



Rep. Tom Emmer on ABC NEWS WITH LINSEY DAVIS – 2025

ABC

Broadcast: January 21, 2025 • Duration: 6:41

LINDSEY:

Now we are thrilled to be joined by the number two Republican in the House, Majority Whip Tom Emmer of Minnesota. Thank you so much for your time tonight. Of course, we've seen this flurry of executive action by President Trump. But as you well know, Congress needs to pass laws for some things to ultimately stick. Your majority in the House is now down to one seat, so you can't afford to lose a single Republican. How difficult of a job do you think this is going to be for you going forward?

REP. TOM EMMER:

Well, people underestimated us, Lindsay. By the way, thank you for having me. People underestimated us last Congress. We started with 222. At times we were down to 221, and at times we'd be even less because we had members who were out for a matter of weeks treating with different ailments. And we managed to accomplish things that most of your viewers probably don't even know about. We passed the strongest border bill in 20 years. We passed the parental bill of rights. We passed a bill to raise the debt ceiling and have permitting reforms, et cetera, that just went over and sat on Chuck Schumer's desk. So you're asking me how hard it is. It's not hard as long as you work with every single one of our members and you do it up front. You tell them this is what we're trying to accomplish with Donald J. Trump and the White House. And the fun part about it is they know now that when we pass these things, when we take these heavy lifts and get them out of the House, we're going to have a willing colleague, a teammate on the Senate side, and we're going to be able to get it to the President of the United States for his signature. So we're all very excited about the opportunity.

LINDSEY:

You were at the White House today meeting with Trump and top leadership. What more can you tell us about that meeting?

REP. TOM EMMER:

President was great. He's in great spirits. He's energized. He knows what it is that he wants to accomplish. But his message to us was we need to be together. We need to support each other. We need to work as a team to get this stuff done. I'm so excited to work with John Thune and his Senate conference, to work with Mike Johnson, our speaker, and all of our members, and obviously to work with President Trump, J.D. Vance and the White House. It's going to be fun.

LINDSEY:

Late today at the White House, the president suggested tying wildfire aid to the spending bill fight. He said they're going to need a lot of money, so maybe that makes it more one-sided. As you know, thousands of residents have lost their homes. What do you think is the right thing to do here?



REP. TOM EMMER:

Well, it's a tragedy, what has happened in California, the Los Angeles area. It's horrific. But when you talk about disaster aid and everything else, this is part of a bigger discussion. And there are no decisions that have been made. People have made suggestions about how you might move that through the House. But we need more detail, Lindsey, quite frankly, before we can move it forward. Right now, we just have to be very supportive of all the people that are being harmed by this.

LINDSEY:

Top Republicans, including Vice President Vance and Speaker Johnson, as well as Trump's selection for Attorney General, Pam Bondi, all said with regard to the January 6th defendants that pardons should be considered on a case-by-case basis. Yesterday, we saw Donald Trump pardon nearly all of the 1,500 defendants. Do you think that he went too far?

REP. TOM EMMER:

Well, Lindsey, he did exactly what he campaigned on. He said what he was going to do when elected, and he was elected by an overwhelming group of Americans. Seventy-seven million Americans gave Donald Trump a mandate. He was very transparent on what he was going to do on day one. By the way, totally opposite if we want to contrast it with the outgoing President Joe Biden, who said he would never pardon Hunter, and he did exactly that. And then he went and gave somehow a pardon for something that hasn't been convicted to his family members and to Fauci and others. Basically, it was a public admission of corruption in his administration. I think there's a significant contrast.

LINDSEY:

The Capitol Police chief, though, I do want to present his quote to you. He said, when people attack law enforcement officers, the criminals should be met with consequences, condemnation, and accountability. Would you agree with that?

REP. TOM EMMER:

Totally agree with it. In fact, that's a statement I made after this incident, that people should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. The problem here is, Lindsay, they went too far. This two-tiered justice system, they went beyond the full extent of the law. And in fact, they had to be slapped down by higher courts in some of these cases for what they were doing. So it's absolutely correct that people who violate the law should be dealt with by the law. But this weaponization of our legal system against certain people because of their political beliefs, that's what has to end. And that's what America, Republicans, Democrats, and others voted for on November 5th. They want to see us getting back to doing the people's business, and they want justice to be equal for all.

LINDSEY:

But I do want to go back to those pardons, though, because I do think that there was a belief anyway that while Donald Trump said he was going to free, as he calls them, the January 6th hostages, many people didn't think that that was going to include people who had been physically harmful, threatened, attacked our very own police officers. Do you think that that is okay? Many police officers today are saying, what about protecting us?

REP. TOM EMMER:



Lindsey, Joe Biden just granted pardons to 2,500 criminals. He wants to say they're low-level drug offenses, but he gave a pardon to Leonard Peltier. Leonard Peltier killed two FBI agents. I think that's where the real contrast is.

LINDSEY:

So, Congressman, just one last bite of the apple, just to play devil's advocate here. Not to talk about the last, because we did hear from one of the senators earlier today who said, I'm not here to talk about the last four years, we're looking forward to the next four years. So I'm just trying to get an understanding from you, do you think it's okay that those who harmed and attacked the police officers on January 6th, that that was a good idea to actually give them pardons and commutations?

REP. TOM EMMER:

Again, the two-tiered justice system that we witnessed, I think people who committed crimes should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law and not beyond that. And what they did is they went too far. This is why President Trump campaigned on this issue. And President Trump simply honored what he said on the campaign trail, unlike his predecessor who did everything he said he would not do and more.

LINDSEY:

Larry Whipp, Tom Emmer, Congressman, we thank you so much for your time, really appreciate the conversation.

REP. TOM EMMER:

Thanks, Lizzie.

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

Source: ABC (January 21, 2025)

Archived: February 05, 2026

Source URL: <https://youtu.be/di0Zd31WABY>

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