



Rep. Tom Emmer on Cavuto Live on Fox News Channel

Fox News Channel

Broadcast: January 29, 2024 • Duration: 7:48

NEIL CAVUTO:

Congressman, great to have you.

REP. TOM EMMER:

Good to be with you, Neil.

NEIL CAVUTO:

Is there going to be a deal, first off?

REP. TOM EMMER:

Well, it's a great question. You heard Chad Pergrin say that three weeks now we've been hearing there's going to be some kind of agreement. We still have not seen legislative text.

NEIL CAVUTO:

Well, you heard some of the rumored elements, like, you know, the president, as soon as he signs off on it, he's going to shut the border down, he's going to limit it to 5,000 a day. You've heard that. What do you think of that?

REP. TOM EMMER:

It will be in the text. I've heard it, but you've got an administration now that, since they took office more than three years ago, they have completely opened the southern border through some 64 executive actions. They effectively undid all of the work that had been done by the previous administration to seal the border. You've got a record number, 300,000, over 300,000 came across the border in December, Neil. Think about this for a second. They waited almost a month to release that number, and they dumped it on a Friday night at the same time they're putting out what I would suggest is a very disingenuous statement from the White House about things that nobody has actually had the opportunity to study and verify.

NEIL CAVUTO:

A lot has been said that Donald Trump doesn't want a border deal because it's a great election issue, and he's more or less sent the word out to you and your colleagues, don't give an inch on this. Is that true?

REP. TOM EMMER:

No. That is a, I would say that that is a narrative that's been created by people who want to give cover to the administration. The former president, President Trump, what he's saying is the same thing that Mike Johnson and House Republicans are saying. Let's make sure that what we do secures the southern border. I mean, you could do things like restore the Remain in Mexico policy that the Trump administration had in place. Neil, that would staunch 70% of the flow across our southern border overnight, and this is a much bigger deal.



NEIL CAVUTO:

And you could just deport more people. We deport a fraction of the people. We're running at about one-fifth the level we used to, right?

REP. TOM EMMER:

Kind of hard to do that when this administration doesn't even know where they are because of catch and release, which should also be removed. They don't know, they've released 40% of those that have come across the border. You're talking about 8.3 million since these guys took over the Biden administration, plus another 1.7 known gotaways. Those are the ones we know about.

NEIL CAVUTO:

But would it would some I get everything you're saying, sir, but would some deal be better than no deal? The Wall Street Journal looked into this and said, giving up on a border security bill could be a self-inflicted GOP wound. President Biden would claim that Republicans want border chaos as an election issue rather than solving the problems. Border anger may over time move Mr. Biden to the GOP and the public will have a point. Cynicism rules.

REP. TOM EMMER:

The only reason that President Biden is even interested in discussion, discussing this issue, Neil, is because it has now become a political liability for the White House. And he's nervous.

NEIL CAVUTO:

It's why not take his bait and say, all right, we're going to hold you to this.

REP. TOM EMMER:

That is essentially what the House Republicans have done. Show us the text. Let's make sure that what we do on the southern border is a substantive fix, not just words.

NEIL CAVUTO:

So it's substantive to you would not be allowing, in other words, getting a shutdown going only when it hits 5000, because that's still a lot of people who get in.

REP. TOM EMMER:

Jay Johnson, who is the ran the Department of Homeland Security under Obama, once said a thousand coming across our southern border is a crisis, Neil. How can you suddenly acknowledge and why would any member of Congress, Republican or Democrat suggest now that it's OK to have 5000 or less coming across your southern border?

NEIL CAVUTO:

So as it stands now, with even the rumored numbers you've heard, Congressman, and I guess you are on the same page as Speaker Johnson, this is unacceptable as it stands with what you've heard.

REP. TOM EMMER:

Well, I have a different job than the speaker. And what I would tell you is if you're giving the president additional parole authority to admit up to 50000 more people a year, if you're doing the 5000 plus one on the border over a



certain period of time and giving them discretion, if you're not ending catch and release, if you're not restoring remain in Mexico, I'm going to have a very difficult time getting the votes that are necessary, even if it comes to the floor.

NEIL CAVUTO:

Isn't this, Congressman, something that even Donald Trump wanted, some of the other issues that might be addressed? You're quite right. We don't know. We don't know this asylum issue. I'll tell you one thing he had said back in 2018, that the biggest loophole drawing illegal aliens to our borders is the use of fraudulent or meritless asylum claims. He said it's really up to Congress to overcome open borders obstruction. This might, and to your point, might be a start in that direction. Go ahead. Take the president's bait. This would be a victory for Donald Trump coming in if he does get elected president. And he could say that they did what I told them they should have done years ago.

REP. TOM EMMER:

Remember, Neil, we haven't talked about it yet this morning, but House Republicans last May passed the strongest border security bill that has been passed in 20 years, which included fixes to the asylum program. Without a single Democratic vote.

NEIL CAVUTO:

Yeah, but. Would never get to the Senate, right?

REP. TOM EMMER:

Well, again, now you see the problem. If you are serious about securing the border, then you have to look at the bill that the Republicans passed out of the House. I would argue that you don't have to have everything in it because you don't have control of all of government. We are one half of one third of the system. But you do have to have substantive things that people can look at and say that is actually solving the problem.

NEIL CAVUTO:

Do you think Donald Trump and his solution and you said that he has not been pressuring lawmakers to to pass on this? Others say he is, but that this is Donald Trump's agenda here.

REP. TOM EMMER:

I think the same agenda that we all have, Donald Trump secured the border when he was in the White House. Neil, this administration has undone all of the great and with executive orders.

NEIL CAVUTO:

So your point was, I think you were telling me during the break that President Biden could undo that with executive orders of his own to undo the executive orders he signed, right? Because that's what opened up the border.

REP. TOM EMMER:

And I think when you talk about President Trump, he's talking about what all the rest of us are. You are not a country unless you have a border and a border that you enforce. We need to have we need to restore not only what President Trump did, but then we need to pass legislation so we eliminate all of this flexibility that allows someone to go into office and undo all the protections that have been created.



NEIL CAVUTO:

Real quickly, sir, while I have you, the president said he wasn't really fond of this RNC efforts to essentially coordinate him, the party nominee or the presumptive nominee, recognizing, I guess, were two contests into this Iowa, New Hampshire. It looks like a prohibitive lead he has going in South Carolina. Do you believe after South Carolina, if Nikki Haley is blown out, that she should bow out?

REP. TOM EMMER:

Donald Trump is going to be our nominee. That that is what I know. So it's up to Nikki and everybody else how they want to harm the party staying in.

NEIL CAVUTO:

Some of your colleagues say she does. Absolutely not. There's a great discussion. But that's up to Nikki. She has to make that evaluation herself. Donald Trump will be the candidate. And by the way, I really appreciate what he said yesterday or the day before when he said no, don't be doing this. You know, the presumptive nominee.

REP. TOM EMMER:

What about his going after those who give her money? They're on a blacklist. All I can do is focus on the next election. We're going to keep focused on the border, keep the government running and try to take care of our allies around the world.

NEIL CAVUTO:

Well understood on all fronts. Very good seeing you, Congressman.

This transcript was independently produced by MN-06 Watch for accountability and archival purposes.

Source: Fox News Channel (January 29, 2024)

Archived: February 05, 2026

Source URL: <https://youtu.be/ivpUBXJOx5U>

For questions or corrections: mn06watch@gmail.com