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Group Plans to Protest Paul Ryan Commencement Address

(KAIR) -- A division of a national advocacy organization plans to protest the planned commencement address of Wisconsin Congressman Paul Ryan at Benedictine College Saturday morning.

According to Johnson County Council Organizer for moveon.org, Al Frisby, over 100 protestors from Atchison, with representatives of the Topeka and Wichita "move on" chapters, have committed to line the sidewalks outside Benedictine beginning at 8:30.

Frisby says the nonprofit federal political committee, started in the late 1990s in the wake of the Monica Lewinsky scandal, opposes several of the policies of Ryan, including his proposed federal budget, and his stance on Pell Grants.

(Play Audio)

Frisby says the group is not organizing to protest the commencement itself.

(Audio Continues)

The planned protest also follows a recent two page paid advertisement in the local newspaper with a petition requesting President Steve Minnis to remove Ryan from the Commencement Address.

It had around 200 signatures and comments from various Benedictine alumni, monastery nuns, citizens and a former St. Benedict's Abbot.

This outcry was initially prompted by a change.org petition by Atchison resident Charles Elias, which had 297 signatures as of earlier this week.

The petition was circulated based on the view that Ryan's politics don't match the Benedictine tradition.

Currently, Benedictine has no plans to remove Ryan from his speaking spot.

President Minnis, who is currently out of town on college business and unavailable for comment, has confirmed to respond to Ryan's appearance and the controversy that surrounds it Friday afternoon.

Many Signals Communications