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Final Edition

**Burris on wiretaps?; Senator changed testimony to state House committee after contact with federal agents**

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After contact with federal agents, U.S. Sen. Roland Burris changed his sworn testimony to the Illinois House committee that moved to impeach Gov. Rod Blagojevich, the Chicago Sun-Times has learned.

Burris acknowledged Sunday that federal investigators have contacted his lawyers. But he denied that was the reason he sent the House panel new testimony Feb. 5 disclosing for the first time fund-raising discussions with Blagojevich's brother, Robert, who chaired the ex-governor's campaign fund.

Burris' voice "might have been" on the tapes, said his lawyer Timothy Wright.

Burris said any such conversations would prove his innocence.

Burris' comments came in the wake of a Sun-Times report disclosing new testimony he filed with the House impeachment panel.

Burris initially told the committee that he had no contact with anyone in the governor's office before the governor appointed him in late December to replace President Obama in the U.S. Senate.

Later, he told the committee that he had been contacted by the governor's friend Lon Monk.

But on Friday, he told the Sun-Times he actually had contact with five people in Rod Blagojevich's camp and was asked to contribute to his campaign.

"I've always conducted myself with honor," Burris said at a news conference Sunday.

But his recent actions have unleashed a political maelstrom that has raised questions about Burris' truthfulness and prompted calls from Illinois House GOP leaders for a perjury investigation. At least one wants him to resign.

**‘He should resign’**

State Rep. Jim Durkin (R-Western Springs), whom Burris called out for not having a direct line of questioning during the impeachment panel hearings, said Burris' claims are "nonsense."

"He should resign," Durkin said. "This is just causing more embarrassment for the state."

The panel was investigating Rod Blagojevich, who was charged Dec. 9 with fraud and bribery and unanimously voted out of office Jan. 29.

"I responded to all questions that were asked of me by the impeachment committee in the time allotted. At no time did I ever make any inconsistent statements," said Burris, blaming the impeachment panel for not asking him the right questions and the media for misconstruing the facts.

While under oath Jan. 8, Burris failed to disclose multiple contacts with the former governor's inner circle or being approached by Robert Blagojevich for campaign cash, things Burris admitted to Sunday.

"Clearly it would have been better if Senator Burris had provided this information when he first testified. Senator Reid is reviewing the affidavit and will await any action by Illinois legislative leaders,'' said Jim Manley, spokesman for U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.).

Burris said he didn't 'fess up to those contacts because he was too busy "answering other questions" about his involvement with the former governor, who was ousted for, among other things, reportedly trying to auction off the seat Burris now holds. Burris also failed to reveal to the impeachment panel that Robert Blagojevich solicited him for a $10,000 campaign contribution.

Burris said he wasn't afraid of the possibility he was caught on FBI wiretaps discussing the Senate seat with the ex-governor's brother because any such conversation would show Burris turned him down.

"I made it very clear to him that I would not contribute, that it would be inappropriate and a major conflict because I expressed interest in the Senate seat," said Burris, who repeatedly shrugged Sunday when asked for a response, and stepped aside for his lawyer to answer questions for him.

In the latest account from Burris, submitted in a Feb. 5 letter to the committee's chairwoman, House Majority Leader Barbara Flynn Currie (D-Chicago), Burris said he had three conversations with Robert Blagojevich, including a discussion by the governor's brother and campaign fund chairman to raise money for the ex-governor.