



Rep. Tom Emmer on The Lead with Jake Tapper

CNN

Broadcast: November 18, 2024 • Duration: 6:24

****JAKE:**

** Now, Republican Congressman Tom Emmer of Minnesota, he is the third highest-ranking Republican in the House. He is, the actual title is House Majority Whip. Do people have to call you Whip, Emmer? Is that like a thing?

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** Might be one of the nicer things.

****JAKE:**

** So let me ask you, first of all, about Gaetz. Today the House Ethics Committee postponed the meeting where they were going to decide what to do with the report. Speaker Johnson said earlier today that he doesn't think that this report about these allegations, this investigation into Matt Gaetz should be released. But there are senators, Republican senators, who would like to read it for the confirmation hearing. Take a listen. I think there should not be any limitation on the Senate Judiciary Committee's investigation, including whatever the House Ethics Committee has generated. We should have access to it one way or another, based on the way that we do all of these nominations. Do you think that your Senate colleagues, at the very least, should, Republican colleagues in the Senate, should get to see it?

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** Well, let's remember first, Jay, that the Biden attorney general, Merrick Garland, used the office to prosecute his political opponents and to go after parents who were peacefully protesting at school board meetings. Donald Trump ran on a promise to shake up Washington, D.C. He's doing exactly that. And Matt Gaetz is one of the examples.

****JAKE:**

** Right. But there is, there are questions about that your colleagues on the House Ethics Committee, Republicans and Democrats, were looking into. And Republicans in the Senate say, we'd like to see that before we confirm him. Is that is that an unreasonable request, you think?

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** Actually, when you look at what Matt Gaetz has done over the last, I think he spent the last six years on the Judiciary Committee, which has direct oversight over the Department of Justice and in the attorney general's office. I think he's the perfect pick for this job because, again, you can't fix what's broken by taking people from inside what they broke. You're going to have to bring people from outside. You're going to have to bring change agents. At the end of the day, Jake, they're all going to be executing on the Trump agenda, not their agenda.

****JAKE:**



**** Right.** But certainly somebody and this is he's accused of having sex with a high school girl, a 17 year old. He denies it. He says it's not true. But the House Ethics Committee is looking into that, whether or not he's good at his job or good at his will be good at his future job. Your Republican Senate colleagues say, we'd like to see what's in the report, Jake. This was investigated by the FBI.

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

**** I think the FBI is probably the preeminent investigation arm of the government, not a House Ethics Committee. That FBI gave that investigation to the attorney general's office or to the Department of Justice. They chose not to prosecute because there wasn't a crime to charge. They closed their their file.**

****JAKE:**

**** I don't know that it wasn't a crime to charge. I think they didn't think that they were they weren't confident they could get a conviction. I think Jake again.**

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

**** So you're going to convict him in court of public opinion. I'm just trying to do a nice thing for John Cornyn. Does anyone believe that the Biden Justice Department, if they had evidence to charge Matt Gaetz with a crime, wouldn't have done it? They don't have the evidence. They close the file. Matt Gaetz is a great pick.**

****JAKE:**

**** So let me ask you about the confirmation process, because there are questions about whether or not the Senate is just going to adjourn and give President-elect Trump an opportunity just to do recess appointments. Or I guess he'd be president at the time. President Trump had the opportunity to do recess appointments. John Thune, the newly elected Republican Senate majority leader, said this last night on Fox. You know, you have to have all Republicans vote to recess as well. So the same Republicans that you mentioned that might have a problem voting for somebody under regular order probably also have a problem voting to put the Senate into recess. You have to have concurrence from the House. There's a process. There is this other contingent, this other provision, that if the House and the Senate can't agree, I can't even get into it. It's too in the weeds. But you know what I'm talking about. Do you think Donald Trump should be able to just do recess appointments and bypass the normal way of having a confirmation hearing?**

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

**** Look, I'm in the House. That's a question for John Thune in the House. We've got our job. The Senate's got theirs. We try to work together. But this confirmation process is entirely a Senate responsibility. John Thune, as I understand it, the part that isn't part of that clip, has said that all of these appointees are going to get vetted through the process and they'll all have an honest process. I think they'll get confirmed.**

****JAKE:**

**** So I want to ask you a question about Robert F. Kennedy Jr., the nominee to be head of the Department of Health and Human Services. He's an outspoken critic of vaccines. I want to bring up Minnesota, where you're from, because there's no mandate for kids to get the measles vaccine in Minnesota, I don't believe. And the latest numbers released yesterday show that there are 52 cases of measles in Minnesota. 28 of those cases are among kids under the age of five. Currently there are 12 in the hospital. We don't see this kind of epidemic of measles in places where there is a vaccine mandate. What is your take on that? Are you concerned about that at all?**



****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** I'm a Minnesotan, Jake, and you're telling me I'm 63 years old. I got vaccinated for measles. You're telling me that at some point we decided we're not doing that anymore? I think that's a poor example. Bottom line is Donald Trump was elected to shake things up in Washington, D.C. Robert F. Kennedy Jr., as the HHS secretary, will be moving to enact the Trump agenda. This is what the country asked for. And he's going to honor the promises that he campaigned on.

****JAKE:**

** But you don't think that the country asked for measles?

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** Again, Jake, you're trying to...

****JAKE:**

** Well, tell me what's going on in Minnesota, because...

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** Again, you're going to have to give me more information, because bottom line is I believe everyone is vaccinated for measles in Minnesota. If there's something that has changed, that's news to me.

****JAKE:**

** Okay. Whip Emmer, it's good to see you, sir. Don't be a stranger. Thanks so much for being here. Congratulations on your party keeping control of the House, winning control of the Senate, winning control of the White House. Quite a day. You guys must be pretty excited.

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** Yeah. You haven't had a day like this since... Well, I can't even keep... Oh, Jake, we haven't had a day like this since last Tuesday. It's great.

****JAKE:**

** You know what I mean. All right. Anyway, thanks for being here. I appreciate it.

This transcript was independently produced by MN-06 Watch for accountability and archival purposes.

Source: CNN (November 18, 2024)

Archived: February 05, 2026

Source URL: <https://youtu.be/VNymCvLpzgA>

For questions or corrections: mn06watch@gmail.com