



Rep. Tom Emmer on Majority Whip Tom Emmer joins ABC News' This Week | August 31, 2025

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MARTHA:

Joining me now is GOP House Majority Whip Tom Emmer of Minnesota. His district covers the area northwest of Minneapolis. Thanks for joining us this morning, Congressman, on a very sad day. Give us an update on the wounded, if you can, this morning.

REP. TOM EMMER:

Yeah, well, first, thanks for having me, Martha, and fortunately, under not the best circumstances. Our hearts are broken, and our prayers are with the families, the two families that lost their children. As you know, there were 20 that were injured, 18 of them are still being treated, 15 children and three adults, and according to the folks in Minneapolis, all are expected to survive. I think Chief O'Hara, the Minneapolis Police Chief, told us yesterday that all the victims are expected to survive, but Martha, just because they survive, the trauma that all of these kids, the families that lost their two children, all the kids and the adults that were injured, and every one of them that was at that mass is, frankly, the community is going to be dealing with this for a long time.

MARTHA:

They certainly will, and I've talked to so many victims from the past, and that will stay with them forever. I do want to talk to you about the investigation itself. They've found mounds of writings from the shooter. Have the police been able to talk to the parents and find out whether they were alerted to mental health problems, whether they tried to have anybody intervene in the past?

REP. TOM EMMER:

Well, first off, the FBI is investigating this as domestic terrorism, an act of domestic terrorism and a hate crime against Catholics. A lot of people don't know that the day before this shooting, there was another shooting in Minneapolis where six people were, actually five were injured and one was killed, and that took place right behind Crystal Ray Jesuit High School. Look, this young man was seriously mentally disabled, deranged. Somebody had to know. We understand that the FBI has talked to his mother, but we'll wait for the investigation for the FBI and local authorities to actually release information when it's fully formed. But somebody had to know, Martha. You're right. There were mounds of dreams, of writings, and clearly this young man was crying out for help. Why was no one hearing him? Why was no one listening? It really is a tragedy, and that's the part that we need to know, is why wasn't this identified? Why wasn't this young man, didn't somebody love him enough to try and help him before he became such a danger to his community and to himself?

MARTHA:

Congressman, I know in the past people have tried to get help for their children, for their adult children in the mental health area. What can you really do to stop someone if they have mental health issues, and what should you do? What would you like to see going forward?



REP. TOM EMMER:

Well, this is an area that I've actually worked on in Congress, Martha. The mental health crisis in this country is one of the main problems that we are faced with today, exacerbated by the pandemic, exacerbated by the internet and all the rest, and we've got to figure out how to deal with it. But people do have options. The key is that when you identify someone, maybe it's in your family, maybe it's a friend, maybe it's in your neighborhood, your support group, whatever your network is, you can report that to the appropriate authorities, your concern. It's not trying to tattle on someone, it's literally trying to help them. This person may need some help. We've got another thing in this state, Martha, which I don't understand. We're going to find out more, because this young man never should have had access or been able to possess a firearm based on what little we already know. Somebody who had to know that, there's a red flag law in this state, and what that's all about is it's usually used by a parent or a law enforcement officer to go to the court and get an order that this individual, because of their emotional state, the mental challenges that they have, the mental illness, cannot, should not possess a firearm because they'd be a danger to themselves and or others.

MARTHA:

And Congressman, in the short term, or maybe the long term, should law enforcement increase its presence in schools and places of worship? I know the governor has deployed them now.

REP. TOM EMMER:

Yeah, well, thanks a lot, Governor. Yes, the answer is yes. The Catholic community, along with other faith-based schools in this area, just a couple of years ago, when Tim Walz and the legislature were blowing through an \$18 billion surplus, they asked for some of those resources, Martha, for improving security in their schools. It was after this very sad incident in Kentucky. What did Tim Walz do? Absolutely nothing. So yes, it's going to be very important that these schools have the resources. The other thing that you have to look at, Minneapolis, because of these crazy policies that the governor, the young mayor, the progressive, if that's what you want to call her, county attorney, the Minneapolis School Board, back in 2020, said they voted out having a Minneapolis policeman as a resource officer on the school property. I think we've got to go back and rethink these things. What works? What doesn't work? And we've got to start improving our game because it's going to be really important.

MARTHA:

You talk about what can be done after mass shootings in Buffalo and in Uvalde, Texas. Congress passed the bipartisan Safer Communities Act. It provided hundreds of millions of dollars for schools to expand mental health services, enhance safety measures. You did not vote for that bill. Why?

REP. TOM EMMER:

I don't remember the reasons that I didn't vote for that bill. I've got to tell you, we did a lot for Uvalde, but you can't replace those children, Martha. You can't. And you can't help that community. We're talking about getting on the front end, Martha. We're talking about we need to have the resources.

MARTHA:

This bill sounds like it might have done that. We need to get to the root cause.

REP. TOM EMMER:



Martha, that would have done that. That would have identified this young man's mental health condition. That would have actually identified him as a danger to himself and the community before this ever happened.

MARTHA:

No, that's the part that we've got to identify. We've got to figure out why did this poor young man who was so mentally disturbed, why when he was crying out for help in public, in the public square, where were his friends, his family, his support group? Why didn't someone?

REP. TOM EMMER:

We've got to get to the bottom of this, Martha, because this is the problem. We're always coming at it at the back end. We're not talking about where the problem starts and how we deal with it as the problem is growing.

MARTHA:

Okay. This problem has been here for a long time. Nobody notified anyone. And this young man was allowed. I mean, our acting U.S. attorney, Martha, has said that this young man hated all groups with the exception of mass murderers and school shooters. If you knew that long ago, why weren't we dealing with the problem on the front end?

REP. TOM EMMER:

Thank you so much for joining us this morning, Congressman. We all hope this can be solved.

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