On November 16, 2023, Republican Representative Michael Guest introduced a resolution to expel Republican Representative George Santos from Congress. On November 28, 2023, two Democratic Representatives, Garcia and Goldman, introduced a privileged motion to force a vote on the expulsion resolution by Thursday, November 30th. Santos is accused of 23 federal felony charges. He has not yet stood trial for these charges and has pleaded not guilty. The House Ethics Committee also released a report following a congressional investigation into Santo’s actions that alleges additional violations. While Santos has admitted to lying to voters about elements of his life story before winning his seat in 2022, he denies the charges against him from the Ethics Committee and the Justice Department. Regardless of whether the outcome is expulsion or not, the vote itself is still an important piece of Congressional history.

The upcoming vote to expel George Santos from Congress will be the third attempt. The previous two votes failed to garner the necessary two-thirds support. The concern for some lawmakers in the prior two votes revolved around Santo’s right to due process. There have only ever been two other Members expelled from the house since the Civil War, Michael Myers (D-PA) in 1980 and James Traficant (D-OH) in 2002. In both of these instances, the individuals had already been convicted in a court of law for their crimes. In addition, Santos is not the only current congressman charged with federal crimes. The difference maker in this vote may be the additional findings within the House Ethics Committee’s report.

To Think and To Do: Given the information in the chart above, why do you think these congressional proceedings are used so infrequently? Explain.