



COMMON SENSE

With Paul Jacob



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Remember Rangel

Have you ever tried to build a multi-million dollar monument to yourself?

No? Well, I guess you're not New York Congressman Charley Rangel. He's been trying to fund the Charles B. Rangel Center for Public Service at the City College of New York.

So far he's nabbed a \$1.9 million earmark to help put his name in lights, not to mention two HUD Department grants totaling another \$700,000 from taxpayers.

Rangel's goal is to raise \$30 million for *his* Center. So, now he's raising more money from special interests. Including those interests that have business before the powerful Ways and Means Committee, which Rangel chairs.

While watchdog groups are questioning the ethics of this fundraising in general, Rangel's use of official congressional letterhead to solicit contributions for the Center seems without question to be a violation of House rules.

Recently, Rangel ran into more trouble in New York City, when it came to light that the congressman has four rent-stabilized apartments. Once again, government regulation benefits the powerful.

Did I mention that this same congressman uses taxpayer money — \$777 a month — to lease a Cadillac. Rangel says he wants his constituents to think their congressman is "somebody."

Give him his due, though. After 38 years in Congress, Mr. Rangel has firmly established himself as a somebody — somebody responsible for helping achieve the lowest congressional approval ratings in history.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.