

Utah prosecutor investigating Reid

By Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY – A Utah county prosecutor said Wednesday he is investigating Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev., in connection with a pay-to-play scheme involving two former Utah attorneys general.

Davis County Attorney Troy Rawlings, a Republican, said in a statement that he's looking into allegations related to the Senate leader.

Rawlings declined to disclose the allegations and only said the claims are based on information from witnesses in the attorneys general case.

Reid, who hasn't been charged, fired back at Rawlings in a statement from his spokeswoman Kristen Orthman. She said Rawlings is using "Sen. Reid's name to generate attention to himself and advance his political career, so every few months he seeks headlines by floating the same unsubstantiated allegations."

Reid has denied wrongdoing since a businessman said in 2013 that a former Utah attorney general arranged a deal to pay the senator to get rid of a federal investigation into a software business.

Federal prosecutors declined to file charges in the case.

Rawlings said he has a duty to follow up on leads in the attorneys general case and has been granted permission to investigate possible statewide crimes in relation to the case.

He said he's limited by what he can disclose due to judicial rules but decided to confirm that he's investigating Reid in

response to questions from a local newspaper.

“To simply ignore and run from what has been presented by multiple witnesses and sources . . . would mean I am either intentionally blind, or overly worried,” Rawlings said in the statement.

Reid’s name came up as Rawlings looks into the actions of former Utah attorneys general John Shurtleff and John Swallow.

The two were arrested last summer after prosecutors said the men engaged in a wide-ranging, pay-to-play scheme where they traded favors with businessmen in trouble with regulators during their combined 13 years running the state office.

Swallow has pleaded not guilty to bribery charges. Shurtleff has pleaded not guilty to obstructing justice charges. Both have trials scheduled in 2016.

Rawlings renewed his criticism of the U.S. Department of Justice for limiting what information he has access to and what he can investigate.

Justice officials closed their investigation in 2013 without filing charges. FBI investigators stayed on the case to help state attorneys who took it over.

“It is not up to the DOJ to tell me who can and who cannot be investigated and what evidence is relevant and material to a state case,” Rawlings said.

Justice officials declined comment.

Rawlings has been the top prosecutor since 2007 in Davis County in northern Utah. He won his first election to the post after working as an attorney in the office for six years. He started his career as a defense attorney.

He has partnered several times with Salt Lake County’s Democratic district attorney, Sim Gill, including on this case

before the two divided duties.

Gill backed Rawlings' actions on the case. Gill said he and Rawlings both committed to following all leads when they took the case, and this one falls to Rawlings since he's the one with authority to handle statewide crimes.

"I trust Troy to do what he deems is right and appropriate," Gill said. "I think he's trying to do his due diligence."

The disclosure by Rawlings that he's looking into the accusations against Reid was first reported by *City Weekly*, a newspaper in Salt Lake City.