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James Hayes Condemns Violence, Calls for Civility and Unity Following Incident at White House Correspondents' Dinner

PITTSBURGH, PA — James Hayes, candidate for U.S. House in Pennsylvania's 12th District, is responding to the incident that occurred during the White House Correspondents' Dinner, emphasizing the need to reject violence and restore civility in American public life.

The annual event - traditionally centered around the role of a free press and open political dialogue - was disrupted by an incident that underscores the rising intensity and division in the nation's political climate.

Hayes made clear that violence, in any form, is incompatible with a functioning and civilized society.

"There is no place for violence in our country - period," Hayes said. "We are a nation built on dialogue, debate, and the rule of law. When individuals resort to violence, it undermines the very foundation of what it means to be American."

Hayes also noted that this moment is not occurring in isolation, but rather reflects a broader and troubling pattern that has emerged in recent years.

"We have seen a steady escalation - where heated rhetoric turns into real-world threats, and in some cases, actual acts of violence," Hayes said. "From threats against public officials to incidents that have crossed a dangerous line, this is a pattern we cannot ignore."

While acknowledging that heightened tensions can contribute to extreme reactions, Hayes stressed that disagreement must never escalate into harm.

Hayes notes that while we are going to have differences of opinion - that's part of who we are as people. However, he acknowledges those differences must be resolved through conversation, not confrontation. The moment we accept violence as an outlet, we lose something far more important than any political argument.

He further notes that while underlying factors such as emotional strain and isolation should not be ignored, they cannot excuse destructive behavior.

"We should always encourage people to seek help and support when they need it," Hayes said. "But we must also be clear: there is never a justification for violence against others. Accountability matters."

Turning to the broader political environment, Hayes calls for a reset in how Americans engage with one another, warning that continued escalation only deepens divisions.

He acknowledges that our political culture has become too focused on tearing each other down. That kind of environment doesn't strengthen our country - it weakens it.

Hayes emphasized the importance of returning to the principles that have defined the nation since its founding, particularly as the country approaches its 250th anniversary.

Nearly 250 years ago, our forefathers set this nation in motion with a simple but powerful idea - that people with different beliefs could still come together and build something greater. That idea only works if we respect one another and reject violence outright.

Hayes urges Americans to take responsibility for lowering the temperature and finding common ground.

"This isn't about left versus right," Hayes said. "It's about who we are as a country. If we want to preserve what makes America strong, we need to choose civility over chaos, dialogue over division, and unity over anger."

About James Hayes

James Hayes is a candidate for U.S. Congress in Pennsylvania's 12th District. A Western Pennsylvania native, Hayes is focused on strengthening communities through economic opportunity, public safety, and responsible leadership. His campaign emphasizes practical solutions, support for first responders, and a commitment to bringing people together to address the challenges facing families across Southwestern Pennsylvania.

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