



RETIRED MEN'S ASSOCIATION OF GREENWICH, Inc. (RMA)
Invites you to its meeting **January 17, 2018** at
First Presbyterian Church, Lafayette Place, Greenwich, CT

Robert Robins

Understanding the 25th Amendment: the Disabled President



Several presidents, notably William McKinley, Woodrow Wilson, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, have for extended periods been medically incapacitated, unable to carry on the duties of their office. The drafters of the constitution did not take such circumstances into consideration. The only option they provided for removal of a president (short of failing re-election) or resignation was by impeachment by the House of Representatives and conviction by the Senate for high crimes and misdemeanors.

Being sick, however, is not a high crime or misdemeanor.

Increasing concern after John F. Kennedy's assassination about the possibility of a president, through no fault of his own, being unable to carry on his duties led in 1967 to the adoption of the twenty-fifth amendment to the constitution. Thirty years later, many still had concerns about the adequacy of the amendment, particularly ex-President Jimmy Carter. A Carter Center working group on the topic first met at the Carter Center in Atlanta, Georgia, in January, 1995. President Clinton augmented this body into a Presidential Working Group. Professor Robins was a member of this Working Group, which had its concluding meeting at the White House in December, 1996.

From 1965 to 2003, Robins was a member of the department of political science at Tulane University in New Orleans. He was Chair of the Department from 1979 to 1990. and Deputy Provost of the University from 1991-97. Honors include Senior Associations with St Antony's College, Oxford University; Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London; Tavistock Clinic, London; Wellcome Institute for the Study of the History of Medicine.

Robins' most recent books are his co-authored *When Illness Strikes the Leader* (Yale), which analyzes the political dynamics around ailing leaders; and *Political Paranoia: The Psychopolitics of Hatred* (Yale), which examines the role of conspiracy thinking in politics. A recent publication is "Board Dealings with a Disabled CEO" in *Directors and Boards*. The Wall Street Journal has identified Robins as "an authority on disabled leaders."