

Ryan says he'll stay on as speaker through end of term

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House Speaker Paul Ryan said today he's not seeking re-election to his 1st District seat, but intends to stay on as speaker until his term ends in January.

Ryan in a news conference today in Washington, D.C. chalked up his decision to not seek re-election this November to wanting to dedicate more time as a father.

"If I am here for one more term, my kids will have only known me as a weekend dad, and I just can't let that happen," he said, reminding the press he had taken the job reluctantly in 2015. He also reminded them his father died when he was 16, the same age as his daughter. He has three children, all teenagers.

He said he considered running for re-election and then resigning early in the next term, but said that would not be an honest thing to do for his constituents.

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"I can't do the normal politician thing, which is to run and retire ... my conscience could not handle going out that way," said Ryan, 48, first elected in 1998. "In order to serve the people honorably, I have to serve them honestly, and to me to ask them to re-elect me knowing that I was not going to stay is not honest, so I simply cannot do that."

The Janesville Republican says he doesn't think his decision will affect the outcome of the congressional midterms and doubts Americans will give much weight to his speakership in voting for their member of Congress.

"If we do our jobs as we are, we're going to be fine as a majority. ...We are going to have a great record to run on," Ryan said, citing major bills passed by the House on taxes and military readiness. "I'm not done yet. I intend to run to the tape."

Ryan, asked if the chance that Dems might take the House come the general affected his decision, responded: “No, none whatsoever actually.”

Two Democrats already are running for the seat, which stretches across the southern border of Wisconsin from Milwaukee to Janesville: ironworker Randy Bryce and long-time teacher Cathy Myers.

A Bryce spokeswoman had harsh words for the outgoing speaker.

“Paul Ryan decided to quit today rather than face Randy Bryce and the voters,” Lauren Hitt said. “With nearly \$5 million raised to date, a strong field program aided by organized labor, a broad coalition of support locally and nationally, Randy Bryce is incredibly well positioned to be the next representative for the First District.”

And Myers in a statement blasted “the harm [Ryan’s] policies have caused our neighbors in Wisconsin’s First District.”

“I am the candidate who will replace him because we need a teacher in Congress who can educate and mobilize voters to reverse the damage Paul Ryan has done to the middle class over his two decades in office,” she said.

Meanwhile, Republicans praised Ryan and his tenure.

“Speaker Paul Ryan is a truly good man, and while he will not be seeking re-election, he will leave a legacy of achievement that nobody can question,” President Trump wrote on Twitter. “We are with you Paul!”

U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh, called Ryan “a person of true integrity.”

“He has served Janesville, southeastern Wisconsin and our nation honorably. We should all be grateful for his sacrifice and understand his desire to be a full time Dad,” he said.

[Watch the video.](#)

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