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In Washington Wednesday, House Appropriations Committee Chairman David Obey (D-Wis.) announced the committee would not approve earmarks to for-profit corporations for the next year.

U.S. Rep. Mike Quigley (D-Ill.) claimed some of the credit for the decision because one of the first bills he introduced when he took office a year ago was to ban the practice.

That bill did not go far.

But recent scandals that knocked Rep. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.) from his Ways and Means chairmanship and preceded Rep. Eric Massa's announced retirement breathed new life into the idea of imposing some restrictions on earmarks, funds specially allocated for projects or programs -- money critics consider pork slipped into bills.

"Today's news is both refreshing and necessary," Quigley said. "I fully support leadership's conversations to make for-profit earmarks a policy of the past, because the most precious commodity we have in the House of Representatives -- and all of Washington -- is the people's trust."

Quigley said he would encourage the House Democratic leadership to make the one-year moratorium permanent.

