If it worked for Rangel, why not us?

Rep. John Carter
New York Post

If powerful politicians suffer no penalty for "forgetting" to pay their taxes, said Texas Republican Rep. John Carter, why should you? I have introduced legislation I'm calling the "Rangel Rule," named after my colleague Charles Rangel, the powerful Democratic chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. Rangel failed for years to pay taxes on some rental property in the Caribbean; after he was exposed, he apologized and paid up, but has not had to fork over any interest or penalties or suffer any prosecution. The new treasury secretary, Timothy Geithner, recently came clean about his own failure to pay federal taxes, and he, too, "has paid no penalties and faces no charges." Make no mistake: If these "oversights" had been yours, you'd be facing serious consequences, possibly including jail. But under my bill, any citizen caught owing back taxes could, by writing "Rangel Rule" on his return, be exempt from interest and penalties. Not only would this "restore equal treatment for working Americans," it would also keep more money in the hands of taxpayers—which happens to be the best way to get our economy moving again.

Quote of the week

"Now unemployed and with a federal indictment bearing down on him, Rod Blagojevich should stick to his routine, put on his track suit and go for a run. Rod can run south on Clark and into the Loop, turning east on Adams Street to the southeast corner of Adams and Dearborn, a steel-and-glass highrise, where [his wife] Patti can wait for him. I'm told there's a shower in that building he can use, and Patti can fix her face and they can take the elevator on up. It is the federal building, where U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald works. It's time to cut a deal, Rod, if they'll let you. You'll do prison time, sure, and you'll have to testify. But don't think others aren't lining up to bury you with their own testimony to save themselves. There's one thing to do, former governor. Start talking."

John Kass in the Chicago Tribune