possible investigative targets, including the Space Force, hurricane relief in Puerto Rico, White House security clearances, White House use of personal email and more.

- **"We have our boxing gloves on,"** Lowey said. "I'm ready. And so is Nancy."
- [See the clip of her answers.](#)

We reminded Lowey and Schiff of a [Jonathan Swan scoop](#) from August, "Republicans secretly study their coming hell," reporting that House Republicans had built a spreadsheet of potential investigation targets, based on Democrats' public complaints and statements.

- **Both Lowey and Schiff** made it clear that the GOP list is just a starting point.
- **So look for probes** of James Comey's firing; Attorney General Jeff Sessions' ouster; the Muslim travel ban; family separation policy at the border; discussions of classified information at Mar-a-Lago; administration dealings with North Korea and Saudi Arabia; and so much more.

Trump is already signaling confrontation, saying at his post-election [news conference](#) that if Dems investigate him, the result will be "a warlike posture."

- **Asked if he'll investigate** the Democrats back, he replied: "Oh, yeah. Better than them."

Be smart: For 225+ years, federal courts have upheld the Constitution's mandate of Congress as an equal branch of government, providing checks and balances on the executive. So House Democrats have a high hand as they assume power.

Go deeper:

- [Democratic hit list: At least 85 Trump subpoena targets](#)
- [Republicans secretly study their coming hell](#)
- [Democrats to probe Trump for targeting CNN, Washington Post](#)

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HOUSE DEMOCRATS

