



Rep. Tom Emmer on Weekly Video Update: DHS Funding

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****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** William, thanks for the question. As I understand it, you want to know, Tom, why did you vote for the Department of Homeland Security reauthorization bill last week? I want to take you back. When we first got here in January, I voted for the bill, as did, I think, every one of my colleagues. At the time, what we voted on was the reauthorization of the Department of Homeland Security, and there was no objection to that, not from the constituents that I heard from or from anyone in our conference here in Washington. After we sent it over to the Senate, there was a lot of controversy in the Senate, and obviously I serve in the U.S. House of Representatives, so I wasn't involved in those discussions, but apparently the Republican Senate wasn't able to get the immigration defunding language that we all supported. They weren't able to get it through the Senate. So at the 11th hour last week, I think it was last week, they sent back the bill without the immigration defunding language. First, I voted for the same bill without that language that I voted for originally, but Second, I expressed disappointment that whoever came up with the strategy of connecting the immigration defunding language, which was really important because we have a president, as you know, who doesn't obey the rule of law. He thinks he can write his own law when he doesn't get his way. I think it would have been a better strategy, and I expressed my disappointment with whoever came up with this strategy of connecting that language to maybe the education bill, or to an EPA reauthorization bill, or maybe even to a bill having to do with the Internal Revenue Service. Why would that be a better strategy? Because you know that Americans, regardless of their political persuasion, would agree with us. Would agree with us not only that this is really important, the rule of law, and making sure that our executive obey the rule of law, but the bill that we tie it to, they wouldn't be able to be critical like perhaps someone could when it comes to the Department of Homeland Security. Why do I say that? What's the number one obligation of government? Well, being a strict constructionist type of person, the Constitution says the number one obligation of our government is to protect its citizens. That's why I voted for the Department of Homeland Security bill. And again, it was the same language, the reauthorization language, that everybody agreed on when we got here. The only very disappointing part was the strategy that someone came up with before we got here to connect this very important language defunding the President's executive orders relating to immigration to this bill. My hope is that we are going to find another place for this, or at the very least, we should be passing the language as a freestanding bill to show the American people that we do not support the executive's unlawful and unconstitutional actions. I tell you, I don't rely on the courts for the final result because it's up to Congress, but we at least have the courts for now instituting this injunction which holds off the Obama administration from following through on their unlawful actions. And hopefully, the leadership here in Congress can come up with a strategy that actually will allow us to check this unbridled exercise of unlawful power by the executive. Thanks for the question, William, and we'll just keep trying to do a good job for you and everybody else in the great 6th District in the state of Minnesota.



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