

Ex-gov. went after Obama's chief of staff

by UPI

CHICAGO -- Former Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich focused an attempted extortion scheme on White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel, a federal indictment indicates.

A 75-page indictment returned against Blagojevich and five others says Blagojevich wanted a Hollywood fundraiser held in exchange for a grant to benefit a public school in "Congressman A's" district, The Chicago Tribune reported Friday.

A White House aide confirmed to the Tribune that Emanuel, a former U.S. representative from Illinois, is the "Congressman A" the indictment refers to.

Emanuel's brother, Ari, is a high-powered Hollywood agent who is active in political fundraising and the inspiration for Jeremy Piven's character in HBO's "Entourage."

The Blagojevich indictment says when Rahm Emanuel called to check on the status of a \$2 million grant for Chicago Academy, Blagojevich had instructed his chief of staff not to release the money, the Chicago Sun-Times reports.

Blagojevich is alleged to have told a high-ranking state official that Emanuel's brother needed to host a fundraiser for him, the Tribune says.

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