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<https://rashidforillinois.com/>

## **Rashid demands Zalewski explain use of \$130,000 in campaign funds for legal defense, proposes stronger campaign finance and ethics reforms**

**May 17, 2022 Press Release**

State Rep. candidate Abdelnasser Rashid called on Rep. Michael Zalewski to justify his use of campaign funds to pay significant legal defense costs. The Illinois Board of Elections campaign expenditure reports show Rep. Zalewski has paid over \$130,000 from his election campaign account to a firm that specializes in white collar criminal defense over the past three years—more than any state representative besides indicted ex-Speaker Michael Madigan, who is the subject of multiple criminal investigations related to corruption in Springfield.

“Voters deserve to know how and why Rep. Zalewski spent an astounding \$130,000 in legal fees after his father’s home was raided by the FBI,” Rashid said, “What’s he hiding? If he shows up at the next candidate forum, he should be ready to explain what the money was used for.”

Rashid, who is running against Rep. Zalewski in the Democratic primary to represent the 21st District, believes that the people of Illinois deserve political leadership that is not compromised by corruption and self-dealing. Rashid is running for State Representative because working families deserve ethical representation.

### **Dismantling the Madigan Machine**

Rep. Zalewski engaged law firm Jones Day, a high-profile firm specializing in criminal defense, in May 2019. This was soon after the home of his father, former Chicago Alderman Michael Zalewski, was raided as part of the ongoing corruption probe into Madigan and ComEd. The elder Zalewski has also dipped into campaign coffers to fund his legal defense, spending \$80,000 on lawyers from Breen & Pugh, completely emptying the bank accounts of his two campaign committees—Friends of Mike Zalewski and 23rd Ward Regular Democratic Organization—in the process.

“We need representatives who serve the people, not do the bidding of Michael Madigan and ComEd,” Rashid said, “The people of Illinois have had enough with corruption and pay-to-play politics.”

### **Rashid’s Reform Agenda**

Abdelnasser Rashid will introduce legislation to strengthen the state’s ethics laws so that lawmakers are required to disclose the nature of their legal expenditures. In addition, Rashid believes that the legislative inspector general must be empowered to conduct investigations and take action without interference or obstruction from a legislative committee. Rashid believes ethics and transparency are essential to rebuilding trust in government, and will work hand-in-hand with reform groups in Illinois to pass meaningful legislation.