

Does Paul Ryan Have Enough Support to Bring Home the House?

Paul Ryan is reportedly expected to become the next Speaker of the House after gaining the support of key conservatives Wednesday evening.

After initially refusing the position, Ryan consented to enter the race Wednesday morning on the condition that all major Republican caucuses endorsed him by Friday. One of the three Republican caucuses, the Freedom Caucus, had intimidated or blocked other potential candidates from running. Ryan's conditional entrance was generally interpreted as a direct challenge to the Freedom Caucus' attempt to control the party.

In response, the Freedom Caucus has reportedly agreed to most of his terms. Vox reports that a supermajority—two-thirds—of Freedom Caucus members has agreed to vote for Ryan, though that is not enough for a formal endorsement (which requires 80 percent).

In a statement, the Freedom Caucus praised Ryan, calling him “a policy entrepreneur who has developed conservative reforms dealing with a wide variety of subjects, and he has promised to be an ideas-focused Speaker who will advance limited government principles and devolve power to the membership.”

However, Idaho Rep. Raúl Labrador, a member of the Freedom Caucus, cautioned that their support was not unconditional: “We can support him and we want him to be successful, but we want to make sure also that he understands that this is not about crowning a king. This is about working together and making sure that every member feels like they're empowered.”

Though Ryan did not receive the full endorsement he desired,

he seems ready to accept the supermajority as sufficient support. In a statement on Twitter, Ryan said, "I'm grateful for the support of a supermajority of the House Freedom Caucus. ... I believe this is a positive step toward a unified Republican team."

Reuters reported that both other Republican caucuses are expected to support Ryan. Full support from all three major caucuses should allow Ryan to clear the 218-vote threshold to become Speaker. The vote is expected to occur next week.

John Boehner, the current House Speaker, said that he supported Ryan to succeed him. Boehner told reporters, "I think Paul Ryan would make a great speaker. I think Paul is going to get the support he's looking for."

Even the Democrats seem pleased to see the Speaker of the House saga come to an end. Rep. Nancy Pelosi, Democratic leader of the House, said at a press conference, "We'll look forward to welcoming him (Ryan) if that all works out in the next few days. It looks like it will."

Oklahoma Rep. Tom Cole told the *New York Times* that the best choice won: "There's only one guy, I think, who can unite us. There's one guy with national stature. I think Paul Ryan is the best guy to put 218 votes-plus up on the board."