

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 7, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Madam Speaker:

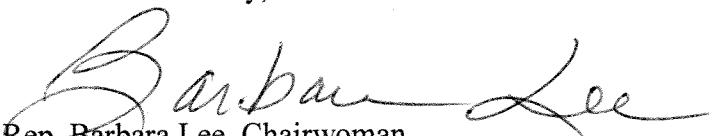
As Members of the Congressional Black Caucus, we support our colleague Charlie Rangel, Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, and condemn partisan attempts to ignore the well-established, bipartisan congressional ethics process.

As you know, Chairman Rangel has been subjected to repeated attacks based on allegations that he committed errors in complex financial disclosure and tax filings. Out of respect for the integrity of the House, Chairman Rangel himself asked the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to conduct a thorough investigation of any possible errors, and he has demonstrated his cooperation with such an investigation by hiring on his own initiative an accountant to thoroughly review all his records and file corrections when necessary. The Committee on Standards is currently conducting its review, and will present its findings to the House when its review is completed. This is as it should be.

Regrettably, the minority has repeatedly attempted to make an end-run around the bipartisan procedures for investigating possible ethics issues. These Republican attempts to presume guilt before an investigation has been completed violate the core American principle of the presumption of innocence. These attempts also will discourage Members in the future from self-reporting any potential ethics issues, and will distract from the important work of the House to fix the economy, put Americans back to work, and improve access to health care.

Charlie Rangel's work on these issues is critically important, and we are proud of the thoughtful leadership he provides to the House. He has our full support for his work as Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means while a bipartisan ethics review is pending.

Sincerely,


Rep. Barbara Lee, Chairwoman
Congressional Black Caucus

Melinda J. Wood

Alfred D. Hastings

Donna M. Payne

Patricia

Siane E. Watson

~~Gregory Weeks~~
John

Sheila Jackson Lee

Gleance Holmes

Ellynn

Chuck Fattel

Gene Beckman

Stanford D. Bishop Jr.

Corrine Brown

Carolyn C. Kelpatich

Benny H. Davis

John

Alma Waters

Wm. Lacy Clay

Yuan Bihai

Maria L. Judge

Frank Johnson

Samuel

Aregal M. A.

Eddie Bernice Johnson

John M. Lott

Dawn Moore

Yvette D. Clarke

Elyse

Al Dean

John Lewis

M.D.

Tang

Arthur Davis

David F. Edwards

Keith Gibson

Letter of October 7, 2009

In order of signing:

Rep. Melvin L. Watt
Rep. Alcee L. Hastings
Rep. Donald M. Payne
Rep. Bennie G. Thompson
Rep. Diane E. Watson
Rep. Gregory W. Meeks
Rep. Ed Towns
Rep. Sheila Jackson-Lee
Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton
Rep. Bobby Rush
Rep. Chaka Fattah
Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr.
Rep. Sanford D. Bishop Jr.
Rep. Corrine Brown
Rep. Carolyn C. Kilpatrick
Rep. Danny K. Davis
Rep. John Conyers
Rep. Maxine Waters
Rep. Wm. Lacy Clay
Rep. Laura Richardson
Rep. Marcia L. Fudge
Rep. Hank Johnson
Rep. Emanuel Cleaver
Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson
Rep. Donna M. Christensen
Rep. Gwen Moore
Rep. Yvette D. Clarke
Rep. Elijah E. Cummings
Rep. Al Green
Rep. John Lewis
Rep. Andre Carson
Rep. David Scott
Rep. Artur Davis
Rep. Donna F. Edwards
Rep. Keith Ellison