



Rep. Tom Emmer on SQUAWK BOX

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****ANDREW:**

** where things stand, and President Trump's call for the Senate Republicans to end the filibuster rule, House Majority Whip Congressman Tom Emmer, good morning to you. Let's start with what the president said overnight, and this very idea of ending the filibuster. Where do you stand?

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** I understand he's frustrated. I'm not going to get into the Senate's business, their institution they're responsible for, but the president's frustrated just like all the rest of us are. This is getting incredibly serious. On day 31, you already have 65,000 small businesses that have lost \$12 billion. These are businesses that contract with the United States government. They've already lost \$12 billion in this first month. These are small businesses across the country, and by the way, they're contractors, federal contractors. Unlike federal employees that usually get back pay, they don't. They just lose the money. This week, air traffic controllers didn't get a paycheck on Tuesday. More federal employees didn't get one yesterday. You've got SNAP benefits being interrupted tomorrow, on Saturday, November 1st. That's going to affect 42 million low-income Americans, and there's a whole bunch of other consequences. So I understand his frustration. We've got to get the government back open so that we can get back to work.

****ANDREW:**

** But on the particular point that he's raising about ending the filibuster, which has been an issue that's been raised as long as I can remember over the years, but the Senate hasn't done it, you must have a thought about it.

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** I wish I could be focused on what the Senate's parliamentary and their rules are. That's not my problem. My problem is dealing with 435 members of the U.S. House of Representatives. Again, we only have to have a simple majority to pass something across. We did this back on September 19th. They've got to have 60 votes.

****ANDREW:**

** Let me ask you a different question. There are a number of proposals to effectively keep SNAP benefits rolling, to keep TSA folks getting paid or things like that, without technically reopening the government and allowing this government shutdown to continue. Do you support any of those proposals?

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** They can solve the problem today by passing the clean CR. By the way, you can talk about all those proposals you want. I understand the Democrats who now have their constituents that are being held hostage by Chuck Schumer and their colleagues in the Senate. They want to be able to vote again and say, well, I voted



for that. But the problem is we had a vote last week in the Senate to fund essential employees, which included our military and other federal employees. And guess what? Democrats in the Senate voted that down, too. So no, the answer is pass the clean CR, which, by the way, Chuck Schumer and company voted for six months ago. And I don't think people understand when you say he also voted for the exact same CR 13 times under the Biden administration.

****ANDREW:**

****** Chuck Schumer wrote the CR.

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

****** That's the just vote for the CR and people will stop getting hurt.

****ANDREW:**

****** In terms of the obviously there's finger pointing on all sides and the Democrats are trying to blame the Republicans. The Republicans are trying to blame the Democrats and all the same. But at what point do you think that things at what point is the inflection point that either forces Democrats to pass the CR cleanly or given that they've held out this long? Do they do you think that they need something? I don't know what something even is. I mean, obviously, they're of they're pushing on the health care issue. But is there something that the Republicans give so that you get to that place? And I'm not suggesting you should be doing that. I'm just suggesting from a practical perspective how both sides can get to. Yes.

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

****** Well, as you know, I believe they should come in today. They should vote and pass it immediately. And President Trump will sign it and we'll be up and running and people will stop. In the meantime, I think it started this week. You know, up till now, the vast majority outside of those sixty five thousand some small businesses across the country. And by the way, the majority of those federal contractors are in the states of Maryland and Virginia. So you would think those Democrat senators would want to put those businesses and the people that are running them ahead of their partisan politics. I think it started on Monday when the largest federal government employee union. There's by one point four million federal employees in this country. They represent roughly eight hundred and twenty thousand. They sent a letter on Monday saying and it wasn't directed to one or the other. It just simply said pass the clean CR. I think that was the beginning. And sadly, I think because what Chuck Schumer and company have done, which is basically take a knee to the most extreme side of their party, they are going to wait until after the elections next Tuesday before they can say, oh, we fought harder than anybody else. We've set the record for a government shutdown. We're right. Republicans are bad.

****ANDREW:**

****** What? How do we like what? Where do you see this breaking? And then I think as the whip, you see this, you think they pass the clean CR with Chuck Schumer saying, yes, let's do this. Or you think appeal?

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

****** I don't know. I'm not going to make that prediction. It could be some some of the more moderates like it could be the two senators from Virginia, the two senators from Maryland. It could be a senator that's up for reelection down in Georgia who's got one of the largest number of federal employees and servicemen and women in there that are going to be impacted. I don't know that it'll be Chuck Schumer's leadership because he hasn't shown



that so far.

****ANDREW:**

** Are we here a week from now or do you think we have this? What's your timeline on it? What if I had if you had to make an estimate?

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** I'm not the one making the. But you understand this. I'm telling you that I sadly, I think their next inflection point is next Tuesday.

****ANDREW:**

** OK, literally, if they try to reopen the government beforehand, the very people that they're afraid of in their party will absolutely destroy them and may not show up Tuesday. So they keep the government closed through Tuesday, harm American people just to make a statement. Let me ask you another question. In terms of the whatever that thing that turns this over so we get past Tuesday, maybe maybe Tuesday is the day. But then there's another issue, which is, is it the constituents that require you that are relying on snap that you think start calling, you know, their congressman, their senator? Is that is that what pushes this over? Or is it that is it that is it a situation where the lines become so crazy, where flights are not taking off, where, by the way, senators and congressmen, you're flying around the country right now, you know, can't actually get where they want to go?

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** No, I had to drive.

****ANDREW:**

** Did you actually drive here?

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** Oh, yeah. I had to drive last night because the there was a complete meltdown. Ground stop in D.C.A. LaGuardia had issues there were, you know, you've seen ground stops in Dallas, Newark.

****ANDREW:**

** OK, so there's part of me that and this is this is a sad commentary on America if it's actually the airlines rather than the folks who who who need snap to eat. What what is the issue you think that actually tips the balance?

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** First off, I would say this when Chuck Schumer and Senate Democrats decided to take us into a shutdown, they should have written the book on government shutdowns. It was written by Republicans. We understand and we learn that you do not leverage your policy provisions from the minority with a government shutdown. Certainly that's number one. Certainly number two, if you do do the shutdown, you better have an exit strategy. They clearly did not have an exit strategy. So look back in 2019 when Republicans were in this place, it will be those forty two million low income Americans. But you'll remember that a bunch of air traffic controllers did not come into work and shut down LaGuardia back in 2019. And the government, lo and behold, the health care costs do go up and they will in certain parts of the country. There is no question that that's directionally where this is is going to go.



****ANDREW:**

****** Do you think Democrats will get any credit when this is all over for raising the red flag on that? And what does that do to some of your constituents and others in in red states?

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

****** Well, they can they can try to claim the high ground on that. But remember, the alternative proposal that Chuck Schumer and company filed in the Senate makes it very clear that their argument about health care is completely false. One, they have it in writing that they would undo the reforms that Republicans did last summer and they would put illegal aliens back on taxpayer funded health care to if it's about health care. Why do it? Why do they want to blow up the 50 billion dollar rural health care fund? The other thing I would say to you, Andrew, is read what they file 60 some pages. I want to say it's 66 pages. Easy to read. Guess what? One and a half pages of that thing roughly refer to those enhanced tax credits that you're talking about. The rest talks about funds for Sesame Street in Iraq and other programs all around the globe that Americans outright voted against last November. That is not the priority of America. I believe Republicans are going to move us forward and we've got to reform the system. But you've got to open up the government first before you can get to that.

****ANDREW:**

****** I want to thank you for coming in this morning. We'll see. I hope we get I hope we get there.

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