



Rep. Tom Emmer on America Reports

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JOHN:

Republican Minnesota Congressman Tom Emmer is also the House Majority Whip. Good to see you, Congressman. Here's what Speaker McCarthy said in the halls of Congress just a short time ago about the debt ceiling. Listen here. I will not put a clean debt ceiling on the floor. Why? Because we've spent more than we've ever spent before and we have the highest debt than we ever had before. I just don't think that's right. So he's saying we can't spend more in the next year than we spent in the last year, but the White House is pushing back against this. But I'm wondering what the game of Joe Biden appears to be. Push this thing toward the deadline so that Republicans either have to capitulate on a lot of his demands or face the consequences of tipping over into default, which he would use to hang around your neck. What do you think?

REP. TOM EMMER:

Well, he might. But if he does that, John, that will be the first president ever to default. And it will be Joe Biden's default. The House, under Kevin McCarthy's leadership, has passed a debt ceiling solution, which, by the way, we had 218 of our members support. I just want to remind people that every Democrat in the House voted against raising the debt ceiling when we had that vote. So Kevin McCarthy has been working, trying to get this president, the White House, to negotiate for months, I mean, since January. Finally got him to at least pay attention three weeks ago, but there has been no urgency, John. The problem is with the White House, you got the president who leaves the country. You've got a Senate who leaves the District of Columbia. They're taking time off right now, away from Washington. This crisis, which Janet Yellen says could be as early as June 1st, and she's given some mixed messages. Quite frankly, there's a bunch of us that would love to have her show us her homework. We'd love to see her math on how she's coming up with this, but we have to take her at her word, and our speaker is, that it could be as early as June 1st. Republicans have the solution. Republicans have been willing to work, our speaker has, with the White House. So far, there just hasn't been any urgency on their side of the equation.

JOHN:

Hakeem Jeffries is blaming the speaker, saying that his negotiating tactic is my way or the highway. Listen to what Jeffries said. That is not a road to a bipartisan resolution. That is an effort to take this country on a reckless legislative joyride to a dangerous default, and that is why America is in this situation right now. So he's saying the speaker's not willing to negotiate, but it seems like he is.

REP. TOM EMMER:

You know, last week it was Republicans are cutting veterans benefits, which was not true. The week before, or this week, it was it's the 14th Amendment. I mean, this is Democrats' desperation time. Hakeem Jeffries has a job to do. Unfortunately, he doesn't have much to sell. You've got a White House that refuses to lead. You've got a Senate that refuses to act, or can't act. You've got a House led by Kevin McCarthy that says, look, we need to raise the debt ceiling. We need to make sure there is no default in this country, and we have a solution



to do that with spending reforms. By the way, a CNN poll says 60% of Americans agree with Kevin McCarthy.

JOHN:

Well, 32 trillion dollars is an awfully big number that we're heading toward so quickly. McCarthy says, look, I'm willing to make concessions here. I've made some concessions, and by the way, some of what's in the Limit Save Grow Act are Democratic ideas. Listen to how he put it. We've offered a lot of concessions. The cap on the spending is a Democrat idea. The work requirement was a Democrat idea. I can't help it if the Democrats have become so extreme, and now it's a party of Bernie Sanders. Okay, but there's a potential pitfall here for McCarthy. If he has to make a compromise that he can't sell to the Freedom Caucus, he's going to need Democrats to get it through. Given what happened in the vote for speakership, and what it took him to get there, that could be problematic.

REP. TOM EMMER:

John, first off, when he's talking concessions, he's not making any concessions. He's not negotiating against himself. He put the deal on the table. He has made it clear Republicans will not default. This is all on the president at this point. If the president's going to come in and he told you in the original deal that he passed with 218 members supporting it, it had Joe Manchin's caps on it. It had Joe Biden's Clinton-era work requirements on it. These are things that are normal. And until you have the other side actually showing urgency, we're not going to see much progress. Fingers crossed that it's going to happen.

JOHN:

All right, Congressman, thank you.

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