

"The cat's got their prophetic tongue"

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

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[The Catholics and the Southern Baptists](#) have joined others in calling for a compassionate response to [the unaccompanied minors from Central America](#). Russell Moore of the SBC has even [signed a letter](#) (pdf) explicitly opposing changes to the 2008 law that currently prevents such children from being summarily deported. [Most Americans agree](#), including majorities of both Republicans and white evangelicals.

Yet Congress [went on recess without doing anything about this](#). Republican members refuse to allocate any money to address the issue, even if that money as usual [includes funds to make border security ever more ridiculously excessive](#). Instead, they want a bill that also weakens the 2008 law—a law that earned wide bipartisan support and [the enthusiastic signature of President Bush](#).

[Mark Silk asks a good question](#): why aren't Catholic and evangelical leaders giving congressional Republicans hell for this? To be fair, we don't know what conversations are happening behind closed doors. But as Silk points out, it's a conspicuous public silence when faith leaders speak boldly about a moral issue but then don't speak out against [a House vote pushing hard the other way](#). Silk:

These are leaders who have not hesitated to let their righteousness roll down like a mighty stream on Obama for a host of sins, real and imagined, against their moral values. But when it comes to their erstwhile GOP allies, the cat's got their prophetic tongue.

Effective advocacy is complicated. Sometimes a public megaphone is helpful; sometimes it isn't. But at this point, there isn't a close vote hanging in the delicate balance. Congress did nothing and went home for weeks. When it's clear that something is not getting done—something these church leaders have eloquently supported, and something their people-in-the-pews mostly also support—it'd be good to hear them making more noise.