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**Witnesses for gov?; Blagojevich's lawyer wants Emanuel, Jarrett and Jackson to testify**

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SPRINGFIELD-Gov. Blagojevich's lead lawyer has asked the Illinois House panel weighing whether to impeach the governor to subpoena three high-profile witnesses.

The lawyer, Ed Genson, said Wednesday that testimony by Valerie Jarrett, a top adviser to President-elect Barack Obama; Rep. Rahm Emanuel, Obama's incoming chief of staff, and Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr. would bolster the governor's contention that he did nothing wrong when it comes to filling Obama's vacant U.S. Senate seat.

Blagojevich -- who has the sole power to appoint Obama's replacement -- was arrested Dec. 9 and accused of putting the seat and other official government actions up for sale.

Genson's request follows the release of an internal report by the Obama camp Tuesday that concluded that Jarrett -- who once had an interest in the seat -- Emanuel, Obama or anybody on Obama's team had not engaged in "inappropriate discussions with the governor or anyone from his office about a 'deal' or quid pro quo arrangement in which [Blagojevich] would receive a personal benefit in return for any specific appointment to fill the vacancy."

Similarly, Jackson has maintained he did nothing wrong in his quest to be appointed to the Senate seat.

The Obama transition team and a spokesman for Jackson did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

House Majority Leader Barbara Flynn Currie (D-Chicago), chairwoman of the House impeachment panel, also could not be reached for comment about Genson's request.

According to secretly recorded conversations detailed in a criminal complaint, the governor was willing to trade the Senate seat for an ambassadorship, an appointment to Obama's Cabinet, campaign contributions and other personal benefits. After Blagojevich was arrested, the Illinois House began an impeachment inquiry.

On Wednesday, U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald was still considering whether to give the impeachment committee access to the secretly recorded conversations, a legislative source familiar with the matter said.

Fitzgerald had indicated that a decision on the recordings would be reached by Wednesday, but his office indicated it was extending that deadline.

The move fueled speculation that Fitzgerald could be amenable to turning over what could be damning evidence as the committee weighs whether to impeach the governor.