

# Opinion: Why Ensign didn't face what Weiner did

By Jon Ralston, Las Vegas Sun

So when a creepy congressman who has a sexting disorder becomes a distraction and liability, fretting Democrats line up to defenestrate him. But when an even creepier senator has an affair with a staffer, reveals himself to be a world-class hypocrite and importunes supplicants to hire the cuckold, Republicans say nothing.

Because proportionality is so often lost in politics, especially in the 24/7 Web world where every gesture and expression is analyzed in microscopic detail, the differences between Anthony Weiner, who seems headed for resignation, and John Ensign, who has fled the capital ahead of an expulsion, are lost.

It is nothing short of remarkable to see members of both parties, actually, calling for Weiner's head – Republicans feeling obvious schadenfreude and Democrats fearing electoral carnage. Contrast this with the reaction, especially by GOP leaders to Ensign, who lasted almost two years after he confessed to an affair with a staffer who was the wife of one of his top aides and who was his wife's best friend.

On the creepiness scale, Weiner is Pee-wee Herman to Ensign's Bob Packwood. And as much as both men have dishonored Capitol Hill – no mean feat – their treatment by their colleagues, especially their partisan allies, is noteworthy for its moral bankruptcy. Democrats are not so outraged by Weiner's behavior as they are about his changing the media horde's focus from their attempts to terrify seniors over Medicare and Social Security "reforms." His sin was not texting provocative pictures of himself, but interfering in the narrative the

Democrats have been constructing to try to win back both houses of Congress.

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