

1 BEFORE THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
2 IMPEACHMENT COMMITTEE

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12 Hearing held on the 8th day of January, 2009, at
13 the hour of 11:00 a.m., in Room 114, State Capitol
14 Building, Springfield, Illinois.

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1 committee could go back to work and then bring other
2 material to the members of the Senate.

3 Mr. Genson -- we have with us, just for the
4 record, we have with us ed Genson and Sam Adam, Jr.
5 representing Governor Blagojevich. Did you wish to
6 say something?

7 MR. GENSON: Yes, I believe the next status
8 in federal court, our filing date is the 23rd, the
9 government's filing date the 29th, but I believe the
10 next status is actually January 29th.

11 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Thank you very much for
12 that helpful information.

13 And we now have with us Roland Burris. And I
14 believe that you are responding to a subpoena that we
15 sent you at the behest of the Minority Spokesman of
16 the committee, and I am told that the members of the
17 United States Senate are following closely your
18 testimony before this committee this afternoon.

19 So if you'd like to make an opening statement
20 we'd be happy to hear from you. But first I'd ask you
21 to take the oath. I'd ask you to raise your right
22 hand.

23 (Roland Burris was duly sworn.)

24 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Thank you. Proceed.

1 MR. BURRIS: Thank you, Madam Chairman. I do
2 not have an opening statement. I would like to thank
3 the members of this state's distinguished committee of
4 the House of Representatives, and I am prepared to
5 respond to their questions pursuant to their subpoena
6 that I appear this afternoon.

7 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: We appreciate that.

8 MR. BURRIS: And by the way, I thank you all
9 for extending that, because it was impossible for me
10 to be here on Wednesday, so I really appreciate that.

11 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: And we were very happy to
12 accommodate you.

13 MR. BURRIS: Thank you so much.

14 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Are there questions in
15 general? Representative Durkin.

16 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Good afternoon, Mr.
17 Burris.

18 MR. BURRIS: How are you doing,
19 Representative Durkin?

20 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: I'm doing fine. How
21 are you?

22 MR. BURRIS: Terrific, thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: I know you had a lot
24 of travel over the last few days, but I appreciate you

1 spending some time with us this afternoon. I think
2 it's important, your testimony is important. It's
3 been a month since the Governor was placed under
4 arrest for a multitude of federal crimes.

5 And one of the major aspects which we are
6 investigating in this committee is the sale of the
7 United States Senate seat from President-elect Barack
8 Obama. We contribute approximately six to seven pages
9 in our recommendation to the allegations of the sale
10 of the United States Senate seat.

11 So I believe your testimony is relevant, it's
12 important to us, and I think your appearance as well.
13 I ultimately believe that your testimony is important
14 to the people of the state of Illinois. I think they
15 owe an explanation about the circumstances upon which
16 you were appointed to the seat, and also to explain
17 the relationship with the Governor.

18 These are things that I'd like to inquire into
19 today. But obviously as you know, Senate Majority
20 Leader Reid has stated that he was looking forward to
21 this testimony, and I'm sure a few other people are
22 watching it as well.

23 But the committee has received a copy of your
24 affidavit. We reviewed it, and I'd like to -- if

1 you're ready I'd like to go into some questions.

2 MR. BURRIS: Proceed.

3 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Now Mr. Burris, upon
4 the Governor's arrest on December 9th, what were your
5 thoughts upon the arrest?

6 MR. BURRIS: Surprise.

7 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Surprise?

8 REPRESENTATIVE FRITCHEY: Excuse me, if I
9 may. While we obviously have a lot of leeway on this
10 committee though as well we still need to be
11 constrained by what our objective here what this
12 committee was convened for. As to what Mr. Burris's
13 thoughts may or may not have been upon hearing that
14 news, I don't know what impact that would have upon
15 our investigation as to the actions of the Governor.

16 Mr. Durkin, I obviously -- Representative Durkin,
17 I obviously appreciate you wanting relevant inquiries
18 with respect to the actions regarding the appointment
19 of the Senate seat. I would be remiss if I didn't
20 remind you and the rest of the committee that our role
21 here is to investigate Rod Blagojevich and not Roland
22 Burris.

23 And to that extent I don't see what Mr. Burris's
24 opinions would have any bearing on this matter.

1 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Well, Mr. Burris was
2 appointed not too long ago by Governor Blagojevich,
3 and one of the major inquiries of this committee is
4 investigating the circumstances of that appointment.
5 So I think it's relevant. But if his thoughts -- I'll
6 leave it to the chair.

7 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Well, I think I suggest
8 that we leave it to Mr. Burris. If you'd like to
9 answer that question, we'd be happy to hear your
10 answer.

11 MR. BURRIS: I would stick to my original
12 answer.

13 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Pardon me?

14 MR. BURRIS: I will stick with my original
15 answer. I was surprised.

16 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Have you had a chance
17 to read the federal complaint and the affidavit that
18 was filed in federal court against the Governor?

19 MR. BURRIS: No, I haven't read it at all.

20 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: No? Not the least
21 bit concerned about it or trying to see exactly what
22 has been alleged against the man who is appointing you
23 to this seat?

24 MR. BURRIS: Naturally I read what was in the

1 newspaper, but I did not read the complaint.

2 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: All right. When did
3 you first become interested in the vacant United
4 States Senate seat?

5 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Could you speak a little
6 more closely to the microphone? We're having trouble
7 hearing you.

8 MR. BURRIS: It must have been around the
9 time that President-elect Obama was -- had won the
10 Democratic primary for President, and naturally my
11 thought was that he would more than likely be elected
12 President and we would have a vacant seat for the
13 United States Senate.

14 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Did you make a public
15 announcement of your interest at any time around when
16 Senator Obama won the election?

17 MR. WRIGHT: Excuse me.

18 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Mr. Wright.

19 MR. WRIGHT: By made a public announcement,
20 could you kindly define it for him? What do you mean
21 by public? Did he tell anybody?

22 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Did you make any
23 public statement regarding your interest in the United
24 States Senate seat after the election of

1 President-elect Obama?

2 MR. BURRIS: No.

3 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Now, prior to the
4 Governor's arrest, did you have any conversations,
5 prior to his arrest did you have any conversations
6 with the Governor about your desire to be appointed to
7 the seat?

8 MR. BURRIS: No.

9 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Did you talk to any
10 members of the Governor's staff or anyone closely
11 related to the Governor, including family members or
12 any lobbyists connected with him, including let me
13 throw out some names, John Harris, Rob Blagojevich,
14 Doug Scofield, Bob Greenleaf, Lon Monk, John Wyma, did
15 you talk to anybody who was associated with the
16 Governor about your desire to seek the appointment
17 prior to the Governor's arrest?

18 MR. WRIGHT: Give us a moment.

19 MR. BURRIS: I talked to some friends about
20 my desire to be appointed, yes.

21 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: I guess the point is
22 I was trying to ask, did you speak to anybody who was
23 on the Governor's staff prior to the Governor's arrest
24 or anybody, any of those individuals or anybody who is

1 closely related to the Governor?

2 MR. BURRIS: I recall having a meeting with
3 Lon Monk about my partner and I trying to get
4 continued business, and I did bring it up, it must
5 have been in September or maybe it was in July of '08
6 that, you know, you're close to the Governor, let him
7 know that I am certainly interested in the seat.

8 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Okay. Did you speak
9 to any individuals who -- any individuals who were
10 also seeking the appointment of the United States
11 Senate seat, otherwise people we've referred to as
12 Senate candidates one through five?

13 MR. BURRIS: No, I did not.

14 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Okay. At any time
15 were you directly or indirectly aware of a quid pro
16 quo with the Governor for the appointment of this
17 vacant Senate seat?

18 MR. BURRIS: No, sir.

19 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Okay. If you were
20 aware of a quit pro quo, what would you have done?

21 MR. WRIGHT: Madam Chairman, I think that
22 calls for a -- that's a hypothetical question that I
23 don't think that what he would have done, it could
24 have depended. I don't think that's an appropriate

1 question.

2 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: I disagree. I think
3 that it is highly relevant. You're speaking to the
4 committee, but you're also speaking to the state of
5 Illinois. I think it's important to know what his
6 response would have been if he was aware of a quid pro
7 quo with the Governor and also for the appointment.

8 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Representative Fritchey.

9 REPRESENTATIVE FRITCHEY: Madam Chairman, if
10 I may, Mr. Burris had already stated that he was not
11 aware of any quid pro quo, which answers that question
12 and puts it to rest. What his response would have
13 been had there been something, which he stated did not
14 occur, is clearly irrelevant to this, and according to
15 Mr. Burris, to speculate on something that would have
16 happened if another situation had happened which he
17 clearly says has not.

18 Representative Durkin, I'm not trying to stifle
19 you whatsoever, and I understand the generalities
20 where you're trying to go. But again, I think that
21 we're outside the realm here of what's germane to this
22 hearing.

23 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: I think it's germane,
24 and I think in the conduct of this committee over the

1 past month that we've been given significant leeway to
2 try to find responses to individuals who are sworn in
3 before this committee, and I think that it's a
4 reasonable request to ask what would have been Mr.
5 Burris's response if he was aware of a quid pro quo
6 for the United States Senate seat.

7 REPRESENTATIVE FRITCHEY: But the leeway has
8 been with response to representatives on behalf of the
9 Governor and the Governor's administration, not with
10 respect to third parties who have clearly stated that
11 they've had no involvement with those actions.

12 MR. WRIGHT: Representative, Senator Burris
13 wants to be clear and open, so to the extent you're
14 asking him to speculate, he'll try to respond to that.

15 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Thank you.

16 MR. BURRIS: Representative Durkin, knowing
17 my ethics, I would not participate in anybody's quid
18 pro quo. I've been in government for 20 years and
19 never participated in anybody's quid pro quo.

20 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: I guess the point is
21 would you have gone to the federal authorities if you
22 were aware of that?

23 MR. BURRIS: I have no response to that.

24 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Now, I want to talk

1 about after the Governor's arrest. What contact did
2 you have, what contact did you have with anyone
3 regarding the appointment, regarding the appointment,
4 I'm talking after December 9th?

5 MR. BURRIS: None whatsoever.

6 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Did you have any
7 contact with the Governor after the arrest then?

8 MR. BURRIS: No, sir.

9 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Now, there's --

10 MR. BURRIS: Let me say this. Naturally
11 there was a contact afterwards, you know.

12 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Which is what I want
13 to get into. Would you explain the contact that you
14 had with -- who did you have a contact with regarding
15 the vacancy and the appointment following the
16 Governor's arrest?

17 MR. BURRIS: Yeah, it was on that Friday
18 after Christmas, December 26th, oh, it must have been
19 about 4:00 in the afternoon, I received a call from an
20 attorney whose name I knew, because I knew the young
21 man, and he said I would like to come and speak to you
22 about something and it's very important. And I
23 said --

24 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Could you identify

1 that person you spoke with on the phone?

2 MR. BURRIS: Yes, I can. It was attorney
3 Sam Adams, Jr.

4 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Do you see him here
5 today?

6 MR. BURRIS: He's sitting at the table.

7 MR. ADAM: Hello, Mr. Burris.

8 MR. BURRIS: There he is, I only saw Mr.
9 Genson, I didn't see him. Yes, and so he came to my
10 home and we exchanged pleasantries. And then he said
11 the Governor would be interested or would like to
12 appoint you to the vacant Senate seat. And I was just
13 a little surprised, and said well, you know, let me
14 think about that. And I'll get back to you Sunday
15 afternoon or Sunday, late Sunday evening.

16 And I wanted to make sure that he was serious,
17 you know, I didn't know -- because I knew I had to go
18 out and touch base with a whole lot of people because
19 I just did not want to make a snap decision.

20 So I went out that night to a big black tie event
21 with about 1500 individuals, and I must have talked to
22 all of them. But all of the responses were positive.
23 You are a qualified individual, you have represented
24 the state well, there's no one better to represent us

1 in the United States Senate than you. I accepted all
2 of those comments, not one negative.

3 I then on Saturday spent the time calling my
4 friends around the state saying that look, if the
5 Governor were to make me an offer for this seat should
6 I take it? All of those persons in Illinois and out
7 of Illinois whose judgment I valued said yes.

8 And so based on that when I did get a call and a
9 visit from Mr. Adams on Sunday afternoon.

10 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: What day can was that
11 can you give me some --

12 MR. BURRIS: Sunday afternoon, that would be
13 December 29th, December 28th.

14 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Let me just ask you
15 when Mr. Adams contacted you, did he indicate that he
16 was contacting you in his capacity as the lawyer for
17 the Governor?

18 MR. BURRIS: That's correct.

19 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Okay. When you went
20 to this -- you conferred with a number of people.
21 Were any of those individuals close associates of the
22 Governor?

23 MR. BURRIS: Oh, no, absolutely not.

24 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: All right.

1 MR. BURRIS: These are all friends of mine.

2 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Okay. What happened
3 after that with respect to Mr. Adams?

4 MR. BURRIS: Well, on Sunday afternoon Mr.
5 Adams came by and we discussed this again, and I told
6 him that should the Governor make the offer then I
7 would accept the offer, if the Governor would make it.
8 Mr. Adams left my home.

9 Shortly after I got a call from the Governor, and
10 we exchanged pleasantries, and he says to me General
11 Burris, if I offer you the Senate seat vacated by
12 President-elect Barack Obama, will you accept my
13 offer? And I said to him Governor, yes, I will. That
14 was the extent of it.

15 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Did you exchange any
16 type of writings or documents with the Governor or any
17 of his staff regarding the qualifications, which many
18 people are very aware of your past, but anything that
19 went between you and the Governor or his staff in the
20 form of documents?

21 MR. BURRIS: No, there was not.

22 MR. WRIGHT: I'm sorry, you asked were there
23 an exchange of documents, and I wasn't sure of your
24 timing. Are you speaking of at the time of that

1 conversation or at any other time?

2 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Well, any time during
3 the -- when you began an interest in the appointment.
4 Thank you for clarifying that. Any time at which you
5 expressed an interest and the time which you accepted
6 the Governor's offer, did you exchange any type of
7 documentation or any writings about your interest or
8 qualifications for the office?

9 MR. BURRIS: Yes, in the conversation with
10 the Governor, you know, he was praising my background
11 and experience in Illinois, but there was nothing
12 written in any transaction. He just explained to me
13 and I was surprised at some of the things that he knew
14 about my background and my accomplishments as he
15 prepared to ask me the question.

16 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Okay. So it was a
17 very brief conversation with the Governor, correct?

18 MR. BURRIS: That is correct.

19 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: And what did he state
20 about the timing of the announcement? Did he tell you
21 when -- the timing of the public announcement, did he
22 indicate when that would happen?

23 MR. BURRIS: No, we did not discuss that.
24 The details would be worked out with my staff.

1 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: So could you explain
2 to the committee when is the last time you had a
3 conversation with the Governor?

4 MR. BURRIS: That Sunday afternoon.

5 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Have you talked with
6 him since?

7 MR. BURRIS: Yes, when we did our
8 announcement on Tuesday at the press conference.

9 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: How about since the
10 press conference, have you had a conversation with the
11 Governor?

12 MR. BURRIS: No, I have not.

13 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Any of his staff
14 members?

15 MR. BURRIS: No, I have not.

16 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Okay. Mr. Burris, I
17 also said I think one of the things that we would like
18 to understand is the relationship that you have with
19 the Governor. So I'm going to go down this line of
20 questioning.

21 Now, you are -- are you currently a registered
22 lobbyist with the state of Illinois?

23 MR. BURRIS: As of today I am not.

24 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: How about with Cook

1 County?

2 MR. BURRIS: I am not.

3 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Were you a lobbyist
4 with Cook County?

5 MR. BURRIS: I was, but I've resigned all my
6 lobbying responsibilities.

7 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Including the city of
8 Chicago?

9 MR. BURRIS: That is correct.

10 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: U.S. House?

11 MR. BURRIS: That is correct.

12 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: United States Senate,
13 were you registered with the United States Senate to
14 lobby before that body?

15 MR. BURRIS: I was registered with the
16 federal government, but that's -- I resigned that.

17 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: This is inclusive of
18 both the House and the Senate, is that correct?

19 MR. BURRIS: Yes.

20 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: All right.

21 MR. BURRIS: Yes.

22 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: While you were a
23 lobbyist, and you're a lawyer as well, you had a
24 consulting firm, correct?

1 MR. BURRIS: Yes.

2 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: What's the name of
3 that firm?

4 MR. BURRIS: Burriss and Lebed.

5 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Could you explain to
6 the men and women on this committee the type of work
7 that you -- well, let me ask you to back up a little
8 bit.

9 Did your consulting firm do any work for the
10 state of Illinois?

11 MR. BURRIS: Small contracts, yes.

12 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Could you explain
13 those contracts?

14 MR. BURRIS: We had a small contract with the
15 Illinois Department of Transportation, I think that
16 was in '04, and then a little bit -- another contract
17 the following year. So that was to help Department of
18 Transportation qualify minority vendors to be able to
19 do work for the Illinois Department of Transportation.

20 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: And you stated it was
21 a small contract. Do you recall what the fee
22 arrangement was for that contract?

23 MR. BURRIS: The first one I think was a
24 150,000 dollar contract, of which we must have

1 collected about 75,000, because it didn't start until
2 August or maybe July of the year when it was awarded,
3 and the other one we did receive a full two-year
4 contract the following year, but it was canceled after
5 we had done one service, one year of service on it.

6 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Did you do any other
7 type of work for the state of Illinois where you
8 contracted, where your consulting firm contracted with
9 the state of Illinois for any other matters other than
10 the IDOT work?

11 MR. BURRIS: I don't believe so,
12 Representative Durkin.

13 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Did you do any work
14 for the State Board of Investment?

15 MR. BURRIS: State Board of Investment, no,
16 sir.

17 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Now, could you give
18 us an understanding of who your lobbying clients were
19 before this legislature over the last, I'll say the
20 last two years, would you identify your clients?

21 MR. BURRIS: One was the Mortgage Brokers
22 Association, I think I lobbied here on behalf of them.
23 One was the small tobacco, the small tobacco clients I
24 lobbied for. Let me see now. Give me a minute. I

1 have to think through these.

2 I don't know if I have these written down, but
3 certainly it's a matter of public record. You all can
4 go to the Secretary of State, because we have to
5 disclose all of that information, so I'm pretty sure
6 you might be able to tell me better than I can tell
7 you who my clients -- so if you can tick some off I
8 can tell you.

9 MR. WRIGHT: I'd be more than happy to supply
10 the committee with any information. But we're talking
11 about clients that began in 2002 up to the present
12 over a series of years, and if you're asking for all
13 of those, I'd be more than happy to supply that
14 information to the committee.

15 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: We may have pulled
16 those, I just want to know if Mr. Burris knows
17 firsthand. But do you recall, there was a report in
18 the Chicago Sun Times within the last week and a half
19 which stated that your lobbying clients received
20 approximately 3 million dollars in state contracts.
21 Is that an accurate statement?

22 MR. BURRIS: I think that is inaccurate. I
23 have not received 3 million dollars in state
24 contracts.

1 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Your clients.

2 MR. BURRIS: Oh, my clients. I don't know
3 what my -- what the dollar value my clients received.
4 They may have, I don't know.

5 MR. WRIGHT: And I'm sorry, is that supposed
6 to be over the span of the eight or nine years we're
7 talking about?

8 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: I believe that we're
9 talking on -- I'm referring to an article that was
10 printed a few days ago by the Chicago Sun Times. I'm
11 not sure if they give reference to the timespan,
12 but --

13 MR. WRIGHT: Yeah, I mean because he answered
14 your question, it really depends upon what period of
15 time you're talking about. And if you're talking
16 about in the year 2002 it's one thing, but if you're
17 talking about from 2002 all the way up to 2008 or 2009
18 it could be a very different answer.

19 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Would you be able to
20 get us that information?

21 MR. WRIGHT: We could supply the information
22 based on the records that we have.

23 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Thank you.

24 Now, between 2002 and the current date, our just

1 brief research established that either yourself or
2 your lobbying firm has made approximately 22,000
3 contributions to the Governor, is that accurate?

4 MR. BURRIS: No, that is not accurate,
5 Representative Durkin.

6 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: What would be an
7 accurate total?

8 MR. BURRIS: Give us one moment. Burris and
9 Lebed over an eight year period of time had just over
10 11,200 dollars.

11 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: How about not just
12 the consulting firm, but how about you individually
13 and your law firms or --

14 MR. BURRIS: Individually I gave 4,500
15 dollars.

16 REPRESENTATIVE BURRIS: Do you recall how
17 much -- what law firms have you been associated with
18 since 2002?

19 MR. BURRIS: Burris, Wright, Slaughter and
20 Tom and Gonzalez, Saggio and Harlan. And Gonzalez has
21 given in 2008 1,000 dollars, and Burris, Wright,
22 Slaughter and Tom over that same period had given
23 5,000 dollars. And I am not in the management of
24 Burris, Wright, Slaughter and Tom, I'm of counsel to

1 that firm. I have no type of partnership interest or
2 business interest in that firm. The Burris by the way
3 is another Burris.

4 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: What firm -- are you
5 with the Gonzalez firm currently?

6 MR. BURRIS: The Gonzalez firm merged with
7 the Burris, Wright, Slaughter firm.

8 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Have you divested
9 yourself from the interest in that firm?

10 MR. BURRIS: I had no interest. I was
11 always of counsel.

12 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Are you still of
13 counsel with the Gonzalez firm?

14 MR. BURRIS: Well, as of -- I resigned from
15 that also as of my appointment.

16 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Okay. Our research
17 has just shown that since 2002 between yourself, the
18 consulting firm, and your law firm, members of your
19 law firm, have made contributions approximately 22,700
20 dollars to the Governor. We can show you that
21 afterwards.

22 MR. BURRIS: That's over the eight year
23 period, is that correct?

24 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Six.

1 MR. BURRIS: Six years.

2 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: I'd like to get into
3 a little bit -- since the last reporting period was up
4 until June of this year, could you tell the men and
5 women of this committee whether you've made any
6 contributions to the Governor since July, 2008?

7 MR. BURRIS: July of 2008. No, I have not.
8 The last one was July 27th going to our records, June
9 27th, I'm sorry.

10 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: June 27th. Has your
11 law firm made any contributions to the Governor since
12 July of this year?

13 MR. BURRIS: I have no jurisdiction over the
14 law firm, I do not know, and I don't believe so, but I
15 have no authority over the law firm. I'm of counsel
16 to the law firm.

17 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Did you bundle any
18 money for the Governor's campaign fund at any time in
19 the last six months from July of 2008 until the
20 present?

21 MR. WRIGHT: I'm sorry, Mr. Representative,
22 when you say bundle, what do you mean by bundle?

23 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Collected money.

24 MR. WRIGHT: Like given a fundraiser, is that

1 what you speaking of?

2 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Sure, I'd like to
3 know that, and I'd also like to know if Mr. Burris
4 directed anybody to make contributions to the Governor
5 since July of this year.

6 MR. WRIGHT: Okay.

7 MR. BURRIS: The answer is no.

8 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Have you been present
9 at any fundraisers for the Governor over the past
10 year, in the year 2008, were you at any of the
11 Governor's fundraisers?

12 MR. BURRIS: I was at the one that he gave I
13 think it was June with 1,000 dollars that I gave June
14 27th, or whatever that fundraiser was during that
15 period.

16 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: In 2006 did you have
17 a fundraiser, did you personally have a fundraiser for
18 the Governor?

19 MR. BURRIS: Yes, 2000 --

20 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: 2006.

21 MR. BURRIS: No, it was for his re-election.
22 Was he running for re-election in 2006? Yes, that was
23 for re-election, that is correct.

24 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Let me ask you this.

1 In 2002 you ran in the Governor's race against
2 Congressman Blagojevich and Paul Vallas, is that
3 correct?

4 MR. BURRIS: That is correct.

5 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Had you entered the
6 race before or after Congressman Blagojevich announced
7 his candidacy?

8 MR. BURRIS: I have no idea. I don't know
9 when he announced. I'm trying to think about when I
10 announced.

11 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Did you have any
12 discussions with Governor Blagojevich prior to --
13 prior to your entry into the race?

14 MR. BURRIS: Representative Durkin, I will
15 try to answer your question, but you are an elected
16 official. I think you know the answer to that,
17 Representative. The answer is no. We're competitive
18 trying to win a primary, and it got pretty rough and
19 tumble there for a while.

20 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: So no one from the
21 Governor, Congressman Blagojevich's staff asked you to
22 get involved in that race, that's basically what
23 you're stating, correct?

24 MR. BURRIS: The answer is no,

1 Representative.

2 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: I'd like to talk a
3 little bit about that 2002 race for a few more
4 minutes. Do you know a man by the name of Joseph
5 Stroud?

6 MR. WRIGHT: Excuse me, Representative. I
7 think we've -- all I want to suggest is I don't know
8 how far this is going, but if this is relevant to the
9 issue of this appointment, we're more than happy to
10 continue down this road.

11 But it seems to me that we've taken a rabbit
12 trail and we've gone into something that's very, very
13 different. And I just would like to ask the chairman
14 where we're going with this, how far we'll go.

15 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: First of all let me just
16 remind people this is not a court of law, we're not
17 bound by the kinds of evidentiary or questioning
18 standards that might apply in a courtroom. But we are
19 certainly concerned that the questioning is focused on
20 our mission. And Representative Durkin, perhaps could
21 you explain what the purpose of that question might
22 be?

23 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Absolutely. Mr.
24 Stroud had made a 1.2 million dollar contribution to

1 Roland Burris's campaign in the 2000 election under a
2 company by the name of Telephone USA Investments.
3 That is the single largest contribution in state
4 history, and the only other individual to receive a
5 contribution from Telephone USA Investments was Rod
6 Blagojevich and that was in 2006 for a hundred
7 thousand dollars. So I think it's a relevant question
8 and I want to go down that questioning.

9 MR. WRIGHT: I'm -- Madam Chairman, I'm
10 sorry, but I didn't understand if are you suggesting
11 that Senator Burris made a hundred thousand dollar
12 campaign --

13 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: No, Telephone USA
14 Investments was the only -- they made a 1.2 million
15 dollar contribution to Mr. Burris in the 2002
16 campaign.

17 MR. WRIGHT: Are you suggesting --

18 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: The only other
19 individual who received a contribution from Telephone
20 USA Investments ever was Governor Blagojevich in 2006.

21 MR. WRIGHT: Well, my question is are you
22 suggesting that the Senator's a part of this telephone
23 company of which you speak?

24 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: No, I want to

1 understand who Robert Stroud is, because that is the
2 single largest contribution as I stated, and there are
3 only two people who received contributions from Mr.
4 Stroud, and that was Mr. Burris and also Governor
5 Blagojevich.

6 MR. WRIGHT: Well, I don't know that to be
7 true. We can accept that I guess since you're making
8 that representation.

9 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: It sounds to me that it's
10 a question that probably Mr. Burris could go ahead and
11 answer.

12 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you very much, Madam.

13 MR. BURRIS: Well, certainly Mr. Stroud in
14 2002 made a loan to the Burris for Governor campaign,
15 and that loan is still outstanding, that's all I know
16 about that situation. I have no other relationship to
17 whatever Mr. Stroud does with his money. That is not
18 my business nor anybody else's business if he wants to
19 give his contributions and the contributions are legal
20 and disclosed, I would think under all of our laws in
21 this state that he could do that, Representative
22 Durkin.

23 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: So you're saying that was
24 not a campaign contribution?

1 MR. BURRIS: It was a loan to my campaign.

2 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Are you still trying to
3 pay it back?

4 MR. BURRIS: It's still on the -- the
5 committee's been closed down, Madam Chairman, but the
6 loan is still on the books, that is correct.

7 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Could you explain
9 when you first -- how long have you known Robert
10 Stroud, prior to 2002 how long have you known Mr.
11 Stroud?

12 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Just a second, Mr.
13 Burris. Representative Lang.

14 REPRESENTATIVE LANG: Well, thank you. I
15 think Mr. Durkin's entitled to his leeway, Madam
16 Chairman. But I don't really understand the purpose
17 of this question as it relates to the reason Mr.
18 Burris was brought before this committee.

19 Is the gentleman suggesting that way back before
20 the 2002 election there was some conspiracy to help
21 Rod Blagojevich in 2008? What is the purpose of the
22 question? I don't understand the relevance.

23 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: I think that as I
24 stated earlier, I believe that there's a few things

1 and that Mr. Burris can explain the circumstances
2 regarding the payment, and also the relationship that
3 he has with the Governor. And I believe that the
4 single largest contribution that was made to a
5 campaign in Illinois history by a company, I'd like to
6 know a little bit why it wasn't forgiven or what were
7 the terms of it and why it still is an outstanding
8 loan.

9 And I find it ironic that the only other
10 individual who's received a loan from Telephone USA
11 Investments was the Governor.

12 REPRESENTATIVE LANG: So it's ironic. You
13 have a loop you want to close up, close it up.
14 Otherwise why don't we move on. The fact that Mr.
15 Burris still owes this man 1.2 million dollars from
16 his campaign fund is not relevant to the appointment
17 of Mr. Burris to be the next United States senator
18 from Illinois.

19 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Did you talk to Mr.
20 Stroud about making a contribution to Governor
21 Blagojevich in 2006?

22 MR. BURRIS: Representative Durkin, you just
23 heard me say that I have no control or contact with
24 Mr. Stroud or anyone else to whom they give money to.

1 And so please.

2 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: I guess maybe it
3 would help if you would explain to the members of this
4 committee how one can forgive a 1.2 million dollar
5 loan to a political action committee, I'd like to find
6 out. But I'm just having a hard time thinking that
7 there's a lack of communication with Mr. Stroud over
8 that amount of money and that loan has been forgiven.

9 Was there any terms to the repayment of the loan
10 or anything in writing which established the
11 conditions of the repayment of the loan?

12 MR. WRIGHT: May I object? Madam Chairman,
13 this isn't a court of law. You know, we're open,
14 we're willing to talk about a lot of things related to
15 this. It just seems that this line of questioning
16 continues to go further and further, and so if you
17 suggest that we continue we will.

18 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: I would suggest that
19 Representative Durkin finish up this line of
20 questioning quite quickly. I don't think there's
21 anything intrinsically wrong with asking if there was
22 some paperwork that describes what you first called a
23 contribution, Representative Durkin, but which has
24 been characterized by the recipient as a loan. So

1 maybe you could let us know quite quickly --

2 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: One last question if
3 I might. I stand corrected. This loan, has Mr.
4 Stroud forgiven this loan?

5 MR. BURRIS: I have not had -- the campaign
6 committee no longer exists. I have no way of repaying
7 the money, and I've not heard one word from Mr. Stroud
8 about anything that is due and owing as a result of
9 that loan.

10 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Mr. Durkin, do you want
11 to try another line? Are you finished?

12 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: No, I've just got
13 just a few more questions.

14 REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Are they about this
15 year? I hope they're about this year.

16 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Absolutely.
17 Absolutely. Now you had recently a meeting with
18 Senator Reid and Senator Durbin in Washington just in
19 the last 24 hours I believe.

20 MR. BURRIS: That is correct.

21 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: All right. Do you
22 expect from that conversation, do you expect to be
23 seated in the United States Senate any time in the
24 near future?

1 MR. BURRIS: That is correct.

2 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Can you tell me if
3 they stated that they will seat you and what would be
4 the conditions of you being allowed entry?

5 MR. BURRIS: We had a great meeting,
6 Representative Durkin. I was really impressed with
7 the Majority Leader Reid and of course our
8 distinguished Senior Senator from the great state of
9 Illinois, Dick Durbin. And what they described to me
10 is in the press. There was no other comments outside.

11 They indicated that they would like for me to
12 make an appearance here before this distinguished
13 House committee. And secondly, that we have to get
14 the Secretary of State's signature on the appointment.
15 We had a very pleasant and how should I say
16 distinguished meeting.

17 And then upon those clearing up they indicated
18 that my documentation would go to the Rules Committee
19 and the Rules Committee would consider it, and then it
20 would be passed out of the Rules Committee. That was
21 the extent of our conversation.

22 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Did you state whether
23 you would run for election in 2010 if you were
24 appointed to that seat?

1 MR. BURRIS: That question did not come up.

2 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: I would agree with
3 that, I believe that Secretary White I believe does
4 not have the authority to exercise discretion so I'll
5 throw that one to you since essentially it will be
6 required.

7 I've just got one last line of questioning. And
8 this is I'm going to ask you about a radio interview
9 that you did on December 13th, just a few days after
10 the Governor's arrest, and that's with WBBM radio.
11 You had commented upon the Attorney General Madigan's
12 lawsuit to remove the Governor.

13 You stated "I certainly applaud our actions.
14 Illinois is too important to its 18 million citizens
15 to have a chief executive who is now incapacitated.
16 The Governor's behavior is reprehensible."

17 If you believe that he's incapacitated and his
18 actions were reprehensible, how can you accept this
19 appointment and claim legitimacy to it?

20 MR. BURRIS: Number one, I said 13 million
21 people. Illinois doesn't have 18 million.

22 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: That's what the paper
23 stated.

24 MR. BURRIS: So that means that they're wrong

1 sometimes, right?

2 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: I'm with you.

3 MR. BURRIS: And if I were Attorney General
4 at the same time that Attorney General Lisa Madigan
5 was Attorney General, I would have taken the same
6 action that Attorney General Madigan took. Because
7 there's an obligation upon you as the chief law
8 enforcement officer of this state when you have
9 certain obligation at your disposal to pursue, and
10 that would be her or my responsibility to pursue the
11 action to make a determination as to whether or not
12 the statute would apply to the Governor. I would have
13 taken that same action, absolutely.

14 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Would you have
15 accepted the appointment on December 13th for the
16 United States Senator from the Governor?

17 MR. BURRIS: That's hypothetical.

18 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: It's reasonable to
19 ask. Since he's incapacitated, is he no longer
20 incapacitated?

21 MR. BURRIS: Well, the Supreme Court
22 dismissed that action, so your question, sir, is not
23 relevant.

24 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: That wasn't your

1 lawsuit, it was Attorney General's Madigan's lawsuit
2 as I recall.

3 MR. BURRIS: Representative Durkin, the
4 Supreme Court did not pursue her actions.

5 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: So you don't have a
6 response whether you would have accepted the
7 appointment on December 13th of this last year,
8 correct?

9 MR. BURRIS: When the Supreme Court did not
10 hear her actions, when there was no special election,
11 my thought was at that time that should I get the
12 appointment, that Illinois should not be short a
13 senator, that I have the experience and knowledge of
14 this great state, and that I could be present to hit
15 the ground running to represent the state of Illinois
16 in the United States Senate, should I get the
17 appointment.

18 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: I understand that
19 incapacitation is a legal defense to virtually
20 everything. So again, let me ask, I'll ask you one
21 more time.

22 Would you have accepted that appointment on
23 December 13th when you stated that the Governor was
24 incapacitated to run this state?

1 MR. WRIGHT: Madam Chairman, I think we've
2 answered that a number of times.

3 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: It doesn't hurt to answer
4 it twice. We often do that in this committee.

5 MR. WRIGHT: Okay.

6 MR. BURRIS: I did not say that the Governor
7 was incapacitated. What I said was we must pursue
8 that legal remedy to make the determination, and the
9 Supreme Court acted on that, Representative Durkin,
10 and that's the end of that.

11 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: I'll go back and look
12 at the transcript from that date, but I feel fairly
13 confident about that.

14 Let me ask you just a few more questions and I'll
15 rap it up. Should the Governor resign?

16 MR. BURRIS: That is up to the Governor. I
17 have no authority over the Governor.

18 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: I'm asking you, do
19 you believe it's in the best interests of the state of
20 Illinois that the Governor resign his post as
21 Governor?

22 MR. BURRIS: I will repeat, Representative
23 Durkin, what I said. I have no authority over the
24 Governor. That is his decision and he said he would

1 not.

2 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Do you support the
3 impeachment efforts going on in this committee?

4 MR. BURRIS: I don't know what you all are --
5 what the evidence are, but I support my legislature
6 and you've got to take whatever action you feel that
7 your duties to the Illinois Constitution that you have
8 to do, and I support that effort that you're carrying
9 out your duties and your responsibilities.

10 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: Whatever answer we
11 take today or tomorrow you would support, correct?

12 MR. BURRIS: The answer is I wouldn't have
13 anything to do about what you all do. Do you think
14 I've got power over what you all do?

15 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: You know what we're
16 doing, the whole world knows what we're doing. This
17 is no secret, Mr. Burris.

18 I've just got two more questions. Mr. Burris,
19 would you support a special election for the seat,
20 take a temporary placement in the United States Senate
21 and let the people make a decision upon a balance of
22 the Senator-elect Obama's seat?

23 MR. BURRIS: That's up to you, Representative
24 Durkin. That's up to this august body, that's not up

1 to me.

2 REPRESENTATIVE DURKIN: I can see where this
3 is going, but I appreciate your patience, and good
4 luck, sir.

5 MR. BURRIS: Thank you very much,
6 Representative Durkin.

7 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Thank you.
8 Representative Flowers.

9 REPRESENTATIVE FLOWERS: Thank you, Madam
10 Chairman. Senator Burris, congratulations on being
11 appointed for the U.S. Senate seat. And I want to
12 also congratulate you on having the tenacity to
13 weather the storm in which you had to endure the other
14 day in the rain and in the cold and humiliation.

15 But I guess you knew that there was a rainbow
16 someplace out there, so you was willing to endure so
17 -- and it was a history lesson that was given to our
18 young people. And I had the opportunity to talk to my
19 daughter to let her know that when you believe in what
20 you're doing, irregardless of the sacrifice, that it
21 may not always be easy, but if you believe in what
22 you're doing, you just stay the course and it will be
23 a brighter side.

24 So once again I congratulate you, and it was

1 really -- you have an impeccable career, and I want to
2 congratulate you again on having that type of career.

3 And as a result of what's going on in this state,
4 the news headlines has been that the seat is tainted.
5 I want to say to you, sir, that as a result of your
6 answers here today, I don't see your seat being
7 tainted by you, but it's tainted by the allegations in
8 which this Governor has been accused of and he is
9 innocent until proven guilty, and these are
10 allegations in the complaint that we had.

11 And the Governor, there's a -- in the complaint
12 there's a headline that says "refused to appoint an
13 individual to the Senate seat without consideration of
14 something in return."

15 The Governor was overheard on the tapes as saying
16 that before he would give up this seat for nothing, he
17 would take it himself. And it was too important and
18 he was determined to get something legal, something
19 political, or either something personal.

20 Can you say before this committee, sir,
21 emphatically that none of those things were promised
22 from you to the governor or there was no exchange in
23 regards to anything legal, personal or political?

24 MR. BURRIS: Representative Flowers, I can

1 before this committee state that there was nothing
2 legal or --

3 REPRESENTATIVE FLOWERS: The three points
4 were legal.

5 MR. BURRIS: Legal.

6 REPRESENTATIVE FLOWERS: Personal.

7 MR. BURRIS: Personal.

8 REPRESENTATIVE FLOWERS: Political.

9 MR. BURRIS: Or political, exchanged for my
10 appointment to this seat.

11 REPRESENTATIVE FLOWERS: There was no
12 conversation, none to that effect, and I know you
13 answered this on numerous of occasions, no quid pro
14 quo, none of that?

15 MR. BURRIS: Absolutely, positively not.

16 REPRESENTATIVE FLOWERS: Well, thank you very
17 much, sir. And once again, congratulations, and I
18 look forward to you serving not only the state of
19 Illinois but the people across the country well.

20 MR. BURRIS: Thank you, Representative
21 Flowers.

22 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Representative Black.

23 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: Thank you very much,
24 Madam Chairperson.

1 Attorney General Burris, it's always good to see
2 you.

3 MR. BURRIS: Good to see you.

4 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: It's been more than
5 forty years. I recall when you were living in
6 Centralia.

7 MR. BURRIS: Yeah, that's right,
8 Representative Black.

9 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: In the Illinois Jaycee
10 days.

11 MR. BURRIS: Absolutely.

12 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: Where did that time
13 go, sir?

14 MR. BURRIS: We've all gotten older, sir.

15 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: Yes, indeed we have.
16 Let me just ask you a couple of questions and follow
17 up on one if I might.

18 Have you established a federal political action
19 committee that would take contributions for any
20 activities that you may be engaged in in your two
21 years in the Senate?

22 MR. BURRIS: Yes, I think we did that a
23 couple days ago, January 5th, that's correct.

24 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: And I would expect you

1 to do that.

2 MR. BURRIS: Yes.

3 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: That's what you have
4 to do when you're assuming public office at the
5 federal level.

6 MR. BURRIS: That's correct.

7 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: I want to ask you one
8 question. You say it was two days ago, correct?

9 MR. BURRIS: January 5th.

10 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: I'm not familiar with
11 the federal rules, it's hard enough to keep up with
12 all the state rules as, you know, you've been through
13 as we all do every six months.

14 Do you have to show on your federal political
15 action committee that you have an outstanding loan of
16 one million dollars from your state political action
17 committee?

18 MR. BURRIS: I think the laws are different
19 and that certainly is on the record here in Illinois.

20 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: Right.

21 MR. BURRIS: And that was a loan not to
22 Roland Burris.

23 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: To the committee.

24 MR. BURRIS: To the Burris for Governor

1 Committee, and that's been on the books since we lost
2 the primary in '02.

3 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: I understand that. My
4 campaign committee has never had to deal with the
5 amounts of money in that range.

6 MR. BURRIS: It still wasn't enough,
7 Representative Black. I needed about another two or
8 three million.

9 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: I understand. My
10 brother donated I think ten dollars to me and now he
11 calls it a loan.

12 But let me ask you, when did you resign your
13 lobbying activities with the state of Illinois? Has
14 that been recent?

15 MR. BURRIS: Very recent, that is correct,
16 upon receiving the appointment, sir.

17 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: Okay. I think earlier
18 if I heard you correct you said that you had met with
19 Mr. Lon Monk who was an employee of Governor
20 Blagojevich in 2008 regarding state business. Did you
21 misspeak? I'm asking, I don't know if Lon Monk -- I
22 don't think he was an employee of the Governor or the
23 state of Illinois in 2008.

24 MR. BURRIS: No, he had resigned as

1 Governor's chief of staff, but he was in the lobbying
2 business, and as lobbyists do, we touch base with each
3 other to see how we can assist each other and Lon --

4 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: Your conversation then
5 was as lobbyist/lobbyist?

6 MR. BURRIS: That's right.

7 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: Fine, I just wanted to
8 clarify that, thank you very much.

9 One other question, and obviously you've been in
10 this business a long time, Mr. Senator, and bear with
11 me. When we are appointed or elected or being vetted
12 or whatever the process may be, we're often asked many
13 things. When you met in Washington and/or with people
14 in Illinois, have you made any promise to a member of
15 the Illinois Democrat party or the Democrat National
16 Committee in Washington that you will be a candidate
17 in 2010 or that you will not be a candidate in 2010?

18 MR. BURRIS: Representative Black, that has
19 not come up in any conversation.

20 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: And the reason I bring
21 it up is there was a report alleged to have come from
22 a Washington journalist that did come up, and that Mr.
23 Reid allegedly was adamant that you not be a
24 candidate.

1 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Representative Fritchey.

2 REPRESENTATIVE FRITCHEY: With all deference
3 to Representative Black, we're clearly outside the
4 scope of anything that's germane to the investigation.

5 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: I'm beginning to think
6 that anything we ask Mr. Burris is outside the scope
7 of this examination, do you know it? With all due
8 respect, Mr. Fritchey, I didn't -- I had no input in
9 you releasing the report of this committee at 9 a.m.
10 this morning. I don't know why you did that. We
11 haven't taken any vote on the committee. We are here
12 determining if there's any link between Governor
13 Blagojevich and anyone who accepted an appointment
14 from Governor Blagojevich to an office of the United
15 States Senate.

16 And I would expect to answer any of the questions
17 that's been asked if I were sitting where Mr. Burris
18 is, and I wouldn't think any of it would be
19 irrelevant.

20 REPRESENTATIVE FRITCHEY: I understand,
21 Representative. You and I go far back on too many
22 issues. But let me tell you when we're discussing
23 whether or not there's been --

24 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: I've asked two

1 questions and I've gone too far back?

2 REPRESENTATIVE FRITCHEY: No, I say you and I
3 have.

4 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: Oh.

5 REPRESENTATIVE FRITCHEY: But it's been a
6 bigger portion of my lifetime than yours. But let me
7 just say obviously we all want to get to the facts.
8 But asking whether or not there's been a commitment as
9 to whether or not the gentleman is going to run in
10 2010 and whether any discussion was taking place
11 between himself and the Senate majority leader, if you
12 can explain how that would be a bearing on any
13 discussions between him and Mr. Blagojevich pertaining
14 to the Senate seat, then obviously you're entitled to
15 do that.

16 Obviously you're entitled to do whatever you
17 like, Mr. Black. But I'm simply saying I do not see
18 the relevance between any conversations he may have
19 had about a 2010 bid with Senator Reid has on how he
20 got appointed to the Senate seat by Governor
21 Blagojevich.

22 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: I accept your
23 critique. I would just remind you that most of us
24 downstate often see more clearly the relevance of

1 matters because we don't have the air pollution that
2 exists in Chicago.

3 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Mr. Black, we're ready
4 for your next question.

5 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: Thank you very much,
6 Madam Chairman.

7 It has been widely reported, Senator Burriss, that
8 Mrs. Blagojevich has a position with a nice salary, I
9 don't know what nice salary is, with the Christian
10 Industrial League, and certainly members of the press
11 have inferred that your business partner, Mr. -- is it
12 Levin?

13 MR. BURRIS: Lebed.

14 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: Lebed, may have had
15 discussions with either Mrs. Blagojevich or Governor
16 Blagojevich regarding her employment by -- is it the
17 Christian Industrial League? I'm not -- I can't
18 remember what that name of the agency is.

19 MR. BURRIS: Yeah, I think it's the Chicago
20 Christian Industrial League.

21 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: Chicago Christian
22 Industrial League?

23 MR. BURRIS: I think that's it.

24 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: Do you know whether or

1 not your business partner had any discussions with the
2 Governor or Mrs. Blagojevich regarding this position?

3 MR. BURRIS: That is not in my purview, I do
4 not.

5 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: So he wouldn't have
6 checked with you?

7 MR. BURRIS: Checked with me? No.

8 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: Or said hey, I've got
9 this really neat job, do you think we should recommend
10 somebody?

11 MR. BURRIS: No, he did not check with me at
12 all on that.

13 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: Okay.

14 MR. BURRIS: I knew nothing about that.

15 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: All right. Mr.
16 Burris, I thank you very much. As always, it's always
17 good seeing you. You and I used to talk about more
18 than four decades ago young men can change the world,
19 remember that?

20 MR. BURRIS: Absolutely.

21 REPRESENTATIVE BLACK: And now that we're
22 much older, sir, I don't know if we've changed it, but
23 I think a few of us have tried.

24 MR. BURRIS: I certainly tried in my days as

1 a public official of Illinois to make an impact on my
2 citizens of this state. Thank you, Representative
3 Black.

4 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Thank you.
5 Representative Eddy.

6 REPRESENTATIVE EDDY: Thank you, Madam Chair.
7 Mr. Burris, I read your affidavit, and as I read
8 it a couple of things jumped out at me and I want to
9 clear those up with you if I could.

10 It states in the affidavit that on Friday,
11 December 28th, you said it was probably about 4:00,
12 that you received a call from Mr. Adams, Sam Adams,
13 Jr. When I read that it struck me as a little curious
14 as to why the Governor's criminal defense attorney was
15 doing business --

16 MR. GENSON: I don't mean to interrupt, but
17 it's been stated he's not his criminal defense
18 attorney. That's all I want to say. Mr. Adams, Jr.,
19 does not, has not, and will not represent Governor
20 Blagojevich in the criminal case. And it's been said
21 publicly and I just wanted to make it clear that just
22 because --

23 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: We'll clarify the record
24 of this committee. Thank you.

1 REPRESENTATIVE EDDY: Thank you, sir.

2 Let me ask you this, Mr. Burris. When Mr. Adams
3 called you, what capacity did you believe Mr. Adams
4 was acting within? Did you believe he was the
5 Governor's criminal defense attorney?

6 MR. BURRIS: I know Mr. Adams, he's a good
7 friend of my son.

8 REPRESENTATIVE EDDY: Okay.

9 MR. BURRIS: I helped raise Mr. Adams to some
10 extent. Mr. Adams contacted me and indicated -- and I
11 had to verify that he was coming from the Governor,
12 that he was delivering a message from the Governor,
13 and I treated it as being a counsel to the Governor,
14 that's how I treated it. I didn't know whether or not
15 he was criminal defense or what defense, as a counsel
16 to the Governor.

17 REPRESENTATIVE EDDY: Okay. So it didn't
18 seem in any way odd to you that it wasn't someone who
19 was -- had some authority that was acting through the
20 Governor's office to contact you about a power that's
21 designated to the office of the Governor?

22 MR. BURRIS: Well, after he came and visited
23 with me, I verified the fact that he had the authority
24 to discuss this with me. That's all I needed to do.

1 REPRESENTATIVE EDDY: You verified it with --

2 MR. BURRIS: With him.

3 REPRESENTATIVE EDDY: He called you up and he
4 said he had the authority to act that way and your
5 knowledge of him and his background led you to believe
6 that he was acting on behalf of the Governor?

7 MR. BURRIS: Let me try to clear it up for
8 you. He contacted me and asked if he could come meet
9 with me, he had something important to discuss. And
10 he came and we began to discuss this. And he then
11 related to me that he had the authority to determine
12 from me whether or not I would be interested in the
13 appointment should the Governor appoint me and that
14 would -- you know, I said okay, are you sure about
15 this, you know, saying okay, the Governor's sending
16 you? And he said well, yes, I have the authority, and
17 that's the extent of it. That's how we got the
18 verification.

19 REPRESENTATIVE EDDY: So you basically -- his
20 explanation to you was enough that hey, he must be?

21 MR. BURRIS: I don't think he would come on a
22 lark.

23 REPRESENTATIVE EDDY: Okay. Now, my serving
24 on this committee, I've seen Mr. Adams sit at the

1 table of the defense counsel of the Governor. So my
2 concern, I'm going to ask the question and I'm going
3 to ask it because I think it needs to be asked.

4 Did Mr. Adams discuss with you any of the
5 elements of the Governor's criminal case during the
6 time you met with him regarding the Senate
7 appointment?

8 MR. BURRIS: The answer is no.

9 REPRESENTATIVE EDDY: Okay, so there is
10 nothing related to the criminal case that is related
11 to the Senate appointment at all based on those
12 conversations?

13 MR. BURRIS: Absolutely not, Representative
14 Eddy.

15 REPRESENTATIVE EDDY: Okay, thank you.

16 MR. BURRIS: You're welcome.

17 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Representative Davis.

18 REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Thank you, Madam
19 Chairman.

20 First of all, Senator Burris, I don't know if
21 anyone welcomed you back to Springfield, but I think
22 you left here after being the Comptroller very
23 successfully, and then you left being the Attorney
24 General without an ounce or smear of any taint, and we

1 appreciate that kind of service to the state of
2 Illinois.

3 MR. BURRIS: Thank you.

4 REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Since you have been
5 asked to serve by this sitting Governor, the
6 Department of Homeland Security has removed his
7 ability to get any access to Homeland Security
8 information. I'm sure you will be seated as a Senator
9 from Illinois.

10 Will you in any way attempt to remove this, what
11 shall we say, this ruling by the Homeland Security
12 department not to provide this Governor with the
13 ability to partake in our security in the state of
14 Illinois?

15 MR. BURRIS: Representative Davis, I have
16 heard this on the news, and when I'm a Senator I don't
17 know what authority I would have, but if it becomes an
18 interest of the citizens of Illinois and the
19 protection of them, I think that we should be
20 protected.

21 I don't know all the ramifications of that, but
22 that is certainly something that if it would come to
23 my attention at that level I would probably confer
24 with our senior Senator Dick Durbin to really, you

1 know, check to see just what authority I would have.
2 But I would act on that immediately because not be
3 able to answer that with intelligence.

4 REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: I think the fear that
5 some people might have is that you are being appointed
6 by a Governor who perhaps won't be around in his
7 capacity much longer. Would you in any way attempt to
8 let's say delay his loss of power or help him in any
9 way to be viable in relationships to citizens in our
10 state or in our government in your activity? I mean
11 would you in any way find yourself involved in any
12 behavior of his because he has appointed you as
13 Senator?

14 MR. BURRIS: The answer is no. And if it
15 involves a protection of the 13 million people of this
16 state, that would be my concern. The Governor will
17 have to deal with his problems that he has, and that's
18 certainly something that you all are going to deal
19 with this committee.

20 But I would in no way be trying to interfere with
21 any of the legitimate information that has been
22 brought about against the Governor. That is not my --
23 that is not my purview.

24 REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Well, based upon my

1 knowledge of your past behavior, and usually that's
2 all we can go on is one's past behavior as a
3 prediction of the future, I think you served Illinois
4 in a very honorable fashion.

5 MR. BURRIS: Thank you, Representative Davis.

6 REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: We thank you for
7 coming before us, sir.

8 MR. BURRIS: Thank you.

9 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Thank you.
10 Representative Rose.

11 REPRESENTATIVE ROSE: Thank you. General
12 Burris, Senator-designee Burris.

13 MR. BURRIS: Good afternoon.

14 REPRESENTATIVE ROSE: I want to ask you a
15 couple quick questions. One, I understand what Mr.
16 Genson just said. I'm not saying I agree with it, I
17 understand that he said that.

18 You're a smart guy, you're the former Attorney
19 General of the state of Illinois. I'm sure you watch
20 the papers. Sam Adam, Jr. who in the papers at least
21 has been reported to be part of the legal defense team
22 of the Governor comes to your home on a Friday
23 evening, early afternoon, whatever it was, December
24 26th. Don't you say in the back of your mind why is

1 the defense attorney coming to my home, don't you ask
2 that question?

3 MR. BURRIS: The answer to that question is
4 it was then considered why, because he wouldn't talk
5 to me over the telephone. He said that he had to talk
6 to me about something and I need to talk two you in
7 person. And so I eventually said okay, what's it
8 about.

9 REPRESENTATIVE ROSE: That's a crafty answer
10 but it's not an answer.

11 MR. BURRIS: Well, I -- I'm sorry if you
12 don't think I'm answering your question. I'm speaking
13 truthfully.

14 REPRESENTATIVE ROSE: I understand what Mr.
15 Genson said, but many of us saw a press conference
16 where Mr. Adam, Jr. stood with Mr. Genson and Shelly
17 Serosky and claimed how proud he was to be part of the
18 team.

19 MR. GENSON: I was never at any press
20 conference.

21 REPRESENTATIVE ROSE: Well Mr. Serosky, I saw
22 Mr. Adam have that press conference. So the bottom
23 line is wouldn't you somewhere in the back of your
24 mind, Mr. Burris, wonder why it is that he's coming to

1 talk to you?

2 MR. BURRIS: In the back of my mind the
3 answer would be I was certainly curious as to what he
4 had to talk to me about. Because when he called he
5 would not talk to me over the phone. And so he came
6 to me and, you know, I said yes, please come on over,
7 I'm getting ready to go out to a black tie event, but
8 come on over. And he came and we had a conversation.
9 That's --

10 REPRESENTATIVE ROSE: But you knew who Mr.
11 Adam, Jr. was before --

12 MR. WRIGHT: Excuse me.

13 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Excuse me, Representative
14 Rose. Representative Lang.

15 REPRESENTATIVE LANG: Madam Chairman, I just
16 feel it necessary to point out to Representative Rose
17 that Mr. Burris indicated that he's known Mr. Adam for
18 many years. Mr. Adam could be coming to visit him on
19 any number of issues.

20 REPRESENTATIVE ROSE: You interrupted me
21 before I got to say it, but he certainly knew that Mr.
22 Adam was part of the governor's legal team in that in
23 stance.

24 REPRESENTATIVE LANG: But he knows Mr. Adam

1 for years, he said he helped raise him I think were
2 the words he used, so he could be coming to talk about
3 a family matter or any other matters.

4 REPRESENTATIVE ROSE: Mr. Lang, I find it
5 interesting that we can ask about Homeland Security
6 questions of the U.S. Senate designee, but we can't
7 ask questions about the actual appointment itself.

8 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Representative Rose, I
9 think he pretty much answered your question, so if you
10 want to follow up.

11 REPRESENTATIVE ROSE: Okay, I have another
12 question I want to pose here to our former Attorney
13 General. You have said, you previously said if I
14 understood you correct, and maybe I missed this, but
15 you previously said you thought the Governor lacked
16 the legal capacity to make the argument or to make the
17 appointment.

18 MR. BURRIS: No, that's --

19 REPRESENTATIVE ROSE: And you agreed with the
20 Attorney General's litigation?

21 MR. BURRIS: No, that's not what I said. I
22 said I would have brought the same action that would
23 cause us to allege that that would be the problem and
24 that would -- as Attorney General is an obligation

1 upon us to carry out what we think of the use of the
2 laws. And I really support Representative Madigan for
3 what she did in that capacity.

4 But the Supreme Court will determine whether or
5 not there is capacity to do that and they did not hear
6 her petition. So therefore, that issue in that
7 capacity is off the table.

8 REPRESENTATIVE ROSE: And do you still
9 believe the Governor doesn't have the legal capacity
10 to make that decision?

11 MR. BURRIS: If I were the Attorney General
12 -- I will repeat myself. If I were the Attorney
13 General --

14 REPRESENTATIVE ROSE: I'm asking about you,
15 if you still believe it.

16 MR. BURRIS: Representative Rose.

17 REPRESENTATIVE ROSE: Mr. Burris.

18 MR. BURRIS: If I were the Attorney General,
19 I would have brought that action, because I would have
20 felt constitutionally and for the people of the state
21 of Illinois we must pursue that particular legal
22 responsibility that would be placed on us to take that
23 action. And that would be up to the courts to make
24 the determination.

1 We cannot determine guilt or innocence when we
2 bring an action. We bring an action into our courts
3 so that then the proper authority can then make the
4 determination. It wouldn't do any good for me to have
5 any type of personal feelings about a legal situation.
6 We don't do that as lawyers and prosecutors. We must
7 follow the law.

8 REPRESENTATIVE ROSE: I think the question
9 was pretty specific, but I understand I'm not going to
10 get an answer. Thank you.

11 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Representative Tracy.

12 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: Thank you, Madam
13 Chairman and General Burris.

14 A few items that I wanted to clear up in my mind
15 in regards to the earlier questioning. You said that
16 you had visited friends perhaps in September of '08 or
17 July of '08 concerning a desire to perhaps be
18 appointed as a senator if our President-elect was
19 elected. And could you give me the names of those
20 friends?

21 MR. BURRIS: I don't think I said in July, I
22 said they were friends that I contacted after the
23 election, but I was talking to people, I mean I don't
24 know who you want as my friends that I consider as

1 persons. For example, when I handled a press
2 conference to express my interest in the seat, was the
3 press conference -- I did hold a press conference and
4 some of my friends were there, for instance.

5 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: I'm sorry, I didn't
6 get that. You held a press conference to talk about
7 your desire --

8 MR. BURRIS: To express an interest in the
9 seat of being appointed.

10 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: And when was that?

11 MR. BURRIS: I don't recall the day. One of
12 those persons was the former justice of the Illinois
13 Appellate Court Justice Cousins. And then some other
14 friends that supported me to seek to be appointed to
15 the seat.

16 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: But I still don't
17 understand. I'm asking when that press conference was
18 held.

19 MR. BURRIS: That was the time I made the
20 statement about Representative Madigan having taken
21 the correct action. It was during the time when the
22 action had been filed by -- I'm sorry, filed by
23 Attorney General Madigan, so it was at that same
24 conference.

1 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: So this is in December
2 of '08 when you held a press conference to express
3 your desire?

4 MR. BURRIS: That is correct.

5 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: To be appointed to the
6 Senate?

7 MR. BURRIS: That is correct. That is a
8 result of my friends saying, you know, you qualify,
9 and so they actually set the press conference up and
10 had me to appear, because they were going to just
11 state that Roland Burris should be appointed to this
12 seat.

13 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: But I think I earlier
14 heard you today testify that in September, '08, or
15 perhaps as early as July, '08, you had visited with
16 some friends about your desire to perhaps seek the
17 seat.

18 MR. BURRIS: No, I think I testified that
19 that's when I began to express an interest in it. As
20 I saw that --

21 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: And I just was
22 wondering who those friends were.

23 MR. BURRIS: One of them was my law partner.

24 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Is that when you talked

1 about your interest with Lon Monk? I think that --

2 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: Was it Lon Monk, was
3 that the extent of it was Lon Monk?

4 MR. BURRIS: That came up in our conversation
5 when we were talking about, you know, if he had some
6 excess clients in the lobbying business, you know, as
7 we try to see whether or not he had conflicts
8 somewhere with some type of a client because of his
9 previous relationship with government. That's what we
10 were talking about then.

11 And it just came up, and in fact I said, "Now
12 Lon, I don't know what's going to happen, but I think
13 that I'm qualified to be appointed to the Senate
14 seat." And Lon said, "Well, Roland, I think you are,
15 too." And that was the extent of it.

16 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: So you don't recall
17 that there was anybody else besides Lon Monk that you
18 expressed that interest to at that point?

19 MR. BURRIS: No, I can't recall. Because
20 people were coming to me saying Roland, you should
21 pursue that appointment, you're qualified, and this
22 was --

23 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: Is there anybody that
24 comes to mind in that light that you can --

1 MR. BURRIS: Yes, Rich Barber from Summerset,
2 New Jersey, the gentleman I introduced at my press
3 conference in Washington the other day, he contacted
4 me from Summerset, New Jersey, and said "Roland,
5 there's no one better qualified for you to be United
6 States Senator from the great state of Illinois. And
7 therefore, I'm going to start contacting --" you know,
8 I was just wait a minute, you know, Obama hasn't --
9 well, that happened after, maybe after November 4th.

10 See you're asking me a question that has so many
11 moving parts to it that I might not be -- and my
12 counsel reminded me that the class of 1955 from
13 Centralia, Illinois, also were contacting me. And of
14 course a lot of them, that got started after
15 President-elect Obama had been -- had won the
16 election.

17 And so I'm -- and I can start giving you names if
18 you need names of people who you can follow up after
19 that, after November 4th I can certainly give you a
20 few names, but I can't give you the thousands of
21 people who were involved in this.

22 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: Going to a different
23 area of your testimony, the 1.2 million dollar
24 campaign donation or campaign loan, I was just curious

1 and wanted to finish in my mind what type of business
2 Mr. Stroud was in.

3 MR. BURRIS: Owns TV stations.

4 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: Do you know where?

5 MR. BURRIS: Channel WYCS, channel 62 and 34
6 I think.

7 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: Does he have any
8 contracts with the state of Illinois?

9 MR. BURRIS: I have no idea what contracts he
10 has.

11 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: Do you have regular
12 contact with him at all or --

13 MR. BURRIS: I see him socially.

14 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: So you have -- do you
15 remember when the last time you might have discussed
16 this campaign donation or understood it's just not
17 going to be repaid?

18 MR. BURRIS: It has never come up since I
19 lost my primary in '02.

20 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: Now, going to your
21 present appointment, do you recognize that given the
22 circumstances of last month, that your appointment is
23 not under ideal circumstances?

24 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: I think that's an

1 editorial comment. I don't know that you need to
2 respond.

3 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: Well, certainly what
4 I'm trying to establish is, you know, on a personal
5 level, I believe that certainly you have the exemplary
6 qualifications. However, what we have to consider is
7 the people of the state of Illinois. And what I'm
8 asking is do you recognize that continuing as a U.S.
9 Senator under an appointment under less than ideal
10 circumstances, which I think you would agree your
11 appointment was not under ideal circumstances or the
12 way you would have liked to have been appointed.

13 MR. WRIGHT: Excuse me, state rep, are you
14 asking whether -- you say ideal, do you mean whether
15 or not the appointment was legal?

16 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: What I'm getting at is
17 that we recognize that this appointment was made kind
18 of at the 11th hour, it was not -- what I'm -- my
19 point I suppose and what I'm asking is do you
20 recognize that there's going to be a cloud as long as
21 whatever investigations follow from hence forth
22 regarding Governor Blagojevich, that that cloud cannot
23 escape some of our junior senators?

24 MR. WRIGHT: I'm sorry, Madam Chairman, that

1 sounds like a speech or an opinion. I don't know if
2 it's a question that we can respond to.

3 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: Well, my question was
4 do you recognize that your appointment was less than
5 ideal circumstances?

6 MR. BURRIS: No.

7 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: Do you think it was a
8 perfect case scenario?

9 MR. BURRIS: No, the appointment was legal,
10 there's no cloud, there's nothing -- the appointment
11 was according to law.

12 REPRESENTATIVE TRACY: Thank you.

13 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Representative Bellock.

14 REPRESENTATIVE BELLOCK: Thank you very much,
15 Madam Chairman. And thank you very much, Mr. Burris,
16 for coming to Springfield.

17 I just wanted to ask somewhat similar to that, is
18 that did you believe the statement that was made on
19 behalf of the Governor and by Mr. Genson about two
20 weeks earlier in mid December that when they assured
21 the people of Illinois and the General Assembly that
22 they would not go forward with making an appointment?

23 MR. GENSON: I don't assure the people of the
24 state of Illinois, I don't want that representation to

1 be made. I made the statement to a reporter. I did
2 not have anything to do with this appointment. And
3 obviously I was disagreed with.

4 But I don't want to tell anyone that I
5 represented anything to the state of Illinois or in
6 front of this committee because a reporter took a
7 quote.

8 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Representative Bellock.

9 REPRESENTATIVE BELLOCK: Thank you very much.
10 Just the question stands. The majority of people in
11 Illinois felt that that statement assured people that
12 he was not going forward with an appointment. I
13 wondered if you had felt that way also.

14 MR. BURRIS: I had no knowledge of the
15 statement, Representative Bellock.

16 REPRESENTATIVE BELLOCK: Okay. Because in
17 this testimony today to hear that Mr. Adams then after
18 the other statement had been made two weeks earlier,
19 that for Mr. Adams to come back to request that you
20 have that appointment seems highly irregular. No
21 matter who Mr. Adams was working for, the Governor or
22 Mr. Genson, that the statement was made assuring the
23 people of Illinois that the appointment was not going
24 to be made, and that no matter who that statement was

1 made to, it was on behalf of Mr. Genson making the
2 statement, correct?

3 MR. BURRIS: Again, I can't respond to that.

4 REPRESENTATIVE BULLOCK: I'm just saying in
5 the testimony today as we hear it, it seems highly
6 irregular to find out the statement was made by Mr.
7 Genson and two weeks later Mr. Adams comes forward and
8 asks you for that, if you're interested in the
9 appointment.

10 MR. BURRIS: I have no knowledge of that.

11 REPRESENTATIVE BELLOCK: Thank you.

12 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Representative Bassi.

13 REPRESENTATIVE BASSI: It's been asked.

14 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Representative Hamos.

15 REPRESENTATIVE HAMOS: Thank you. Good
16 afternoon, Mr. Burris.

17 MR. BURRIS: Good afternoon.

18 REPRESENTATIVE HAMOS: Just to refresh your
19 memory, I came to meet you and to introduce myself and
20 to get your insights about the Attorney General's
21 office.

22 MR. BURRIS: That is correct.

23 REPRESENTATIVE HAMOS: And that was October
24 8th, three months ago, and you told me that one of

1 your dreams was to become the United States Senator.
2 So congratulations, I think you're really close to
3 becoming the United States Senator.

4 MR. BURRIS: Thank you.

5 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Representative Turner.

6 REPRESENTATIVE TURNER: Thank you, Madam
7 Chairman and members of the committee.

8 To Senate-elect, Senate-appointee, Mr. Burris, I
9 want to welcome you here today. I just wanted to send
10 a message to the people I guess out in radio land and
11 in TV land in terms of trying to clarify just a little
12 bit what's happening here today.

13 In particular for some of my friends on Roosevelt
14 Road and 16th Street who have no idea as to where
15 we're headed or just what we're doing here and so
16 often -- I'm not an attorney, so in terms of some of
17 the information that's being expressed here, and I've
18 enjoyed listening to Mr. Genson, listening to our
19 committee members, those who are attorneys, and this
20 is a rather confusing process, one that we all admit
21 we're not honored to be sitting here trying to
22 address. And I know your appearance here today is a
23 little outside our original goal, which is to deal
24 with the impeachment process.

1 And oftentimes in the day sometimes when I'm at
2 home I get a chance to visit with my sister, and she
3 still looks at a lot of old Perry Mason reruns. And
4 if you don't mind I'd like to ask you a couple
5 questions, because I think that Perry had a way of
6 doing things where when you left you sort of
7 understood what the final verdict was.

8 And I also should share that as we make laws,
9 that oftentimes when you go to court, and I know that
10 there's a lot of court TV on these days, and I know
11 that some of those same people on Roosevelt Road watch
12 those programs, that at the end of the program there's
13 always someone that comes out and says they were
14 either dealt a bad hand or things didn't work the way
15 they worked.

16 And so I said that to say that sometimes the way
17 the laws are implemented, people are not always happy.
18 There's someone who is going to be opposed to any
19 decision that is made.

20 And so in your role as the former Attorney
21 General, and could you just briefly tell me as the
22 Attorney General, what is that -- what was your role,
23 what does the Attorney General do? And the point I'm
24 getting at is I believe you're the lawyer, and in that

1 role you were the lawyer for the state.

2 And in that role I would like to ask you
3 regarding filling Senate seats, what does the Illinois
4 Constitution say are the steps to fulfilling a vacancy
5 in the U.S. Senate?

6 MR. BURRIS: Thank you, Representative
7 Turner. The Attorney General is the chief legal
8 officer for the state of Illinois, and he has to
9 represent all the people of our state in any legal
10 matters. He is the only lawyer that can go into a
11 courtroom and argue on behalf of the people of the
12 state of Illinois. He has trial authority,
13 prosecutorial authority, and appellate authority to
14 carry out the laws that this body passes to protect
15 the citizens of the state of Illinois.

16 REPRESENTATIVE TURNER: Now I know it's been
17 a while since you served in that role as the Attorney
18 General, and I'm not going to ask you to recite the
19 exact statute, but can you tell me briefly, if you can
20 recall, how do we fill a U.S. Senate vacancy --
21 actually I'll start, let me back up.

22 How do we fill congressional vacancies in the
23 state of Illinois? What is the process as you recall?

24 MR. BURRIS: The process is this.

1 REPRESENTATIVE TURNER: For congressional.

2 MR. BURRIS: For the congressional seat there
3 must be a special election that will be called by the
4 Governor, and he has a time line as outlined in the
5 Illinois statute as to when he can -- upon the
6 resignation of a congressperson, then he must within a
7 certain period of time call for a special election.
8 That is for the congresspersons, and that must be
9 under our laws a primary election and a general
10 election.

11 Now as far the other appointments for the United
12 States Senate seat, under the Constitution of the
13 United States, Article 17, it says that the Governor
14 shall fill a vacancy upon the resignation of the
15 United States Senator, and that the -- I think it says
16 executive, that the executive, and that the executive,
17 the state legislature can then also make other
18 implementing or changing statutes to implement the
19 filling of that particular vacancy.

20 And under our laws currently following the 17th
21 Amendment the Governor has the sole authority with no
22 equivocation, with no taint, with no cloud, to make an
23 appointment.

24 REPRESENTATIVE TURNER: And may I ask as we

1 speak or this appointment that was given to you or
2 that was given to you, what's the date of that
3 appointment again, how long ago was that?

4 MR. BURRIS: I was appointed by the Governor
5 on December 30th, 2008.

6 REPRESENTATIVE TURNER: And you say by the
7 Governor. And who was the Governor December 30th,
8 2008?

9 MR. BURRIS: All powers and authority rest in
10 the chief executive of our state, by the name of --
11 actually it was the 31st, I'm sorry.

12 REPRESENTATIVE TURNER: 31st of December.

13 MR. BURRIS: The 31st of December, and that
14 is in the name of Rod Blagojevich.

15 REPRESENTATIVE TURNER: I rest my case.

16 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Representative Rose with
17 a follow-up question.

18 REPRESENTATIVE ROSE: It's not a question as
19 much as a statement. Mr. Genson was correct, he was
20 not at the press conference. But there's a -- as of
21 December 20th, a New York Times article where Mr.
22 Adams, Jr. appeared with Serosky after the Governor's
23 press conference to address many of the legal concerns
24 related to the criminal complaints.

1 And while this -- I asked my question of Mr.
2 Burris, but I hope at some point in time we're going
3 to be able to ask some questions as to what the status
4 of Mr. Adam is.

5 MR. GENSON: Well, I'll give you the status,
6 but don't count on Mr. Adam answering it.

7 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: All right, thank you very
8 much. The committee is going to take a five minute
9 break, and we appreciate the appearance of Mr. Burris,
10 and we appreciate all of your questions. We're going
11 to take a five minute break. We're going to come
12 back, there is one additional item to enter into the
13 record, and that is a letter from Brenda Gold who was
14 fired inappropriately from the Illinois Department of
15 Transportation.

16 MR. WRIGHT: Madam Chairman, does that mean
17 we're excused?

18 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: I'm sorry, you're gone,
19 you're out of here.

20 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you very much.

21 CHAIRWOMAN CURRIE: Back to Washington.

22 MR. BURRIS: Thank you, Madam Chairman,
23 Members of the House. God please you all. Happy new
24 year.