



Rep. Tom Emmer on CONGRESSIONAL SPEECH – 2025

SPEECH

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****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the people of Minnesota to honor the lives of former Minnesota Speaker of the House Melissa Hortman and her husband Mark who were brutally murdered in their home on June 14. We also express our collective outrage over this politically motivated attack which resulted in life-threatening injuries to my friend, Minnesota State Senator John Hoffman and his wife Yvette. My wife Jackie and I have known Melissa for more than 20 years. Melissa and I joined the Minnesota Legislature together in 2005 and we served together until 2011. While we may have disagreed on policy, Melissa was a great colleague who fearlessly fought for what she believed in and she devotedly served the people of Minnesota. One day, while I was in the Minnesota Legislature, I brought my only daughter to work with me. I wanted to introduce her to some of the strong female leaders in our state and my colleagues who were frankly exceptional at what they do. One of the first people I introduced Katie to was Melissa Hortman. Though we came from different sides of the aisle, Melissa was incredibly gracious with her time and couldn't have been more kind and encouraging to my daughter. Melissa's warmth and generosity extended far beyond that moment. As Speaker of the Minnesota House, she led with integrity and fostered bipartisan collaboration even during the most challenging times in our state. While we mourn Melissa and her husband Mark, we continue to pray for healing and peace for Senator Hoffman and his wife Yvette and their daughter Hope, who were targeted by the same evil coward that night. I have known Senator Hoffman for many years and have had the pleasure of meeting his daughter Hope on several occasions as they visited our office here in Washington, D.C. John's a wonderful man, a devoted husband and father and a friend. He's a common-sense legislator and has been a champion for Minnesotans with disabilities throughout his time in office. His bravery during the attack, lunging at the gunman to protect his family, likely saved their lives, though it left him with life-threatening injuries. Yvette, who was also hit by the gunfire, heroically shielded their daughter Hope, whose quick thinking in locking the door and calling 911 triggered a statewide law enforcement response that frankly prevented further tragedy. Their courage and heroism should continue to inspire us all. We are grateful to the brave men and women of law enforcement for their work to apprehend the evil perpetrator and we look forward to justice being served. Let's be clear. There is absolutely no place in our country for politically motivated violence. This attack, carried out by an evil coward disguised as a peace officer, was not just an assault on two Minnesota families, but it was an attack on the very fabric of our nation. It sought to silence and strike fear into the hearts of those who dedicate their lives to public service. And we, as we continue to grieve, we cannot and we will not let this tragedy define us. We must show our communities, our state, our country and the world that Minnesotans are united and our resolve is stronger now than ever. From Minneapolis to Mankato, from Delano to Duluth, we come together as one voice to condemn all forms of political violence. And we commit to always treat each other with respect, regardless of differing opinions or political affiliations. Our prayers are with the Hortman family as they grieve the devastating loss of their loved ones. And we also continue to pray for John, Yvette and Hope as they deal with the physical and emotional repercussions of this horrific attack. In closing, I want to echo the words of Melissa and Mark's children. Quote, hope and resilience are the enemy of fear. Hold your loved ones a little closer, love your neighbors, treat each other with kindness and respect. The best way to honor our parents' memory is to do



something, whether big or small, to make our community just a little better for someone else. May we always adhere to that sentiment. Thank you and I yield back.

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For questions or corrections: mn06watch@gmail.com