

Did Paul Ryan Just Fire the House Chaplain?

House Speaker Paul Ryan dismissed House Chaplain Patrick Conroy, citing member claims that their “pastoral needs” were not being met.

Conroy initially announced his intention to step down 10 days ago, but this week, House members began to question Conroy’s motivation behind the resignation.

In a letter obtained by CNN, the Catholic Conroy’s resignation letter states that Ryan asked him to resign.

The Hill reports:

A number of lawmakers had approached Ryan and told him they needed someone in the chaplain’s role who could offer more “spiritual counseling,” according to Rep. Duncan Hunter, R-Calif., who attended the meeting.

Ryan agreed, he told the members.

Rep. Fred Upton, R-Mich., also told The Hill that Ryan insisted during the private meeting that the dismissal was not done for any politician reasons, but because it was just “time for a change.”

Swift backlash followed the resignation as House members debated if Ryan had the authority to dismiss Conroy.

“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 letter, which was obtained by CNN, states. “The sensitive nature of this situation requires a description of the process followed to arrive at the decision and a justification for that

decision.”

Religion reporter Jack Jenkins live tweeted the House discussion following Conroy’s ousting:

Um, they’re talking about the dismissed House chaplain on the House floor right now.

– Jack Jenkins (@jackmjenkins) April 27, 2018

They’re proposing a committee to investigate his resignation, and House Speaker Ryan’s role.

Wow.

– Jack Jenkins (@jackmjenkins) April 27, 2018

Minority whip is asking if the House Speaker even has the right to dismiss the chaplain.

Speaker is refusing to answer.

– Jack Jenkins (@jackmjenkins) April 27, 2018

Now they’re holding a vote on the matter.

Will take 15 minutes to vote.

This is quite a thing.

– Jack Jenkins (@jackmjenkins) April 27, 2018

I believe this is ongoing vote on the motion to KILL a proposed committee to investigate the chaplains ouster (meaning it won’t be created).

That said: kinda wanna know who those two Republicans are.

Anyone know?

– Jack Jenkins (@jackmjenkins) April 27, 2018

Looks like that's over. Such an odd story.

– Jack Jenkins (@jackmjenkins) April 27, 2018

Rep. Mark Walker, R-N.C., has been charged with finding Conroy's replacement.

"I'm looking for somebody who has a little age, that has adult children, that kind of can connect with the bulk of the body here, Republicans and Democrats who are going through, back home the wife, the family," Walker says.