

Rand Paul: I Value My Word

U.S. Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.), a former GOP presidential candidate, told Laura Ingraham during an interview on her nationally syndicated radio program that he's not attending next week's Republican National Convention in Cleveland.

His absence, however, is not for the reasons many might immediately suspect. He told the hostess that with the busy legislative schedule in the Senate, he wants to use the extra time meeting face-to-face with his constituents.

"I'm up for election in November, so I've got events scheduled for the next six weeks doing town halls around Kentucky," he said. "I've done 55 town halls so far, and I plan on trying to get another 50 town halls in in the next six weeks."

Asked if he was trying to avoid the nomination of Donald Trump as the party's presidential candidate, Paul said his absence really was "just a matter of needing enough time to be at home," and that his appearance schedule was already "set in stone." But, he also had a message for fellow Republicans—particularly those who used to be presidential candidates like he was—who aren't attending because they don't want to support Trump.

"Well, you know, when I was running for president, everybody thought, 'Well, the establishment candidate might win, and Trump might run as a third party,' so they asked everybody to sign a statement saying, you know what, I pledge to support the nominee," he said. "It was done to prevent Trump from running as the third party. It was never done intending that he would be the nominee, but everybody signed it. I guess I value my signature, I value my word and so I think it is important that people do support the nominee ...

"For many, many years people have sucked it up. Conservatives had to suck it up and support moderate establishment nominees

and you know when the establishment doesn't win, then they don't necessarily like having to support otherwise."

Paul said he also felt Trump had a "recipe for victory" in many of the issues he's championed as a candidate.

"I think there are many things that Trump is talking about as far as trying to restore our country, as far as trying to lower taxes on business, as far as trying to lower the regulatory burden, and really frankly his discussion that the Iraq War was a mistake are a new kind of vision that has a chance of sort of bringing together a coalition that can win," he said, "And I think you combine that with the disaster and dishonesty of the Clintons and I think there is a recipe for victory."