

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 878

Raising a question of the privileges of the House.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 8, 2018

Mr. CROWLEY submitted the following resolution; which was laid on the table

RESOLUTION

Raising a question of the privileges of the House.

Whereas the tradition of the House Chaplain dates to the earliest days of the House of Representatives, beginning in 1789;

Whereas the role of House Chaplain has been filled by sixty individuals of various religious denominations, serving Members of Congress of all faiths;

Whereas Father Patrick Conroy has served honorably as House Chaplain since May 25, 2011, when he was appointed by then-Speaker John A. Boehner in consultation with Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi;

Whereas Father Conroy had been re-appointed and elected by the House of Representatives on three separate occasions, most recently January 3, 2017;

Whereas on April 16, 2018, the nation’s first Jesuit—and only the second Catholic—Chaplain of the U.S. House of Representatives submitted his resignation before the full House;

Whereas the Chaplain had only eight months remaining in his term of service to the House;

Whereas this resignation was requested by the office of Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives;

Whereas the Speaker’s office said “. . . the decision (to remove the Chaplain) was his (Speaker Ryan’s);”

Whereas on May 3, 2018, Father Conroy submitted a letter retracting and rescinding his resignation, which was accepted by Speaker Ryan;

Whereas despite the Speaker’s statement accepting this retraction letter, a number of Members of Congress remain concerned about what motivated the original request for Father Conroy to resign and the lack of adequate notification or explanation given to Members;

Whereas the rights of Members of the House of Representatives were undermined when the leader of one party made a unilateral decision to ask for the resignation of the Chaplain;

Whereas this resignation and the circumstances behind it has compromised the integrity and the dignity of the House of Representatives by politicizing the office of the House Chaplain: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That—

2 (1) There is hereby established a select com-
3 mittee to investigate the circumstances around the
4 resignation of the House Chaplain.

1 (2) The select committee shall be comprised of
2 six members, of which three shall be appointed by
3 the Chair of the Committee on Ethics, and three by
4 the Ranking Member of the Committee on Ethics.

5 (3) The select committee shall investigate the
6 motivations and actions that led to the resignation
7 of the Chaplain, including the decisions to remove
8 the Chaplain and the process by which Members of
9 Congress were notified of the resignation.

10 (4) The select committee shall provide a report
11 to the House by July 13, 2018.

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