



## Basis Points – January 21, 2020

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### Above the Fold

#### *Impeachment Trial to Begin — Has Anything Changed?*

After weeks of withholding, Speaker Nancy Pelosi finally sent the articles of impeachment to the GOP-led Senate. The formal transfer immediately triggered the start of President Trump's trial, which most expect will end in Trump's favor.

As the hearing begins, the President still maintains strong support from Senate Republicans and even a couple Democrats. It would take a defection of 20 Republican Senators to join the expected 47 Democrat votes in order to convict, and remove Trump.

Keep in mind that it will only take four GOP votes to allow witnesses in the trial. And while experts still believe it is unlikely that testimony of witnesses would be damning for our President, it would drag out a process that was likely doomed from the start. Fueling partisan fervor on both sides, many believe the impeachment has further polarized our nation, soaking up resources that may have been better utilized. According to a recent [NPR poll](#), most Americans agree that a trial would be unlikely to change the likely outcome of an acquittal.

## Three Things

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1. *IMF Eyeing a Comeback* – Supported by central banks' hyper-accommodative monetary policy and the much anticipated progression of U.S.-China trade negotiations, the International Monetary Fund sees global GDP (gross domestic product) rebounding to 3.3% in 2020, up from 2.9% in 2019.
2. *Americans Finicky With EVs* – According to Subaru CEO Tomomi Nakamura, the U.S. is a "difficult market" for EV (electric vehicle) offerings. He says Tesla is the only EV manufacturer having major success. The Edison Electric Institute notes improving electric vehicle sales, but the segment accounts for less than 2% of the cars sold in the U.S.
3. *Palm Readers and Checkout Lines* – Tech and retail giant Amazon is going beyond smartphones and RFID chips for payment and right to your hand (and no, not for the cash in your pocket). The company is creating checkout terminals that use your palm's unique signature to pay for purchases. Your hand's signature would be linked to a credit card of your choice and "swiped" at any register that has the technology.

## Did You Know?

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### *One Problem a Wall Can't Fix*

At the U.S.-Mexico border, huge vulture populations are wreaking havoc on a major radio tower, stifling critical communications. The birds' massive presence, along with nests and other unmentioned bodily functions, are prohibiting proper functionality of the equipment and leaving a nasty mess that's near impossible to clean. Customs and Border Patrol agents have also reported near misses from prey dropped by the birds from heights of 300 feet or more. A contractor has been hired to install a "Vulture Deterrence Netting System" before roosting season begins in August.

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