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DeLeo shown sponsoring widow of mob boss; Senator says list is incorrect

By Dave McKinney

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Illinois state Sen. James DeLeo (D-Chicago) -- who has made public statements questioning the existence of the Chicago mob -- was credited by former Gov. [Rod Blagojevich's](http://www.nexis.com/search/XMLCrossLinkSearch.do?bct=A&risb=21_T21276285735&returnToId=20_T21276285749&csi=11064&A=0.1896559649470283&sourceCSI=162599&indexTerm=%23PE0009ULK%23&searchTerm=Rod%20Blagojevich's%20&indexType=P) office with trying to help the widow of one of Chicago's most infamous slain mobsters.

The Northwest Side lawmaker is listed in a secret hiring database the then-governor's aides kept as the political sponsor for Anne Spilotro, the widow of murdered mob boss Michael Spilotro.

She's among 146 "recommended" job candidates linked to DeLeo by Blagojevich's office, though it isn't clear for what job.

Thirty-nine of them wound up being hired or promoted, according to the records, obtained by the Chicago Sun-Times, making DeLeo one of the top go-to guys at the Statehouse for jobs inside the Blagojevich administration.

'I'D REMEMBER THAT NAME'

"There's names on there I've never recognized," DeLeo said when shown copies of the job lists bearing his name. "I don't even know where they came from, who hired them. I have no idea who most of those people are.

"It makes me angry people's names are on a list with my name coded in there [and] that I don't even recognize any these names."

DeLeo said he knew Anne Spilotro but had no idea why she was on his jobs list.

"Would I remember that name? Would I remember that name?" DeLeo repeated. "I'd remember that name. I would remember that name."

Michael Spilotro's brother, Anthony Spilotro, was once the Chicago crime syndicate's Las Vegas boss. The bodies of the brothers were found buried in a shallow grave in an Indiana cornfield after they were beaten to death in a 1986 mob hit.

In 2007, Anne Spilotro testified in the landmark Operation Family Secrets mob trial that she felt ripped off by DeLeo and another investor who bought her business in the late 1980s, after her husband was killed.

DELEO: I DIDN'T HELP THIS TIME

Spilotro, an employee of the state Department of Financial and Professional Regulation since 1998, said she never discussed changing jobs or a promotion with DeLeo.

"I haven't even talked to him for years," she said.

Another name on DeLeo's jobs list is the daughter of Marty Gutilla, managing partner of Tavern on Rush, the bar DeLeo co-owns with Illinois Senate President John Cullerton (D-Chicago) and others.

Shauna Gutilla Kelley, a $99,924-a-year division head for the Illinois Commerce Commission, was hired by Blagojevich's administration in August 2003. Since then, her salary has risen 59 percent, state records show.

DeLeo denied persuading Blagojevich's administration to hire or promote her -- though he acknowledged recommending Kelley for a state job "two administrations ago," under now-imprisoned former Gov. George Ryan.