

Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (<https://www.ncronline.org>)

February 10, 2011 at 7:11am

Competence Matters Too

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Distinctly Catholic

The Republican landslide last November resulted from two distinct political waves. The GOP base was riled up and turned out. And, independent voters fled the Democrats. These two waves can easily crash into each other, not least because the base cares more about taking principled stances no matter what the outcome and independent voters tend to eschew ideological arguments and advance a kind of pragmatism. (Alas, that pragmatism often contains a boatload of ideological assumptions, but that is another story for another time.) The first principle of that pragmatism is competence: Independent voters expect people to be competent at their jobs.

But, twice in as many days, the new House GOP leadership has brought a bill to the floor for passage and then, surprise, they have not had the votes to pass it. Neither of the bills was especially controversial either.

Combined with the somewhat bizarre controversy and resignation of Cong. Christopher Lee, apparently for flirting, the GOP is not off to a good start.

It will be curious to see how long it takes for their standing among Independent voters to sink.

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