

BURRIS DID NOT WANT TO REVEAL HIS CONVERSATIONS-AND HE DIDN'T

Check out this video of Roland Burris' testimony before the IL Legislative Committee. Here's the transcript, on the interactions between Burris and his lawyer.

Rep. Jim Durkin: Prior to his arrest, did you have any conversations with the governor about your desire to be appointed to the seat?

Roland Burris: No.

Durkin: OK. Did you talk to any members of the governor's staff or anyone closely related to the governor, including with family members or any lobbyists connected with him, including oh, let me throw out some names: John Harris, Rob Blagojevich, Doug Scofield, Bob Greenlee, Lon Monk, John Wyma? Did you talk to anybody who was associated with the governor about your desire to seek the appointment prior to the governor's arrest?

Burris (confers with his attorney off-mic and says): I talked to some friends about my desire to be appointed, yes.

Durkin: I guess the point is I was trying to ask: Did you speak to anybody who was on the governor's staff prior to the governor's arrest or anybody, any of those individuals or anybody who was closely related to the governor?

Burris (again confers with attorney and says): I recall having a meeting with Lon Monk about my partner and I trying to get continued business and I did

bring it up, it must have been in September-maybe it was in July of '08 and you know, 'If your close to the governor, well let him know that I will feel certainly interested in the seat.'"

Durkin: OK.

Durkin lists off a list that includes **all five** people whom Burris has now admitted speaking to about the seat and other issues. Burris' lawyer seems to know immediately that Burris is going to need help with the question and asks for a moment to confer. Burris gives his attorney a short explanation, the attorney responds with one word (seemingly telling him he has to reveal it), and the elaborates that advice. Burris then gives his weasely answer, "I talked to some friends." Durkin tries again and asks what was in effect a simple yes or no question about whether Burris had talked to anyone on the Governor's staff or "was closely related" to the Governor.

Rather than saying yes, or starting with those closest to the Governor (his brother), Burris launches into a vague answer about Lon Monk.

And he never gets around to revealing that conversation in which Rob Blagojevich discussed fundraising in the context of the Senate appointment. And here—from later in the transcript—is Burris trying to avoid answering whether or not he would have turned the Blagos in if they asked for a clear quid pro quo.

Durkin: At any time were you directly or indirectly aware of a quid pro quo with the governor for the appointment of this vacant Senate seat?

Burris: No sir.

Durkin: Ok. If you were aware of a quid pro quo, what would you have done?

(Burris's lawyer calls it a hypothetical question and inappropriate. Durkin calls it "highly relevant" and what his

response would have been. Rep. John Fritchey (D-Chicago) says his response to something that did not occur was "irrelevant" and "speculative." Durkin says its "germane" to the hearing and a "reasonable request" of what he would have done. Burris' lawyer says Burris will respond because he wants to be "clear and open.")

Burris: Rep. Durkin, knowing my ethics, I would not participate in anybody's quid pro quo. I've been in government for 20 years and never participated in anybody's quid pro quo.

Durkin: I guess the point is, would you have gone to the federal authorities if you were aware of that?

Burris: I have no response to that.

Let me answer this for you, Representative Durkin: No. Burris would assuredly **not** go to the Feds if he were offered a quid pro quo.

Obviously, I'm not a juror or a court of law, but I'd say the evidence suggests Burris operated with clear intent in hiding both his conversation with Rob Blagojevich and the quid pro quo conversation they had.