

Experts: Tough to stop Bybee impeach moves

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- There's little U.S. President Barack Obama or Senate conservatives can do to halt impeachment proceedings against Judge Jay Bybee, analysts say.

The U.S. Appellate Court judge has riled liberals with revelations that, as head of the U.S. Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel under the Bush administration in 2002, he signed off on legal opinions authorizing the use of harsh interrogation methods against terrorism suspects.

Even though Obama and key U.S. senators have voiced opposition to retaliatory actions against Bush administration figures implicated in approving techniques some say amounted to torture, they are unlikely to stop the initial moves on impeachment proceedings against Bybee, the Washington publication Politico reported Tuesday.

"If the House votes for it, there's no way the Senate can avoid it," former Senate parliamentarian Robert Dove told the publication. "I can't think of any way of just not acting on it. I assure you, if the Senate could have not acted on the (President) Clinton impeachment, they would not have acted on it. If the House impeaches, we will have a trial."

Yale Law School professor and pro-impeachment activist Bruce Ackerman said, "Constitutionally, it is entirely independent of, and should be independent of, the executive branch."

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