



Rep. Tom Emmer on Fox 9 All Day – January 21, 2026

Fox 9 Local

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AMY:

Congressman Emmer joining me now from the capital. Thanks for your time today, Congressman.

REP. TOM EMMER:

Good to be with you.

AMY:

So, let's, you know, we'll talk about some of the bills here in a minute. There's some important news for Minnesotans to know, but I really want to start with this surge here in Minnesota and what you've been watching from afar, what you've been hearing from your constituents. I you know, I'm curious. It seems like we're at an impasse here in Minnesota. I think that a sentiment from a lot of people is that, you know, every time the politicians or people in the public are calling for ICE to get out, Homeland Security is doubling down on the enforcement. So, where does this end, do you think, Congressman?

REP. TOM EMMER:

Well, first off, Amy, again, it's great to be with you. I hope you're staying warm. I understand Minnesota has been pretty nippy.

AMY:

So cold. It's going to get colder, too. But we're hearty. You know that. We can handle it.

REP. TOM EMMER:

A great time of year in Minnesota, Amy. We're making ice and frankly you are asking about a topic that really breaks my heart watching what's going on in Minnesota. The problem is quite simply we got to we can take Tim Walz out of the equation. I think we could try to take Keith Ellison out of the equation. I don't know that the mayor of Minneapolis is of any consequence. And you know what, the president you can take out of the equation. What this comes down to, this could all settle down so quickly if our local law enforcement were allowed to do what is traditionally something that happens in all states across the union, enter into something called a 287G agreement with the federal law enforcement authorities. What does that mean, Amy? That means there's an agreement where our local law enforcement, typically it would be the county sheriffs and their deputy sheriffs, can do the job of finding, picking up, if you will, the worst of the worst, the sex offenders, the murderers. They've had deportation orders for years. You've seen a short list of the people they've already identified and removed. This could be done by local authorities who understand the communities better. This is why when you hear Tom Homan say, if you want us off your streets, let us in your jails. That's what he's talking about. Because they typically have these agreements. Unfortunately, we have an attorney general who's given an opinion that you can't exercise an immigration detainer. In other words, if you pick up, if you're a local sheriff



and you pick up someone who's a convicted murderer who is here illegally, you can't hold them in the jail until the federal law enforcement officers get there to retrieve them and do their job. You have to let them back out on the street. So Amy, if you want this to resolve very quickly, you got to take these personalities out of it. Tim Walz has to quit talking like he's Jefferson Davis in the New Confederacy. We've got to get the normalcy back to where people are in control of their own communities and that can happen rather quickly.

AMY:

And Congressman, I just want to let you know, we're going to take a quick break in just a moment here and come back with much more of our conversation. And you know, I'm glad you brought up the jails and the prisons because I have heard Tom Homan talking about that and I've asked some local sheriffs and some of our other reporters have said, "What about this?" You're absolutely right when you say there's that time limit, right, where they could notify, the sheriff could notify and Cottonwood County could notify ICE and say, "Hey, we've got this person going to be released here soon." But if they can't get there in time, then that's a soft spot right there. There are also things that are going on though, Congressman, that I want to ask you about. You know, we were hearing a lot about from local law enforcement about concerns over the racial profiling. We just had a press conference here with a young woman and we don't know everything of all of these cases, Congressman, but even if a small percentage of even if one of these cases is, you know, true and accurate and is found to be true, how do you feel about the fact that ICE is here and according to local law enforcement doing some racial profiling and there's excessive force allegations as well. How do you respond to that?

REP. TOM EMMER:

Well, first before we leave it, Amy, because I think it's important to emphasize that we have an attorney general who has told our county sheriffs that they cannot exercise an immigration detainer. That's why you're saying, well, they have to let him go, Amy, they don't. They could hold them until the federal agents get there. But they've got an advisory opinion from a guy who is not even a good lawyer, Keith Ellison, who seems to hate cops and want to prosecute cops, who's telling them that they can't rely on these detainers. Well, guess what I would say to every county sheriff? Talk to a good lawyer. Talk to real lawyers about what they can and can't do and then figure out what's best for your county, for your citizens. On this other issue, uh you refer to them as ICE. I refer to them as immigration enforcement officers. There's federal law enforcement officers. Yes, there are many that are coming into our state because of the, you know, apparently our governor thinks he's fighting with the federal government. But we've got officers that live in our communities that are our neighbors that frankly their kids go to school with our kids. These are human beings. And when you got the Star Tribune literally publishing names and pictures and convicting people in the court of public opinion trying to get them killed, I would argue the officers are going to be hyper sensitive about everything around them because they do not know who it is that is going to try to harm them. So the episode you're talking about, look, I understand there was a stop. I don't know the pretext for the stop. Everybody can guess what that is, but that's their guess. The officers that were involved will be able to explain the reason for the stop. And by the way, if you encounter someone on a stop that is armed, of course, you're going to react not knowing who that person is. In that case, I believe the individual identified themselves immediately as a peace officer. That was confirmed and on their way they went. So, I think the more we dig into some of these, there was a story about somebody who was wrongfully thrown to the ground and dealt with at a Target. Well, you come to find out that because they're being encouraged to confront federal law enforcement and they're getting aggressive. Well, you know, the law enforcement are going to respond. It's just a fact and we want this to end. And the way it ends is nobody has to get a win here. That's not what it's about. What it's about is empower our local law enforcement, our neighbors, friends, part of our community. Let them work with the federal law enforcement. Much like Tom Homan said, they know the people in our communities and they are probably the best prepared to collect the worst of the



worst so that the federal authorities can then retrieve them and get them out of our state and out of our country.

AMY:

Okay, Congressman, we are going to take just if you can hang on for two minutes, we're going to take a quick break. Come right back. More to talk with you about, including some important bills that have been making their way through the House as well. So, folks, stay tuned. We'll be right back with Congressman Tom Emmer after this.

AMY:

We just have a few minutes left here and so much to cover, Congressman. I just really, really briefly though, I did want to circle back on one thing, which is yesterday we did have law enforcement - Hennepin County Sheriff Dawanna Witt among others - who came out and said, yes, there is specifically racial profiling going on here. I just really want to get your thoughts on that. You know, you've represented Minnesota for a very, very long time in the St. Cloud area. When you hear that, what goes through your mind?

REP. TOM EMMER:

County Sheriff - great lady. I have a lot of respect for her. She does a wonderful job, but she's not the officer involved. I used to do this kind of work, Amy, when I was practicing law. I want to hear it from the officers involved. I appreciate that she probably has pressures being in Hennepin County that a lot of people don't have to face. She's handled them very, very well. I think her counterpart at the city of Minneapolis, if they would've provided that perimeter protection that is customary for local law enforcement to provide, we never would've had the tragedy that occurred a couple weeks ago. So again, I don't want to take someone else's word for it. I'd rather hear from the actual officers that were involved in whatever the stop is or the engagement is.

AMY:

We can definitely continue these conversations at another time. Our show ends at two and I want to get to a couple more things here with you, including there's a bipartisan bill that is really important to healthcare in Minnesota. I know I've been following the story about the psychiatric beds here. Tell me a little bit about this. It's bipartisan, is that right, that actually removes a bureaucratic provision and prohibits inpatient psychiatric hospitals from securing mortgage assistance? Why would you deny inpatient psychiatric facilities? It's confusing to me.

REP. TOM EMMER:

We've got a mental health crisis in this country. We need more facilities. We need more beds to deal with the serious mental health crisis that is upon us, and I think it's incredibly important in Minnesota, which has always been a leader when it comes to treatment of mental illness. I think it's time that this mean and outdated provision be eliminated. I offered it with a Democrat, Ritchie Torres from New York. I think we filed it before, trying to work on it in the last administration. I think we've got a great chance of getting it done in this administration.

AMY:

About two minutes left here and I got a hard out. I also wanted to ask about the denaturalization act that you're working on as well. Can you tell us just briefly what this is?

REP. TOM EMMER:



The SCAM Act will expand and clarify the federal immigration and naturalization act. The current bar to denaturalize someone - take away their citizenship - is very high, and it should be. But we're just going to make it more clear: denaturalize criminals who commit fraud, aggravated felonies, espionage, or people who join a terrorist group after they have come to this country and been naturalized. The SCAM Act will not only hold Somali fraudsters in Minnesota accountable, but it's going to restore long overdue integrity to America's entire naturalization process. That was filed this week and it'll start moving through the process in the coming weeks.

AMY:

Thirty seconds left - the BWCA bill is making its way through. Is that something that you'll be a part of?

REP. TOM EMMER:

I mean, people are getting it wrong. It's to eliminate an executive order that was signed by Joe Biden. People need to understand that this executive order went way too far, Amy. It would remove 225,000+ acres from northern Minnesota for resource development and utilization. And yes, that could include mining, but mining can only occur outside of the Boundary Waters and even outside of the legal buffer around the Boundary Waters. But it also includes timber and other resources. And by the way, it's public school trust land, which would be very harmful to the public school system in Minnesota. So yeah, I'll be supporting it. I think everyone should be supporting it, and then we all need to make sure we protect the integrity of the BWCA.

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