



News from THE RIPON SOCIETY

January 17, 2025

Ripon Society Hosts Discussion with 14 New Members of the 119th Congress

WASHINGTON, DC – With the 119th Congress sworn in earlier this month and the 47th President scheduled to take the oath of office this coming Monday, The Ripon Society hosted a breakfast discussion yesterday morning with 14 new Members of the U.S. House of Representatives, who discussed some of the challenges facing the people they represent and their priorities for the coming year.

“It’s a busy time in Washington to say the least,” stated Ripon Society President & CEO Jim Conzelman. “It’s also an exciting time, with new Members of Congress from all around the country bringing new energy and new ideas to our nation’s capital. We were honored to be joined yesterday by 14 of these new Members. They talked about their backgrounds. They talked about their beliefs. And they talked about some of the key challenges facing the people they represent back home. We were honored they took time out of their schedules to join us, and wish them all the best as they move forward to tackle these challenges in 2025.”

According to Conzelman, the 14 new Members participating in yesterday’s discussion included:

- **Tom Barrett (MI-07)** An Army veteran of 22 years, Barrett has served his country around the world including Guantanamo Bay, Kuwait, and the Korean DMZ. He later advocated for veterans in the Michigan State Legislature. He currently serves on the House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure in addition to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

- **Michael Baumgartner (WA-05)** Baumgartner has long been involved in public service as a Washington State Senator, diplomat, Treasurer of Spokane County, and now Congressman. Previously, he served as a U.S. State Department officer at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq. He later worked as



Chris Winkelman, former Executive Director of the NRCC, gives remarks and introduces new Members of Congress at The Ripon Society breakfast discussion on January 16th.

a counternarcotics advisor on a U.S. government-funded program in Afghanistan. Baumgartner exercises his expertise across three committees: the House Judiciary Committee, the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

- **Jeff Crank (CO-05)** Crank, a native of Colorado and a former Hill staffer, was appointed to serve on the House Armed Services Committee. Prior to coming to Congress, Crank served as Senior Vice President of the Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce, Chief Operating Officer at Americans for Prosperity, and as the president of his own real estate company.

- **Julie Fedorchak (ND-At Large)** Another former congressional staffer, Fedorchak served as U.S. Senator John Hoeven’s state director for two years before later becoming a utility regulator. Fedorchak also founded her own successful communications firm. She has been appointed to serve on the House Energy & Commerce Committee.

- **Vince Fong (CA-20)** Fong, another alumnus of Capitol Hill, worked for former California Congressmen Bill Thomas and later Speaker Kevin McCarthy. He then participated in the California state legislature representing District 34 in the state assembly. He currently serves on the House

Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure in addition to the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

• **Mike Haridopolos (FL-08)** The Sunshine State welcomed Haridopolos to Washington after his tenure in the state legislature as well as a college professor. A seasoned leader, it was in the state legislature that he served as President of the Senate until 2012. Then, he founded a successful consulting company. Haridopolos serves on the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee and the House Committee on Financial Services.

• **Pat Harrigan (NC-10)** A West Point graduate, Green Beret veteran, and business founder, Harrigan brings with him his military values to Congress. After earning two Bronze Stars in Afghanistan, he co-founded a small, successful firearms company that turned into a thriving enterprise. He was moved to run for Congress following the botched withdrawal from Afghanistan under the Biden Administration. He serves on the House Armed Services Committee and the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

• **Jeff Hurd (CO-03)** Hailing from the Centennial State, attorney Jeff Hurd represents a congressional district rich in natural beauty and resources. Prior to his election, Hurd practiced law at the firm he founded with a focus of serving rural communities. He serves on the House Committee on Natural Resources, the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, as well as the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

• **Addison McDowell (NC-06)** The Tar Heel native comes to Congress with a mission to tackle the drug crisis and strengthen border security. He is no stranger to political life as he is a former staffer for both the Honorable Tedd Budd and Richard Hudson. He currently serves on the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, the Natural Resources Committee, and the Budget Committee.

• **John McGuire (VA-05)** A Navy SEAL of ten years with several deployments under his belt, small business owner, and former state legislator, McGuire represents more than 775,000 Virginians in the 119th Congress. He has been appointed to the House Armed Services Committee and the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability.

• **Mark Messmer (IN-08)** Messmer, a lifelong Hoosier and former Member of the Indiana State Senate, has long fought for policies that spurred economic growth and job creation in his home state. He currently serves on the House Armed Services Committee and the Agricultural Committee.

• **Derek Schmidt (KS-02)** A fifth-generation Kansan from Independence, Schmidt previously served 12 years as the 44th Attorney General of Kansas. Before being elected Attorney General, Schmidt served as a Kansas state senator representing part of Southeast Kansas, as Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, and as the



A crowd of over 150 attended The Ripon Society's first event of 2025.

Senate Majority Leader. Now, he serves on the following U.S. House committees: Small Business, Judiciary, and Armed Services.

• **Dave Taylor (OH-02)** A conservative businessman and attorney, Taylor served in the Clermont County Prosecutor's Office before joining his family's small business. He currently serves on the Transportation and Infrastructure and Agriculture Committees, focusing on rural infrastructure and supporting Ohio's agriculture sector.

• **Tony Wied (WI-08)** A lifelong resident of Northeast Wisconsin, Wied and his wife built a successful business of operating gas stations and Little Caesars restaurants. He brings to Congress his small business experience and problem-solving skills as he serves on the House Committee on Small Business, the Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure, and the Committee on Agriculture.

Conzelman noted that yesterday's discussion was moderated by Chris Winkelman, who served as Executive Director of the National Republican Congressional Committee for the past four years and was one of the architects of the GOP effort to defend and retain its House Majority. He added that the discussion was attended by a crowd of over 150.

The discussion was held as part of The Ripon Society's *2025 Policy & Politics Series*, and was the first event of the new year. Last year, The Ripon Society held over 55 events as part of the Policy & Politics Series, featuring such leaders as House Chairmen Jason Smith and Tom Cole, and U.S. Senators Shelley Moore Capito, Steve Daines, and Thom Tillis, among others.

The Ripon Society is a public policy organization that was founded in 1962 and takes its name from the town where the Republican Party was born in 1854 – Ripon, Wisconsin. One of the main goals of The Ripon Society is to promote the ideas and principles that have made America great and contributed to the GOP's success. These ideas include keeping our nation secure, keeping taxes low and having a federal government that is smaller, smarter and more accountable to the people. **RS**



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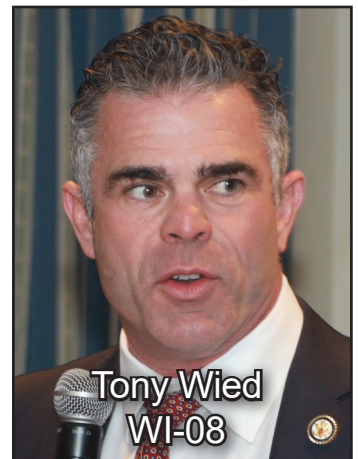
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Meet the Freshmen

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WI-08