

Ryan dismisses reports that he'll retire next year

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House Speaker Paul Ryan says he's not leaving Congress anytime soon amid multiple media reports this week the Janesville Republican will step aside next year.

That includes a Politico Magazine report Thursday that says Ryan's planning to retire after the 2018 elections. The report cited interviews with three dozen lawmakers, aides, intellectuals and lobbyists.

But at his weekly news conference Thursday morning when Ryan was asked if he's "quitting anytime soon," he responded with a laugh: "I'm not, no."

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And Ryan spokeswoman AshLee Strong later today called the report "pure speculation," saying Ryan's "not going anywhere any time soon."

The Politico report says Ryan wants to serve through Election Day next year and "retire ahead of the next Congress."

"This would give Ryan a final legislative year to chase his second white whale, entitlement reform, while using his unrivaled fundraising prowess to help protect the House majority—all with the benefit of averting an ugly internecine power struggle during election season," according to the publication.

Meanwhile, Gov. Scott Walker wrote on Twitter this afternoon Ryan's not planning to retire.

“Just checked in with my friend @PRyan. He’s not going anywhere,” the gov wrote.

But U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore wrote in a tweet Ryan should retire immediately if he’s planning on stepping down.

“Paul Ryan is working to shower the wealthy with tax cuts, gut Social Security and Medicare, and repeal Obamacare. Now, he is considering not running for re-election after 2018,” she wrote. “If Paul Ryan wants to leave Congress, he should do it NOW before he destroys the social safety net.”

The Politico story comes on the heels of yesterday’s report from the Huffington Post, which cites “a number of” unnamed Republicans who agree there’s speculation surrounding Ryan’s future as speaker.

A CNN story later today reported Ryan has had “soul searching conversations about his future with friends,” and people close to him believe it’s possible he could leave Congress after the 2018 midterms.

Hear the news conference (the question comes at 14:21):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n3eL9ynuHfw&feature=youtu.be>

See the Politico article:

<https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/12/14/paul-ryan-retire-speaker--ready-leave-washington-216103>