

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 27, 2018

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan
Speaker of the House of Representatives
H-232, United States Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker,

We respectfully write regarding your decision to remove the House chaplain without cause from his office prior to his term's expiration.

Since the election of Reverend William Linn in 1789, the Chaplain of the House of Representatives has provided pastoral counseling to individuals who serve in and support our institution. The House chaplain is vested with a special mission, including the free exercise of religion, the integrity of which must be safeguarded.

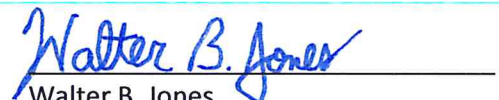
To that end and in the expectation of a shared commitment to transparency and due process, we are seeking additional information regarding your decision to request the resignation of Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, the 60th Chaplain of the House of Representatives. The sensitive nature of this situation requires a description of the process followed to arrive at the decision and a justification for that decision. We believe that, absent such details, questions will inevitably arise about the politicization of the process for hiring and dismissing a House chaplain. Not revealing such details could also risk resurrecting prior questions of religious bias. Absent transparency, we are also concerned about the implicit damage done to the reputation of the House chaplain personally. Continued silence on this matter could allow unfair and utterly unfounded inferences to be made about his character and the evenhandedness of the House on dealing in matters of faith.

We appreciate your urgent attention to our request. This is a matter that has serious implications for our institution, and we look forward to your reply to address the concerns raised by your decision to request Reverend Conroy's resignation.

Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress



Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress



Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress