

Joe Kaufman Declines Saturday Debate to Honor the Jewish Sabbath

Kaufman Chooses Faith Over Politics

BOCA RATON, FL, UNITED STATES, June 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Republican congressional candidate Joe Kaufman [announced on Wednesday](#) that he will not participate in the Republican Party of Florida's upcoming CD25 "Showdown" debate because it is scheduled during Shabbat, the Jewish Sabbath.

Kaufman had respectfully requested that the debate be moved to another day of the week or to Saturday evening after Shabbat so that observant Jewish voters and candidates could participate. The Republican Party of Florida [responded](#) that its schedule had already been finalized and that it was unable to make a change.

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Joe Kaufman

Kaufman expressed gratitude for the invitation and appreciation for the party's response.

"I appreciate the Republican Party of Florida's invitation and understand that schedules are often difficult to change," Kaufman said.

Kaufman, an observant Jew, emphasized that his decision is not political, but religious.

"I would have welcomed the opportunity to participate in the debate and share my vision for Florida's 25th Congressional District," Kaufman said. "However, my faith teaches me that there are certain commitments that must come before politics. Every Saturday, I am in synagogue with my wife and daughter honoring the Sabbath, and I will not compromise that commitment."



Kaufman said his decision reflects a broader American principle: the freedom of every citizen to practice his or her faith without being forced to choose between religious conviction and public life.

"One of the greatest strengths of our nation is that Americans should never have to choose between serving their country and serving God," Kaufman said. "Religious liberty is not merely a constitutional right; it is a foundational American value that must be protected."

Kaufman noted that history has celebrated individuals who remained true to their beliefs despite personal or professional consequences. One of the most famous examples came in 1965, when Hall of Fame pitcher Sandy Koufax declined to pitch Game One of the World Series because it fell on Yom Kippur, Judaism's holiest day. Though criticized by some at the time, Koufax's decision has since become an enduring symbol of faith, integrity, and conviction.

"Like millions of Jewish Americans, I grew up admiring Sandy Koufax's courage," Kaufman said. "His decision demonstrated that faith is not something to be practiced only when convenient. While my situation is far less significant, the principle is the same: Our beliefs should guide our lives, not the other way around."

Florida's 25th Congressional District is home to one of the largest Jewish populations in the United States, including many families who attend synagogue and faithfully observe Shabbat each week.

Kaufman said he remains eager to engage voters and would gladly participate in a debate held on any other day of the week. He concluded by wishing the organizers a successful event.



Joe Kaufman speaking at fundraiser discussing Iranian threat



Rabbis & Joe

"I appreciate the invitation and wish for a successful event," he said. "My hope is that this moment serves as a reminder that America is strongest when people of every faith are free to live according to their convictions."

Joe Kaufman is a nationally recognized counter-terrorism expert, Chairman and CEO of Kaufman Security, and Republican candidate for U.S. Congress in Florida's 25th Congressional District. In 2024, Kaufman was the Republican nominee against incumbent Democrat Jared Moskowitz, receiving 48% of the vote in what was the closest race in Florida and the strongest performance by a Republican candidate in the district's history.

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