

Exhibit 12

https://www.nola.com/news/politics/i-know-what-was-being-said-steve-scalise-suggests-garret-graves-undercut-speaker-bid/article_c8fb3590-905e-11ee-86ce-4319bdb3475d.html

'I know what was being said': Steve Scalise suggests Garret Graves undercut speaker bid

BY GORDON RUSSELL | Staff writer
Dec 1, 2023

1 of 2



U.S. Rep. Garret Graves, R-Baton Rouge, speaks at a March 30 press conference in the U.S. Capitol. Then-House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., is to Graves' right. Beside McCarthy is House Majority Leader Steve Scalise, R-Jefferson.

Staff Photo by Mark Ballard

In his most direct remarks on the controversy to date, House Majority Leader Steve Scalise in a new interview suggested Rep. Garret Graves, a fellow Republican who represents an adjoining district, helped undercut his recent bid to become speaker.

Scalise, of Jefferson, had hinted at his frustration with Graves, of Baton Rouge, in previous interviews, and aides have privately confirmed a rift.

In the new interview, published by Politico, reporter Ryan Lizza asked Scalise: “What happened with Garret Graves? He really tried to screw you?”

Scalise responded: “Funny. He’ll tell people differently. He, look ... in the end, we all make our decisions.”

Lizza said he wished Scalise’s wife, Jennifer, could answer his question about Graves. “No, you really don’t,” Scalise said.



A minute later, Scalise added: "You can read through the B.S. And believe me, you know, anybody who thinks that there are secrets in this town, there are not. You know that as the press."

U.S. Rep. Garret Graves, R-Baton Rouge, talks on his cellphone as he stands in the entrance to the Capitol offices of the speaker of the House on Oct. 4.

Associated Press Photo by Mark Schiefelbein

Scalise was careful not to utter Graves' name in the interview, but his comments were made in response to questions about Graves. The same was true when Scalise complained at length about misinformation that had been spread about his cancer diagnosis -- a campaign he implied Graves was involved in.

"I know what was being said," Scalise told Politico. "I mean, medical opinions that were being given out were completely false. I had a doctor from M.D. Anderson, the top myeloma cancer specialist in the world, who, along with my local doctor, was looking at all of my blood work and meeting with me on a regular basis, who said, 'Everything you're doing is fine, the cancer is almost gone and you're going to live a long life.' He's looking at my blood work. And then there's some, you know, member, unnamed member of Congress, who's naming somebody that might not even be a doctor saying he's going to die in six months. That's how bad it was.

He added: "I really don't think it moved votes but it showed you the lack of character of other people."

Scalise loyalists have previously said that Graves also reminded some colleagues of a controversial Scalise comment from years ago, in which he described himself as "David Duke without the baggage," and brought up Scalise's 2002 speech before a group of White supremacists. (Scalise has said he wasn't aware of the group's affiliation, and that his Duke remark was not meant as an embrace of the former Ku Klux Klan leader's White supremacist views.)

Graves has emphatically denied he did anything to resurface those episodes, calling such claims "bulls--t."

Graves was a close ally of ousted House Speaker Kevin McCarthy -- who didn't get along well with Scalise -- and made public comments at the time suggesting he opposed Scalise's ascension to the House's top job. Graves also went out of his way to praise Rep. Jim Jordan of Ohio, a far-right Republican who was challenging Scalise for the gavel.

The remarks surprised many Louisianans, who assumed the four other members of the state's House GOP contingent would fall in line behind the congressman from Jefferson.

Graves has said he actually supported Scalise for speaker, and that his comments were misinterpreted. He did not immediately respond to a request for comment Friday.

Scalise won a majority of the House Republicans behind closed doors to become the speaker-designate, but came about a dozen votes shy of the majority of the full House he needed.

After about a day and a half, Scalise threw in the towel, saying he didn't want to put his colleagues through vote after vote.

The drama ended unexpectedly with the elevation of another Louisianan -- Rep. Mike Johnson, of Benton -- to the speakership.

-Staff writer Mark Ballard contributed to this report.