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Don't add to partisan polarization

BY JEFF VONKAENEL /

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I do not like Donald Trump as a person or as a president. I think that he, like other presidential candidates, should release his

But I oppose the state of California requiring candidates for president and governor to submit copies of their tax returns from the last five years to the California secretary of state at least three months ahead of the state's primary. This is a clearly a partisan, anti-Trump move. I also oppose limiting candidates to those without orange hair.

This kind of partisan maneuver is frivolous and a waste of time. If voters really want to elect a corrupt, self-serving individual who refuses to provide basic information to us, then the voters have a constitutional right to do just that. Our Going high means constitution gives us forgetting about many rights, including the right to make these impeaching our kinds of poor choices.

law-breaking, corrupt, With a supermajority in the state self-serving Legislature, Democrats president. now have the ability to do stupid things that appeal to their political base, such as restricting who can run for president. But they should not follow the lead of Texas Republicans, who approved handgun registrations, but not student IDs, as identification to vote.

In her 2016 Democratic convention speech, Michelle Obama said, "When they go low, we [Democrats] go high." It is a goal worth pursuing.

Going high means forgetting about impeaching our law-breaking, corrupt, selfserving president. Sure, a case can be made for impeachment. But there is a correct way to remove Donald Trump from office, and that is to defeat him in the November 2020 election. Impeachment—which would never get a two-thirds vote necessary for conviction in the Republican Senate—is a waste of time. And it adds to partisan polarization, which we should be trying to reduce, not

increase. The Democrats should learn from the mistakes of the Republicans, who made themselves look foolish and petty when impeaching President Bill Clinton.

Instead, those of us who want to reduce income inequality, who want to save the planet, who want affordable health care, who want criminal justice to be just, who want to reduce wasteful military spending and who want to have a foreign policy that leads to a safer world, we need to reflect on why Trump has the support of nearly two out of five Americans.

Many of those same Americans who voted for Trump were willing to vote for a black president in 2008 and in 2012. Why?

> Having lived in a small town in Ohio that voted overwhelmingly for Obama as well as for Trump.

I believe that those voters could support progressive candidates. But a failed impeachment attempt will not get their support.

Instead of having impeachment hearings, why not have congressional investigations into why hedge fund operators pay the much lower capital gains tax

instead of paying the higher tax rate that wage earners pay? Or how cutbacks at the IRS have allowed rich people and corporations to routinely get away with tax fraud? Or further investigation of the drug pricing practices of the pharmaceutical companies? Or how large agribusiness companies are unfairly slashing small farmers' incomes?

Part of Trump's appeal is that many Americans believe that the system is rigged against them. And they are right. What progressive Democrats need to do is demonstrate that the Democrats represent the 99% of Americans.

Jeff vonKaenel is the president, CEO and majority owner of the News & Review.