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Final Edition

**Top Senate Dems meet on Burris; Reid, Durbin huddle with ethics panel**

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SPRINGFIELD-The U.S. Senate's top two Democrats met Wednesday with their chamber's ethics committee about an ongoing probe of Sen. Roland Burris and the circumstances surrounding his appointment.

Sen. Dick Durbin confirmed his appearance before the panel and added he met last Wednesday with Sangamon County State's Attorney John Schmidt, who is conducting a separate investigation into whether Burris perjured himself before the House panel that drafted the impeachment article against former Gov. Rod Blagojevich.



"In both instances, I shared my recollection of events leading up to and following Sen. Burris' appointment to the Senate," Durbin said in a statement. "Sen. Burris deserves a fair and impartial investigation; the people of Illinois deserve to know the truth. And everyone deserves that this matter be brought to a timely conclusion."

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) also met with the Senate Select Committee on Ethics regarding Burris, but Reid spokesman Jim Manley declined comment.

Burris, whom Blagojevich appointed Dec. 29, has faced accusations that he misled the House panel and the U.S. Senate by not initially divulging the full extent of conversations with Blagojevich's inner circle about getting appointed and about fund-raising inquiries from the Blagojevich camp before the appointment.

Timothy Wright III, a lawyer for Burris, did not respond to a message left Wednesday at his Chicago office.