

# Jackson denies wrongdoing in Ill. corruption

**Special to Sentinel-Voice**  
WASHINGTON — Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr. said Wednesday he openly sought appointment to Barack Obama's Senate seat but denied offering favors in return to Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich and said he was not involved "whatsoever in any wrongdoing."

A lawyer for Jackson acknowledged that the Illinois Democrat is "Senate Candidate 5" in the 76-page federal complaint filed against Blagojevich, who was arrested Tuesday. Wiretapped conversations suggest Blagojevich felt the candidate would raise campaign money for him in exchange for be-

ing appointed to the Senate seat vacated by the president-elect.

Jackson, a seven-term House member and son of civil rights activist Jesse Jackson, told reporters in Washington that he spoke with the U.S. attorney's office Tuesday.

"They shared with me that I am not a target of the investigation and that I am not accused of any misconduct," said Jackson, who left the crowded session without taking questions.

U.S. attorney's spokesman Randall Samborn would not confirm or deny Jackson's assertions.

Blagojevich, a second-



Rep. Jesse Jackson, Jr., D-Ill., walks from the podium after a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington on Wednesday. Jackson's name came up in an Ill. corruption probe.

term Democrat, is accused of scheming to enrich himself by selling Obama's open seat for cash or a lucrative job for himself or his wife. The federal complaint says that in a wiretapped conversation on Oct. 31, Blagojevich described an approach "by an associate of Senate Candidate 5."

The governor was quoted as saying the person made a "pay to play" proposal, a term for a payment in exchange for a political favor. "That, you know, he'd raise me 500 grand" for future political campaigns, the governor said in the wiretapped conversation.

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## Ethics panel expanding probe into Rep. Rangel

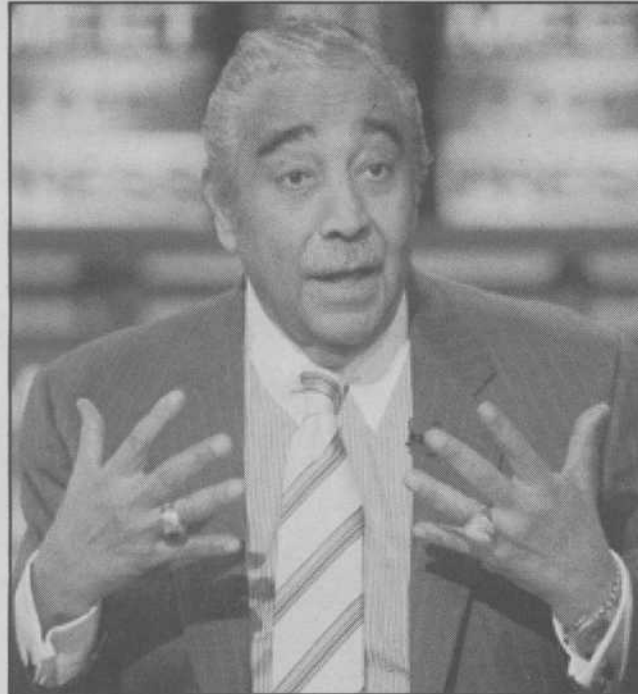
**Special to Sentinel-Voice**  
WASHINGTON — The House ethics committee is expanding an investigation of Rep. Charles Rangel, chairman of the tax-writing Ways and Means Committee. The ethics panel issued a statement Tuesday saying it had voted to expand an already far-ranging probe into the New York Democrat to examine whether he protected an oil drilling company from a big tax bill when the head of that company pledged a \$1 million donation to a college center named after the congressman.

The move means the Rangel inquiry will likely stretch well past early January, when House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., had previously said she expected the matter to be resolved.

Republicans have called for Rangel to step down from his chairmanship of the powerful Ways and Means panel during the investigation. The expanding investigation means the ethics cloud hanging over Rangel is likely to follow him and Democratic leaders into the next Congress as they seek to pass major stimulus legislation and buoy the sinking economy.

The committee will now investigate contributions or pledges of money made to the Charles B. Rangel Center for Public Service at the City College of New York, particularly one made by Eugene M. Isenberg, CEO of Nabors Industries, Ltd.

Rangel, 78, reportedly helped preserve a tax loop-



Rep. Charles Rangel, D-N.Y., has come under ethical fire.

hole that saved the company tens of millions of dollars a year.

The congressman, who has been in office for 40 years, maintains he has done nothing improper, and he says he has always opposed the kind of change to tax law that would have cost Nabors dearly. The ethics committee said it was expanding the probe after Rangel asked them to do so.

The committee has already been probing Rangel's failure to pay taxes on about \$75,000 in rental income from a beach house he owns in the Dominican Republic. They are also eyeing his use of three rent-stabilized apartments in Harlem, including one for a campaign office. Also under scrutiny are letters Rangel wrote on congressional stationery looking to drum up donors for the

college center.

College officials have refused to say who donated to the Rangel center, citing the ongoing investigation.

Rangel has insisted that whatever he did wrong, they were honest mistakes, not intentional deceptions.

## Applicants

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transition team. Even the applicants who discover the inside track to an administration position have to fill out the President-elect's thorough and now infamous questionnaire. The release of a 64-question application survey has had a daunting effect on many qualified professionals with hopes of joining the Obama administration.

"It is very difficult for anyone to comply with those types of requests if you want to be truthful, honest and complete. And it's not because you don't want to, it's just because memory fades and documents get lost over time," said Datus Wall, 20-year engineer, management consultant, African-American, and D.C. resident.

The survey has been heralded by TalkLeft.com, and many others, as "the most intrusive application ever," with questions like, "briefly describe the most controversial matters you have been involved with during the course of your ca-

## Jefferson loses his seat

By Dorothy Rowley  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

(NNPA) — Beleaguered Louisiana lawmaker William Jefferson has lost his bid to remain in office.

The veteran congressman, caught up in a 2007 indictment, charging him with taking \$500,000 in bribes, was ousted Saturday from his New Orleans district in elections that had been delayed by Hurricane Gustav.

Jefferson, a Democrat, lost to Republican Anh "Joseph" Cao who won 50 percent of the vote in the heavily Black and Democratic 2nd Congressional District race.

Cao will become the first Vietnamese to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.

When he took office in 1991, Jefferson, 61, became Louisiana's first Black congressman since Reconstruction.

He has pleaded not guilty to charges of bribery, money laundering and misuing his congressional office.

According to an Associated Press report, Jefferson conceded defeat in a speech that was gracious but stopped short of concession.

He blamed low voter turnout, saying voters might have thought he was a shoo-in after his victory in the Nov. 4 primary.

"I think people just ran out of gas a bit,"



U.S. Rep. William Jefferson, D-La.

Jefferson was quoted as saying, "People flat didn't come in large numbers [Saturday]."

Jefferson's loss is a coup for Louisiana's Republicans, whose national committee supported Cao's candidacy. In the process, Republicans argued that Jefferson's scandal had cost him the election.

But the party's fortune reportedly had already taken a turn this year for the worse when Democrats gained control of Congress.

Dorothy Rowley writes for the Afro-American Newspapers.

reer" and "Please list and, if readily available, provide a copy of each book, article, column or publication (including but not limited to any posts or comments on blogs or other websites) you have authored, individually or with others."

Wall is not the only qualified potential applicant deterred by Obama's questionnaire. However, the detraction of established professionals like him could prove to be beneficial for young applicants who have had less time to develop discretions in their past, and for those who research shows are making rapid advancements in developing media technology skills.

Says Michael K. Powell, chair of the National Advisory Committee for the Joint Center Media and Technology Institute, "We hear encouraging things about how African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans are eagerly adopting the new ways of communicating that technology is making possible."

Simon Breedon writes for the Washington Informer.