



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on December 30, 2016

Charles Rangel, 23-term N.Y. Democrat, Finally Packs It In

In one of his last interviews with reporters, Rep. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.) [said](#) it was finally time, after 46 years, to leave Washington: “I did not ever think about leaving. I have mixed feelings. But the way the political races have turned out, I can’t wait to get out of here,” he declared.



Those tracking his dismal political performance over 23 terms in Washington, along with his breathtaking moral and ethical lapses and failures, no doubt feel the same way. A reporter with the *Washington Times* summed up his career nicely:

For 46 years Mr. Rangel has represented the same Harlem district where he grew up. He scaled the heights of congressional power, chaired the tax-writing House Committee on Ways and Means, plummeted in an ethics scandal that cost him the chairmanship and subjected him to the humiliation of censure on the House floor, and bounced back to win re-election to two more terms in the House.

The New American looked more closely at Rangel’s moral, ethical, and political lapses when he officially announced his retirement last June. Calling him a “master plunderer,” the [article](#) noted that the pressure on him to resign “has been building since 2008, when the House Ethics Committee launched its investigation into Rangel’s failure to report (and pay taxes on) \$75,000 of rental income he earned from property he owned in the Dominican Republic.”

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The committee investigated his illegal renting of four subsidized apartments in New York City, paying less than half the going rate while at the same time claiming Washington, D.C. as his primary residence for tax purposes. The committee investigated Rangel’s parking his Mercedes in the House parking garage for free while not claiming the \$290 a month rent he wasn’t paying as income.

Adding insult to injury, Rangel also claimed a “homestead” tax break on his Washington, D.C. home while working full-time out of those subsidized apartments in New York City.

In May 2009 another ethics complaint was filed against Rangel for accepting free trips to the Caribbean paid for by a number of companies that just happened to “have business” before the House Ways and Means Committee that he was chairing.

He failed to make full disclosure of his financial assets, saying that he “overlooked” two accounts worth over \$250,000 each, another bank account, several other mutual fund holdings, and other stock and real estate investments totaling another \$300,000 or so. In other words, Rangel failed to report half of his net worth, thanks to his “overlooking” those unreported assets.

The Sunlight Foundation claimed that Rangel lied about, or failed to report on, purchases, sales or ownership of assets at least 28 times, noting that his reported “assets worth between \$239,026 and \$831,000 appeared and [then] disappeared with no disclosure of when they were acquired, how long



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they were held, or when they were sold, as House rules required.” When pressed on the matter in an interview, Rangel let slip his usual cordial manner and responded “It’s none of your —— business!”

In July 2010 House subcommittee investigators charged Rangel with 13 violations of congressional ethics standards, convicting him on 11 of them. The matter was referred to the full committee in November, which voted 9-1 in favor of censure. In December the full House voted 333 to 79 to censure him, making him one of just 25 members in House history to be so censured, and the first one since 1983.

His voting record reflected a similar disregard for ethics and morality, earning a lifetime rating of 91 percent from the far-left Americans For Democratic Action, 100 percent ratings from NARAL (National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws) and Planned Parenthood, and ratings in the high 90s from the ACLU and the NAACP. When his voting record is compared to the restrictions and limitations built into the Constitution, which he took an oath (23 times) to support and defend, he scored (according to the Freedom Index of The John Birch Society) a dismal 19 out of 100.

As Rangel was finishing his packing, he told the *Washington Times* reporter:

I think the elections have made it less painful for me to leave. One of the things that I’ve always said: “If you don’t enjoy each and every day as a public servant and a member of this great Congress, it’s time to get out.”

In Rangel’s case it’s not only time to get out, but long past time.

Photo of Rep. Charles Rangel: AP Images

An Ivy League graduate and former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American magazine and blogs frequently at [LightFromTheRight.com](#), primarily on economics and politics. He can be reached at badelman@thenewamerican.com.

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