



UMB News

Cardin Talks Impeachment Vote at Maryland Carey Law

February 7, 2020 | By [Laura Lee](#)

One day after the United States Senate's historic vote Feb. 5 to acquit President Donald Trump of impeachment charges, U.S. Sen. **Ben Cardin, JD '67**, a Democrat from Maryland and a senior member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, shared his thoughts on the trial with [University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law](#) students in an hourlong discussion at Westminster Hall.



U.S. Sen. Ben Cardin, JD '67, shares his thoughts on the impeachment trial with University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law students at Westminster Hall.

Cardin, a 1967 graduate of the University of Maryland School of Law, voted guilty on both articles of impeachment in lockstep with Senate Democrats. In a statement dated Feb. 5 he wrote, "The actions by the Senate today and throughout this trial reflect as poorly on the Senate itself as on the president. The failure of the

Senate to conduct
a fair trial has

tainted this final verdict and has upset the balance of power between two constitutionally coequal branches of government.”

Fresh off the grueling three-week trial, Cardin struck a cautiously hopeful tone at Westminster Hall as he thanked students for choosing law school and reminded them of their “communal responsibility” to the United States.

“You are going to be the custodians of our legal system,” he told the audience. “You need to make sure that our rule of law, that our access to justice remains at the core of the values of this country. And it’s under attack.”

Calling it a “sad moment,” Cardin said the Senate clearly failed in its constitutional responsibility to conduct a fair trial. “I don’t think you can find a reasonable judge who would have allowed a trial to take place in his or her courtroom without allowing the calling of witnesses or the production of documents,” he told the students.

Third-year student **Benjamin Dorfman** attended Cardin’s remarks as part of a criminal procedure class taught by professor **Lee Kovarsky**, JD. “I’m really glad I came today because getting to hear from someone who was actually in the room and had firsthand impressions of what happened in the trial was really enlightening,” Dorfman said.

Another third-year student, **Zachary Lee**, said it was exciting to get a glimpse of the proceedings from a primary source. “The impeachment just wrapped up and it’s on the forefront of the American consciousness, so it’s phenomenal that Sen. Cardin was able to come down and talk to us,” he said.

Cardin took questions from the audience before concluding his remarks on an optimistic note. “I have great confidence in our system,” he said. “But I have more confidence seeing you here. You’re going to protect our system for the future.”

Maryland Carey Law recognizes the achievement of its distinguished alumnus with the Cardin Requirement, named for the senator, which requires every student who enrolls as a first-year, full-time student to provide legal services to people who are poor or otherwise lack access to justice as a prerequisite to graduation.

The Cardin Requirement results in more than 150 students contributing over 75,000 hours of free legal service annually, making the Clinical Law Program one of the largest public interest firms in Maryland.

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