FNC "Fox News @ Night" Interview With Rep. Doug Lamborn,.., sked

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REP. DOUG LAMBORN (R), COLORADO

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REGARDING POLITICS

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JUNE 18, 2018

SPEAKERS:

REP. DOUG LAMBORN, R-CO.

SHANNON BREAM, FNC HOST

BREAM: Well, it appears he still has a way to go to sell the idea, even to some within his own administration. But it's turning out to be an important project for him so we want to know more about why. Joining us now, Republican Congressman Doug Lamborn from Colorado, who sits on the House Armed Services Committee. He's from the Colorado Springs area where so much space in missile defense is done. Congressman, thank you for joining us.

LAMBORN: I'm glad to do so.

BREAM: OK. So, listen, there are folks out there talking about a potential space war looming. They say we're way behind when it comes to China and Russia. It's not a topic we hear a lot to hear about. What do we need to know?

LAMBORN: We need to know that if our space assets are ever threatened in a time of conflict, our war fighters on the ground would be deaf, dumb, and blind. And we can't let that happen. We have to protect our space assets, we have to show the other side that we can put their assets at risk. But this all requires making military or defense space more of a priority, even then it is right now. And that's what the president is after. And I think that that's very exciting, and very timely, and very necessary.

BREAM: OK. So, my understanding is that the Air Force handles about 80 percent of this right now. You know, by some reports, we're not really excited about this. And here's what the secretary of defense had to say. This a few months back. He said: "I oppose the creation of a new military service and additional organizational layers at a time when we are focused on reducing overhead and integrating joint war fighting functions." What do you make of that?

LAMBORN: Well, I think the president is going to -- pardon the phrase, but over the defensive secretary. What the commander in chief desires and wants is going to be what we do. So, I think that's what's going to ultimately happen. The House and the Senate are in slightly different positions. The House is a little more reform minded. I think the Senate is a little more status quo minded. But we have to do whatever the final version is, we have to make space more of a priority. And the Air Force is taking some good steps, they're doing some good things, they're doing a study right now, for instance, but we have to make sure that space is more of a priority. It won't create more bureaucracy necessarily. The key is to make it better-funded, a better priority, that the personnel within space have more clout and prestige and set the acquisition -- this is all important -- that the acquisition process is faster and more effective. Right now, it takes five to 10 years to put a satellite up into space. And that takes way, that's way too long. Technology changes so fast.

BREAM: OK. Well, I know that Pentagon has been working on a number of studies to wrap up one major one, independent review that ordered by Congress is not even supposed to be until December. So, some folks wonder if the president is jumping the gun on this. Now, Senator Bill Nelson, a Democrat, who happens to be a former astronaut himself says, "The president told a general -- told the U.S. general to create a new space force, as sixth branch of military today, which generals tell me they don't want. Thankfully. the president can't do it without Congress because now is not the time to rip the Air Force apart. Too many important missions at stake." Will Congress block this effort by the president?

LAMBORN: Well, Congress plays a vital role in defining the parameters and defining how the process is going to be done, and even some of what the final version will look like. The commander in chief has the biggest voice of all. And I disagree with Senator Nelson. We do have to reform space. It's not the priority right now that it needs to be. It's tugged into many different directions. The funding for it sometimes gets siphoned off into other things, because is not the priority that it should be. We all agree on the objective, even if we disagree on how to get there.

BREAM: All right, Congressman Lamborn, thank you for giving me insights into something I really haven't heard a whole lot about. We will follow it. Thank you, sir.

LAMBORN: You're welcome.

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