



Rep. Tom Emmer on THIS WEEK

ABC NEWS

Broadcast: January 12, 2025 • Duration: 5:26

HOST:

I am joined now by House Majority Whip Tom Emmer. Thank you for being here. So let me start with California. President Biden this week called on Congress to do whatever, provide California whatever it needs to recover. What's your sense? What's going to be needed?

REP. TOM EMMER:

Well, right now, we don't know what's going to be needed. We know it's significant. What we do know is that Congress in December, before we left the 118th Congress, passed the American Relief Act, which provided billions of dollars to FEMA to not only deal with the pre, the hurricanes, Milton and Helene, but also for situations such as this, although no one could predict what's happening right now in L.A. I mean, it's unbelievable.

HOST:

And you, you, of course, you're the guy that counts the votes, and I saw you counting the votes as you were trying to elect a speaker, and it wasn't particularly easy. Now you have a very ambitious incoming agenda from President Trump. Realistically, what, what are you going to get accomplished in these first hundred days or so?

REP. TOM EMMER:

We're going to get the Trump agenda put in place. Donald Trump got a mandate on November 5th. The public expects us to deal with the excessive spending, the debt, the deficit that has driven double digit inflation at the beginning of the Biden term. They've asked Donald Trump to seal the southern border, and they want to make sure, they want peace and stability around the globe. I think that's what Congress will be working with Donald Trump to get done.

HOST:

You're going to need Democratic buy-in, I think, on a bunch of this stuff, aren't you? I mean, Trump, one thing you need to do is raise the debt ceiling, for instance, and you've got a number of your colleagues that just won't do that under any circumstance. Trump's even talked about eliminating the debt ceiling. How are you, are you having conversations on this? Are you looping in Hakeem Jeffries and the Democratic leadership on some of this, or is it political warfare from the start?

REP. TOM EMMER:

I'll allow our speaker, Mike Johnson, to have those discussions with Hakeem, the minority leader. My job is to work with our members, which we have been doing for the last two years plus. This is a new group. We added some new members last week. And when you say that we have members that will never do something, be careful with that.



HOST:

Really? I mean, you can acknowledge they've never done it yet.

REP. TOM EMMER:

Absolutely. There's only two that I know of that we have right now. But that doesn't mean that that's not going to change under the right circumstances. The issue that Republicans have had, and I think that Donald Trump has, is the debt ceiling is a false number. The bottom line is you've got to get your spending under control and you've got to have a plan to pay off the debt. So as long as we're doing that, don't underestimate what the House Republicans can do.

HOST:

So there's a lot of talk about one bill, two bill, one big, beautiful bill. I don't want to get into all the weeds on this, but Kim Strassel of the Wall Street Journal editorial board published a piece this week that was headlined, *The GOP's Irreconcilable Differences Donald Trump's Budget Strategy Could Produce One Big Beautiful Mess*. Is there a danger of trying to do too much in one big bill at a time, taxes, the border, everything else?

REP. TOM EMMER:

That's not a concern to me. Once we make the decision, is it going to be one? Is it going to be two? It doesn't matter. The whip's job is to make sure that we execute once that decision has been made. And I love people who tell us that we can't do something. I mean, when we didn't have the White House and we didn't have the Senate, we did things that Republican majorities had never been able to do in the previous 10 to 15 years. I mean, it was the strongest border security bill in 20 years. It was an all of the above energy policy with all the reforms to permitting that we haven't seen for 30 years. The list goes on and on. It was raising a debt ceiling. We were told we couldn't do any of those things. And you know what? We did do those things. Now we have a partner in the Senate with John Thune and his people, and we have the White House to get the things done that Donald J. Trump said he was going to do that the American public elected him to do.

HOST:

And you have an even narrower majority. And it was narrow before, but an even narrower majority. Don't envy your job. It's only 222 to 219. I mean, it's unbelievable. So let me ask you your relationship with Trump. I remember when Kevin McCarthy was ousted as speaker. You were nominated to replace him. And Donald Trump, you probably remember this. But let me remind you, just in case, posted on Truth Social, I have many wonderful friends wanting to be speaker of the House and some truly great warriors. I know Tom Emmer, who I do not know well, is not one of them. He is totally out of touch with the Republican voters. Now, to be fair, that was more than a year ago. I assume you've gotten to know Trump a little bit better.

REP. TOM EMMER:

The president and I are on very good terms. I'm. Yeah. The president is has been wonderful to me, been wonderful to my wife, has done everything that he could to campaign in Minnesota. He's been amazing. And yeah, we're going to do some good work together. But it's Donald J. Trump's agenda. My job is to make sure that we execute.

HOST:

And what are those interactions like?



REP. TOM EMMER:

He's he's a very blunt and honest human being.

HOST:

All right. Well, we look forward to seeing we hope to have you come back soon. We have more time. Congressman Tom Emmer, the majority whip. Thank you very much for being with us this morning.

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

Source: ABC NEWS (January 12, 2025)

Archived: February 05, 2026

Source URL: <https://youtu.be/SYqsZvh6aM0>

For questions or corrections: mn06watch@gmail.com