

# Kendall Coffey on Blagojevich Corruption

## NEWS INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

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**TAMARIN HALL:** The investigation into what U.S. attorney Patrick Fitzgerald calls a political crime spree is still underway. In fact, authorities have been investigating the governor of Illinois, Rod Blagojevich, for five years. So the Illinois governor knew he was being watched. But the FBI said that that did not stop Blagojevich from repeatedly trying to auction off President-Elect Barack Obama's senate seat to the highest bidder. And with me to talk about the case against Blagojevich live from Miami is former U.S. attorney Kendall Coffey. So Kendall, I'm sure you've had a chance to read the affidavit and I'm certainly sure you heard the details from Fitzgerald. Does this sound like the ammunition is certainly on the side of the prosecution?

**KENDALL COFFEY:** Oh, for sure. They've got so much evidence and a lot of which comes from the tape-recordings of this guy's own voice. You know, we've already suspected that a governor of a major state could be corrupt. But to see that somebody that is this foul-mouthed, this petty, this bone-headed is amazing. You've got to assume that somehow he was feeling drunk with power and starved for money.

**TAMARIN HALL:** Well, his attorneys are saying he's not guilty. So let's play devil's advocate here. If he and his attorneys argue, listen this is just macho-talk. That's one theory that I've heard might be floated out there. He never actually received anything. Would that fly?

**KENDALL COFFEY:** Well, it certainly doesn't. Of course, when you're caught like this you've got to come up with some kind of "I was just kidding; I was just blustering". I mean, how many times have we seen that. But this is more than the tapes. This is just more than trying to do things like sell a U.S. senate seat to the highest bidder. The guy's methodology is so crude, you wondered why he didn't put it up on eBay. But this is years, years of strong-arming, bullying and extorting people and the complaint says it all and I think you're going to be seeing a plea out of this case.

**TAMARIN HALL:** It's interesting as you mentioned five years in the making, if you will, he's been under investigation, is it just startling that up until the day before he was arrested, they were still recording, allegedly, some of these crimes?

**KENDALL COFFEY:** It's such an amazing state of denial. Because normally you clam up. You don't talk on the phones. There are a hundred things you do when everybody in town knows that you've been under investigation by the Feds. But this guy not just didn't get it he kept trying to get more and get more. Maybe even thinking that somehow in his final closing hours, if his time was up, he'd better grab for everything he possible could before they showed him the door.

TAMARIN HALL: All right, Kendall, thank you very much for your insight on this one. He's back to work today as the governor of Illinois.