



Rep. Tom Emmer on Emmer: Don't politicize American safety

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HOST:

Freshman Congressman Tom Emmer is making headlines by criticizing fellow Republicans for their role in a possible shutdown of Homeland Security. Right now the shutdown is scheduled to happen on Friday. The funding is tied up in a dispute over the president's immigration plan. Emmer says it's wrong of conservatives to not support Homeland Security funding because of the immigration issue. Emmer's stand is a surprise to some who remember his run for governor in 2010 when he ran as a strong conservative. Aslee Murphy joins us now with more. Is this a new Tom Emmer?

ASLEE MURPHY:

Well I can tell you what he says. He says no. But his willingness to take on conservative leaders shows his willingness to chart his own path. It's also an indication of how much pressure the model of America and another terror threat has put on Republicans. When Tom Emmer ran for governor in 2010, conservative icon Newt Gingrich campaigned for him. And when he won the seat vacated by Tea Party star Michelle Bachman, a lot of people thought he would follow in their paths. But with conservatives insisting that Homeland Security funding be used to pressure the White House on immigration, Emmer is breaking ranks.

REP. TOM EMMER:

The president has overreached with his executive action. But the way I look at it is two wrongs don't make a right.

ASLEE MURPHY:

Emmer says his conservative colleagues are jeopardizing public safety for political gain.

REP. TOM EMMER:

I am very disappointed with the so-called strategy, the approach. I don't think, again, you leverage the safety of American citizens, and especially when you come from a state where you have the Mall of America.

ASLEE MURPHY:

Professor David Schultz, who has known Emmer for two decades, says he has always had an independent streak.

PROFESSOR DAVID SCHULTZ:

I think Congressman Emmer is trying to sort of tell the rest of the Republicans, put a break on this, especially if you want to have a chance of being able to run successfully for re-election or for the presidency for the Republican Party in 2016.

**ASLEE MURPHY:**

Schultz says Emmer's stand is also a sign of the enormity of the concern here in Minnesota over not just the Mall of America threat, but ongoing terror recruitment.

PROFESSOR DAVID SCHULTZ:

I think sensitivity over making sure that Homeland Security is funded is probably even more heightened here than in some other parts of the country.

ASLEE MURPHY:

And to be clear, Emmer says he believes the president's immigration plan is wrong. He just says leave Homeland Security out of it. Now with the shutdown really just four days away, it's not clear if some kind of funding deal can be reached before a shutdown happens on Friday.

HOST:

Alright, we know where Emmer stands. What about other Minnesota Republicans?

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