

[First posted at 10:18, revised at 2:10]

The revolving door for Republican GOP nominees continues. Tom Emmer, who was briefly the [~~newly picked~~] Republican nominee for Speaker of the House **on Tuesday**, is a relative unknown despite having been part of the House Republicans' leadership team.

Emmer, who grew up in an affluent suburb of Minneapolis, became a lawyer and then state representative. He successfully ran to replace Michele Bachman. If you've forgotten about her, she was essentially the Marjorie Taylor Greene of her era.

Emmer's scores from the League of Conservation Voters are about par for a House Republican: 5% for both the 2022 scores and the lifetime score. However, his average before 2019 was more like 1%. His lifetime average was pulled up by scores of 7% in 2019, 10% in 2020, and 22% in 2021. As I've noted about some other candidates for the Speaker post, however, the 2021 scores in particular included votes that were not directly environmental, like voting to accept the results of the 2020 election (which applied in Emmer's case).

He doesn't seem to be a climate denier. When asked about climate change in a town hall, he responded, "Why don't we agree we should leave this place in as good a condition as we found it," Emmer said. He then mentioned proposals to clean plastic from waterways and plant a trillion trees.

Given that he represents Midwest farmers among others, Emmer is a big supporter of biofuels like corn ethanol. But when he ran for Governor in 2010, he attacked a Republican rival's support for renewable energy. Emmer said:

"There are many different factors and variables [increasing energy costs], but one of the primary variables that when government gets involved in mandates that you must have renewables in wind, solar and biofuels. . . . When government starts mandating, it creates an imbalance in the marketplace."

More recently, Emmer has been a big advocate of permit reform. Earlier this year, he touted HR 1, a bill that would have greatly curtailed environmental review of energy projects. He touted the bill as a way to "restore America's energy independence and lower costs by increasing the production and export of American Energy and reducing regulatory burdens."

My overall impression is that climate and energy just aren't major issues for Emmer. It was

hard to find many public statements about them. The few that I did find were not exactly passionate. He would definitely ~~be~~ **would have been** an improvement over Jim Jordan, the last GOP nominee for Speaker. In the meantime, it is **was** good news in terms of the democratic process that he voted to uphold the results of the 2020 election.

~~Whether Emmer can get enough votes on the House floor to become Speaker remains unclear, given how divided House Republicans.~~ **Within hours of being the nominee, he had dropped out.** He may not ~~be~~ **have been** the ideal choice from an environmental point of view, but he would **definitely have been** be an improvement over leaving the post empty — and that, after all, is where we are right now **yet again**.