



Rep. Tom Emmer on ABC NEWS LIVE – 2025

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HOST:

My next guest voted yes for the bill and was a major reason why it passed. Majority Whip and Republican Congressman from Minnesota, Tom Emmer, joining me once again. Good to see you, sir. This is the president's signature legislation. So tell the American people why you say it's good for all Americans.

REP. TOM EMMER:

Well it is. You started out, and by the way, thanks for having me. It's been a long few days. I think I'm going on close to 48 hours just straight through, so bear with me. But you started out by saying Trump's spending bill. Actually this bill will have savings of almost \$2 trillion. It's never been done before, and the parts of government that are being addressed, this is all about efficiency. This is all about making government actually perform for the people. This legislation will unlock American energy. It'll give further resources to complete the president's work on sealing the southern border and deporting criminals, cartel members, gang members, rapists, murderers, the worst of the worst, as he says, and a whole bunch more. It also saves all Americans, all Americans from a \$4.5 trillion tax increase in January. And if you think about what it's going to do, the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, once it was signed into law, it caused our economy to just take off. We expect the same now that the public, once this is signed into law, people will know how their money's going to be treated starting next January, and we're going to see that same economic impact.

HOST:

So Democrats, of course, no surprise, slammed the bill. House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries calling it a reckless, regressive, and reprehensible tax scam. Here's a little bit of what he said. I want to get your reaction, Congressman. Taxes are crashing this economy in real time and driving us toward a recession. But beyond that, costs are actually going up. We will fight for you, for your health care, for your decency, for your well-being, for your grace, and for your dignity. Your thoughts, your response?

REP. TOM EMMER:

Well, nobody's buying it. I mean, clearly, Hakeem doesn't understand why his party lost the election last November. And he's going back to old, worn-out talking points. Hakeem and his party don't have a leader and don't have a message. They seem to want to be for people who want open borders. They don't seem to want to be for criminals. They actually represent, they go and celebrate criminals and want to advance them over U.S. citizens. Why they don't embrace government efficiency. Why they don't want to root out waste, fraud, and abuse, which should seem to be a non-partisan issue. The American public is smarter than he's giving them credit for. And they told him last November, we are sick and tired of the same tired, worn-out rhetoric that it's your fault, it's their fault. You can tell everybody that you're crashing the economy, but they're doing better. And you're going to see, when this thing takes off even more, look, it's going to make the Biden years hopefully look deep into the rearview mirror, because they blew up the economy, 40% inflation that we hadn't seen in 40 years, and the list goes on and on. Gas prices are coming down, grocery prices, eggs are coming down. All of



this is actually starting to happen under Donald Trump. And frankly, it's only going to get better.

HOST:

Let me ask you about health care, of course. The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office estimates this bill is expected to cause 7.6 million Americans to lose their health insurance over the next decade now. In your home state of Minnesota, more than a million people rely on Medicaid and other programs for health care. What do you say to your constituents, sir, that are worried about their coverage now?

REP. TOM EMMER:

Well, you have to look at the details. You brought up the work requirements. What has happened under the Biden administration is absolutely no verification of eligibility. So able-bodied, working-aged adults without children that this program was not intended for have somehow ended up on this program. They can get a job, they can find insurance through that. There's 1.4 million illegals that should not be on the program. Quite frankly, this is going to make the program stronger for those that it's intended for, the disabled, single parents with children. It really is going to make this whole Medicaid system work better for the states, I would argue, state-directed payments for non-expansion states are going up. So again, it's the same tired rhetoric, I think even the media takes the talking points that are created off of that number without looking under the hood and seeing exactly what we're talking about. I think all my people at home are going to agree completely that if you are an able-bodied, working-aged adult, that you actually should probably go out and find a job and start to get back to work. And you'll get your benefits. So we'll make sure you're covered.

HOST:

One more question, if you don't mind, Moody's just downgraded the U.S. credit rating for the third time ever amid concerns about the growing national debt. We were talking about this, sir, last week. That downgrade and growing deficit, you know, could lead to higher borrowing costs now and increased inflation. You list deficit reduction as a key issue on your campaign website. Why vote for a bill that could add trillions of dollars to our national debt? Something that, you know, could drive costs up for average Americans, Americans who are struggling right now.

REP. TOM EMMER:

Well, first, Moody's timing is very interesting, and I think it's somewhat political. But let's forget that for a second and talk about your definition of the deficit. Our government's got a very interesting way of doing accounting. You tell citizens that they're going to pay X percentage of their income this year to the federal government. The lawmaker, me, I come in with an election certificate and say, no, I think that's a little high. We're going to cut that down. And you know what my government does? My government says, oh, my goodness, you just cost me all this money that I was planning on having. It's not the government's money. It never was. It belongs to the people. And you've got to look at how they're accounting for it.

HOST:

Well, the bill now heads to the Senate. I want to stay in close touch because I know you're not going to budge and you're going to be a part of those negotiations for sure. And I know you can negotiate. Majority Whip Tom Emmer of Minnesota. I hope you get some sleep, sir. Thank you for your time.

REP. TOM EMMER:

Thank you.



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