

His shifting story

by Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Illinois Sen. Roland Burris' attempts to dodge, obfuscate and shift attention away from how he got his job essentially amount to an admission that there's something to hide, that he did something wrong. It's also difficult to see how he can serve effectively, given the controversy and suspicions that still swirl around him.

Burris should resign the post now. And Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn should then hold a special election to replace him. Although we still disagree with Wisconsin Sen. Russ Feingold's proposal for a constitutional amendment requiring a special election in such cases, Quinn would be foolish to appoint someone to the position.

Quinn's predecessor, Rod Blagojevich, was arrested in December on charges that he plotted to sell President Barack Obama's vacant U.S. Senate seat for campaign cash or a job for himself. Before Blagojevich was impeached and removed from office, he defied lawmakers by appointing Burris to the Senate.

The Democrat is accused of lying to an Illinois House committee in January when he testified that he hadn't had contact with key Blagojevich staffers or offered anything in return for the seat. Burris has since released an affidavit saying he had spoken to several Blagojevich advisers, including the former governor's brother and finance chairman, who Burris said called three times last fall asking for fundraising help. This week, Burris admitted trying to raise money for Blagojevich.

The whole sorry saga simply adds to the legend of corrupt Illinois politics. Our neighbors to the south deserve better.

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