Doug Chapin on Drivetime with DeRusha

WCCO NewsTalk 830

Broadcast: October 16, 2026 • Duration: 13:21

JASON DERUSHA:

He is running against the most powerful politician in the state of Minnesota. Republican Tom Emmer is facing a challenge, though, in the 6th District. Doug Chapin is with us via video link up so you can watch our conversation on YouTube, Facebook or X. Doug, it's good to visit with you.

DOUG CHAPIN:

It's great to be here, Jason. Thanks for taking us in.

JASON DERUSHA:

All right. What? First of all, Tom Emmer, incumbent, has the advantage of incumbency, has been reelected time and time again by very large margins. What made you jump in the race?

DOUG CHAPIN:

To be honest, I got into the race when the president pardoned the January 6th rioters in January of 2025. I spent 40 years working in elections and democracy, had no intention of being a candidate for anything, let alone Congress. And when the president rewarded that barbarians at the gate moment with pardons for everybody involved, I knew somebody had to do something about it. And it turned out I was the one.

JASON DERUSHA:

Tell our listeners a little bit about your background, because, as I said, like in 2024, Emmer won about 58 to 40 percent. But you've been raising money. There has been quite a bit of an interest in your campaign. You said you've worked in elections. You worked at the U of M and at the Humphrey School and Pew as well, right?

DOUG CHAPIN:

I did. Yeah. So undergrad from Princeton, master's in public administration from Harvard's Kennedy School, law degree from Georgetown, spent three years on Capitol Hill with the Senate Rules Committee, advising Democrats on election issues, spent a decade at the Pew Charitable Trusts, heading up their election team, doing everything from expanding military and overseas voting, promoting online voter registration, working with Google to put voting information on your phone and on your laptop. From there, went to the U, worked at the Humphrey School, built the nation's first online program, an election administration for both graduates and undergraduates. We tell people that we are literally training both the current and future generations of election officials nationwide. I've been an election geek for almost 40 years and looking forward to bringing that experience to bear when I get to Washington.

JASON DERUSHA:

Auto-generated: this transcript, summary, key quotes, and topic tags were produced by automated speech recognition and AI analysis and may contain errors or mischaracterizations. Refer to the source video for the authoritative record.

Well, it is interesting because it's really the Republicans who have been, you know, you could argue fomenting concerns about election security and election integrity. You could argue that they've brought to light issues that maybe people haven't been thinking about. When you look at election integrity and election security, what what would you change if you got to the House?

DOUG CHAPIN:

To be honest, the biggest thing I would change when I get to the House would be to make the federal government pay more regularly for state and local election administration. People don't realize that until we passed the Help America Vote Act of 2002, the federal government had never paid dime one in support of state and local elections, even though federal candidates often take up a ton of real estate on the ballot. That lack of funding makes it really challenging to run elections at the local level. If you're depending on property tax revenue to fund your local elections. And so getting the federal government to be a consistent partner in funding state and local election administration, I think, has to happen as soon as possible.

JASON DERUSHA:

When when you look at your district, very suburban, I think it has a reputation of being very Republican, but we have seen kind of that inner urban DFL stronghold spread. I live in Maple Grove, which used to be very Republican, had the state speaker of the House for a couple of them came from my area. And today, Maple Grove has been a pretty reliable Democratic city. What is your take on the sixth district?

DOUG CHAPIN:

Yeah, my take on the sixth district is that it's actually a lot like what the third district where Maple Grove is was back in 2018. I tell people all the time the district is like a dog with a ball in its mouth and the ball is the metro. So Anoka, Sherbourne, Wright, Curver, Carver, and then stretching up to St. Cloud and Benton County. All around the mouth of the ball, we are seeing thousands of families moving in either from the metro or from out of state. Younger, better educated, more diverse. The kinds of folks who if they aren't already voting for Democrats are very much inclined to do so.

JASON DERUSHA:

Do you have do you have the money needed to compete? Is this a TV ad? Is this a digital ad? Battleground? That that I think has been the challenge for anybody who is going up against an incumbent.

DOUG CHAPIN:

Yeah, I think we have the money we need. I mean, look, we're not going to get into an ad war. You know, Mr. Emmer has probably 10 million dollars to spend. We've been really doing it really honestly, the old fashioned way. I've been traveling this district for more than 20 months. I've put in sixty five thousand miles on my car and our second hand ambulance, which we've rebranded the Democracy Rescue Rig. And we've been at parades. We've been at meetings. We've been at coffee houses and rallies. We are meeting folks out on the street and we're hearing from folks out there is that they like somebody who physically shows up. We've done 22 town halls across the district. So we're really doing it the old fashioned way. Knocking doors, making phone calls. We do have some stuff on digital. We're doing our bit to to get the name out there. But it really is about that one to one voter contact and making sure that people know they have a choice in the 6th District.

JASON DERUSHA:

Auto-generated: this transcript, summary, key quotes, and topic tags were produced by automated speech recognition and AI analysis and may contain errors or mischaracterizations. Refer to the source video for the authoritative record.

Doug Chapin is running for Congress in the 6th District. Let me ask you sort of sort of a Machiavellian question, because even if you don't like Tom Emmer's rhetoric, he's been very vocal against Somalis, for example, lately, which I can tell you is in line with a lot of people on my text line. Like, I think there are a lot of people who feel the way that Tom Emmer feels. But even if you have questions about Tom Emmer. Why why go with Doug Chapin and give up sort of the power that the 6th District has in the U.S. House right now?

DOUG CHAPIN:

Because I don't think I don't think the 6th District has any power in the House. I think that what we're seeing is that being the majority whip is good for Tom Emmer and not for the 6th District. We've really seen no signature program. It's not like money is flowing to the district. The 6th, the majority whip job makes Tom Emmer a really important person. I want people to vote for me because I know that it's the voters that are important. I think Emmer really believes that it's voters job to send him back to Washington. I believe it's my job to represent people when I get to Washington. So, yeah, you know, he has a fancy title. He gets to be on cable news all the time. He gets to be the president's best friend in press conference after press conference. But when it comes to actually delivering for the district, we've seen absolutely no evidence of that.

JASON DERUSHA:

Doug Chapin running for Congress in the 6th District. Have you guys debated? Have you have you had a chance to talk to Tom Emmer in person?

DOUG CHAPIN:

Not at all. I've never met the man. He has yet to even acknowledge my existence. Right now, he's on a nationwide tour campaigning on behalf of other Republicans. Right now, we've really given up on Tom Emmer showing up for debates. We're really just hammering on our local media to give us the chance to tell our side of the story.

JASON DERUSHA:

Hang on. Hang on a second. You are running for U.S. Congress after winning the DFL primary and you've never met Tom Emmer?

DOUG CHAPIN:

Never met him. He's never been here to the district. The only events he has are private. You're not. I've never had a chance to meet the man. I'm running against his record and his failure to do anything for the people of this district. So, no, I never met the man.

JASON DERUSHA:

It's sort of crazy, isn't it? I mean, today we had Michele Tafoya having a debate with Peggy Flanagan for the U.S. Senate seat. And you think, I don't know, we had a caller a couple of weeks ago, Doug, say that it should be mandatory that if you are on the ballot, that Minnesota taxpayers pay for to be printed an election to happen. There should be a mandatory statewide radio and statewide television debate, at least two mandatory debates.

DOUG CHAPIN:

I wholeheartedly agree. I would love the opportunity. I've been stacking up against Mr. Emmer for 20 months on social media. I would love the opportunity to sit next to him. We had a chance to be together at Farm Fest this summer and he ducked it. He claimed health problems, but he was on Fox News that morning. So I don't think

Auto-generated: this transcript, summary, key quotes, and topic tags were produced by automated speech recognition and AI analysis and may contain errors or mischaracterizations. Refer to the source video for the authoritative record.

he was in that bad of shape. I think he should come home, not just look me in the eye, but look the voters of this district in the eye and let us know why we should support him for a sixth term, seventh term in Congress after 2026. And I don't think he's got the answer for that.

JASON DERUSHA:

Doug Chapin, thank you for being on with us. We appreciate it. And we, of course, invited Tom Emmer on the show as well. And have we heard back?

JASON DERUSHA:

Not yet. No, not yet. Shocking. We're we're here if he's ready. We're here if he's ready. Doug, thank you for being here. We appreciate it.

DOUG CHAPIN:

My pleasure, Jason. Thanks a lot.

JASON DERUSHA:

It is three forty nine. Lots of text coming in. People grateful we had Doug on. We just you know, if people are running, we we want to give them a give them a. Actually, Doug, can you hang on? I got a text question and I'm going to ask you that after a break. So if you want to if you guys have questions for Doug, six, five, one, four, six, one, nine, two, two, six. Drive time back in a minute.

JASON DERUSHA:

All right, Doug Chapin, the DFL candidate for U.S. House of Representatives. He's running against Tom Emmer in the sixth. Lots of text coming in. But a texter wants to know where you stand on voter I.D. You've studied elections. You've studied this issue. The American public overwhelmingly, when you look at polls, says, yes, we support the idea of voter I.D. But here in Minnesota, when it was on the ballot, voters decided, no, we didn't want to require it. Where is Doug Chapin on voter I.D.?

DOUG CHAPIN:

Yeah, actually, I think my opinion is a lot like the people of Minnesota's was in, what was it, 2012. The idea of voter I.D. looks like a good idea. The problem is, as now Secretary of State Steve Simon says, the closer you look, the less you like. The challenge isn't requiring I.D., it's who has the I.D.? Courts have again and again said that if you're going to require I.D., you have to make sure that everyone has access to it. And unless and until everybody who is eligible to vote has the opportunity to get the I.D. they need to cast a ballot, I'm against it. If we're going to require voter I.D., then I think we need to make it freely available to anyone who is eligible to vote.

JASON DERUSHA:

I do wonder if people have changed a bit since 2012. Right. If we did that election today because it's become such an issue. Personally, I would like to see voter I.D. come into play just so we can stop talking about it. Like, I think it might be worth it just to restore some trust in the elections, because it seems to be something that would would do some good in making people feel more trust or trust, have more trust in the process.

DOUG CHAPIN:

Auto-generated: this transcript, summary, key quotes, and topic tags were produced by automated speech recognition and AI analysis and may contain errors or mischaracterizations. Refer to the source video for the authoritative record.

Yeah, look, and getting getting I.D. to more people would be good. Years ago, I got to pay. You got to pony up. You have to be willing to spend the money to get I.D. to everybody in a senior citizen center who doesn't drive anymore, for example. Yeah, but again, but you cannot you cannot you can't condition a constitutional right on payment for something like an I.D. Look, if we want to make I.D. available to people so that they can bank, they can be they can be identified for any purpose. Then I think we as a society can pony up for that and make it voter I.D. to make that happen. I'm OK with that. But until everybody who's eligible to vote has the I.D. they need to cast a ballot, then it's a no sale for me.

JASON DERUSHA:

Doug, thanks for staying through and answering that question from one our listeners. One of our listeners. We appreciate it. Doug Chapin running for U.S. House. We welcome all the candidates on the show. We'd love to ask our questions and yours, too. So thanks for texting in. It is Continental Diamond time check time. Three fifty eight looking to plan ahead for holiday giving. Why not? Time to think about it. Go visit Continental Diamond dot com or go check out their store in St. Louis Park. Family owned great people.

This transcript was independently produced by MN-06 Watch for accountability and archival purposes.
Source: WCCO NewsTalk 830 (October 16, 2026)
Archived: October 17, 2026
Source URL: https://player.amperwavepodcasting.com/?&feed-link=https%3A%2F%2Frss.amperwave.net%2Fv2%2Fepisode%2F8819539_2026-10-16-214739&withPlaylist=false&theme=blurred&playerDisplay-logoType=Audacy
For questions or corrections: mn06watch@gmail.com

Auto-generated: this transcript, summary, key quotes, and topic tags were produced by automated speech recognition and AI analysis and may contain errors or mischaracterizations. Refer to the source video for the authoritative record.