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House Republicans' impeachment push closely matches a 2019 Democratic version. One key part is missing.

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WASHINGTON – Parts of House Republicans' resolution to greenlight an impeachment inquiry into President Joe Biden reads almost verbatim to the resolution Democrats passed in 2019 authorizing their impeachment push into then-President Donald Trump.

There's one important difference: The GOP version today leaves out language requiring the investigation be transparent.

For example, both resolutions describe proceedings for the committees at the center of the impeachment inquiries. The House Intelligence Committee led the Trump inquiry in 2019, while the House Oversight Committee is leading the Biden inquiry now.

But the header of Democrats' 2019 resolution read: "Open and transparent investigative proceedings by the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence."

Meanwhile, that title is in contrast with House Republicans' text: "Investigative proceedings by the Committee on Oversight and Accountability."

House Republicans' version, with the exception of the committee leading the investigation, essentially mirrors House Democrats' push. But it omits the words "open and transparent."

Excluding the language appears to undercut House Oversight Committee Chair James Comer, R-Ky., who has argued that House Republicans have investigated the president in the open.

“Everything we’ve done in this committee has been transparent. I would argue this is the most transparent congressional investigation in history,” Comer said earlier this month on conservative commentator Lou Dobbs’ podcast.

A senior House Republican aide said the change in language was to simplify the resolution. The header, the aide said, was "wordy" and not consistent with other sections explaining procedures for lawmakers.

The substance of the resolution will be the same, the aide argued, and the language leaving elements of the investigation optional is to avoid restricting GOP investigators. The language in the 2019 resolution was to control tensions between House Democrats in their impeachment inquiry, the aide said.

The top Democrat on the House Oversight Committee, Rep. Jamie Raskin, D-Md., scoffed at the changes and told USA TODAY "it seems to be a rather suspicious omission."

The resolution targeting Biden also changes specific language about whether the Oversight Committee should hold public hearings.

Below the header, House Democrats’ 2019 effort required the House Intelligence Committee to hold open hearings, using the word “shall”: “The chair of the Permanent Select Committee shall designate an open hearing or hearings pursuant to this section.”

But House Republicans’ version swaps the word “shall” for the word “may,” leaving it optional for the House Oversight Committee to hold the hearings.

In another instance, House Democrats’ resolution required the House Intelligence Committee to issue a report on its findings, using the word “directed.” “The Permanent Select Committee is directed to issue a report setting forth its findings,” the resolution reads.

The House Republicans’ resolution, however, says only that the House Oversight Committee “may” issue a report, making it optional for the committee to convey its findings to the public.

The rest of House Republicans’ impeachment inquiry resolution reads largely the same alongside Democrats’ resolution. The GOP version does include additional sections for the other committees – the House Judiciary Committee and House Ways and Means Committee – involved in their investigation.

House Republicans opened their inquiry in September over allegations that Biden reaped personal benefits from his family's foreign business dealings. Though investigators have found Biden's family made millions, the inquiry has yet to turn up evidence directly implicating the president.

The president's son Hunter Biden has been a focal point at the center of House Republicans' investigation into the president's alleged corruption. He has pushed to testify publicly in response to a House Oversight Committee subpoena that called for him to testify behind closed doors.

Comer and House Judiciary Chair Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, threatened to hold Hunter Biden in contempt of Congress if he defies the subpoena. The two chairs contend that Hunter Biden should testify in a closed-door deposition first before testifying publicly.

Hunter Biden was scheduled to testify to the Oversight Committee on Wednesday, but it was not clear whether he would show up on Capitol Hill.