

# Ryan guilty

## A Juror's View

**'I feel a little wiser now. ... I think I saw an up-close view of real life, how government works.'**

## Ex-governor's Reaction

**'This decision today is not in accordance with the kind of public service that I've provided to the people of Illinois over 40 years.'**

## The Appeal

**Attorney Dan Webb said, 'I can promise you we will file an appeal.'**

April 18, 2006 | By Matt O'Connor and Rudolph Bush, Tribune staff reporters. Tribune staff reporter David Heinzmann contributed to this report.



George Ryan Sr., a consummate political dealmaker who rose to become Illinois' 39th governor, was convicted Monday on sweeping federal corruption charges of wielding power to help himself and his friends.

After a historic, marathon trial, a federal jury in its 11th day of deliberations found Ryan guilty on all 18 counts of steering state business to cronies for bribes, of gutting corruption-fighting efforts to protect political fundraising and of misusing state resources for political gain.

Ryan's co-defendant, lobbyist and longtime friend Lawrence Warner, was also found guilty on all 12 counts against him.

Ryan's lawyer, Dan Webb, signaled an appeal was certain and would focus on U.S. District Judge Rebecca Pallmeyer's decision to oust two jurors eight days into a first round of deliberations for concealing arrest records during jury selection in September. She added two alternates and ordered deliberations restarted.

U.S. Atty. Patrick Fitzgerald called Ryan's quashing of investigations into the sale of driver's licenses for bribes as secretary of state "a low-water mark for public service."

In brief remarks after the verdict was announced, Ryan said he was disappointed with the jury's decision but confident that he would be vindicated on appeal.

"I believe this decision today is not in accordance with the kind of public service that I've provided to the people of Illinois over 40 years," Ryan told a throng of reporters as he left the Dirksen U.S. Courthouse.

Reached later by telephone, Warner, who made more than \$3 million on the insider deals, said he was unprepared for the guilty verdicts.

"I've been trying not to have negative thoughts," Warner said. "I honestly thought I would walk."

With the verdicts, Operation Safe Road has snared 75 convictions, ranking it with Operation Greylord, the 1980s probe of judicial corruption, as the most successful federal investigations in modern Chicago history in reach and significance.

The conviction marked a stunning fall from grace for Ryan, the third former governor to be convicted of wrongdoing in Illinois history. A onetime legislator from Kankakee, he rose to House speaker before holding statewide office for 20 consecutive years as lieutenant governor, secretary of state and governor. He gained international renown in 2003 for commuting the death sentences of condemned inmates in Illinois.

Federal law-enforcement authorities expressed confidence the jury's decision would be upheld on appeal.

Jury looked at 'totality of case'

"This case was tried witness by witness, piece of evidence by piece of evidence, and it was only by looking at the totality of the case that the true picture could be shown to this jury," said Assistant U.S. Atty. Patrick Collins, in charge of the prosecution. "And that was a picture of corruption at the highest levels of government."

The deliberations have played out over more than a month amid controversy. After the Tribune discovered last month that two jurors had apparently concealed their arrest records during jury selection in September, Pallmeyer excused them, added alternates in their place and ordered deliberations to start over again.

By then the original jury had deliberated eight days. There were signs of personal rancor during those deliberations and after a note had indicated "personal difficulties" among jurors, the judge responded in writing by asking jurors to treat one another with "dignity and respect."

The defense sought a mistrial, suggesting that one or both of the excused jurors had been holdouts for Ryan.

The legal arguments in that dispute took place behind closed doors, and Pallmeyer hasn't released edited transcripts of those hearings yet.

Though the judge lifted a gag order following the verdicts, lawyers in the case declined to discuss those closed-door discussions since they remain under seal.

In a rare press conference involving jurors, six of the panelists spoke Monday of the grueling experience of serving more than half a year and said testimony by a series of secretary of state employees proved crucial to their verdicts. Most of the corruption occurred during Ryan's two terms as secretary of state in the 1990s.

Later, one of the excused jurors, Evelyn Ezell, called the trial "a miscarriage of justice" and criticized other jurors for jumping to conclusions early.

Pallmeyer's courtroom quickly filled to capacity after word of the verdict was announced about 10:10 a.m, just 40 minutes after jurors resumed deliberations after a three-day layoff.

The reading of the verdicts was delayed until about 12:20 p.m. in part because Ryan's defense team made a last-ditch argument in the judge's chambers over allegations that a juror had improperly discussed the case with an outsider, said a source familiar with the matter.

1 | 2 (/2006-04-18/news/0604180306\_1\_probe-of-judicial-corruption-guilty-verdicts-ryan/2) | 3 (/2006-04-18/news/0604180306\_1\_probe-of-judicial-corruption-guilty-verdicts-MORE: ryan/3) | Next (/2006-04-18/news/0604180306\_1\_probe-of-judicial-corruption-guilty-verdicts-ryan/2) | Coping on land after surviving at sea (/2003-03-19/features/0303180492\_1\_sailing-cabin-south-pacific) | Princess Grace`s Fatal Crash: Her Daughter`s Account (/1989-10-23/features/8901240679\_1\_chauffeur-prince-rainier-monaco) | Ask Tom why: Has it ever snowed in Chicago in May or later? (/2011-04-02/news/ct-wea-0403-asktom-20110402\_1\_biggest-snowfall-measurable-snow-snowflakes) | Cause of facial tingling can be very unnerving (/2004-02-15/features/0402150303\_1\_facial-nerve-paralysis-face) | `They hated it`: When `Trading Spaces` goes wrong (/2003-07-20/news/0307200007\_1\_new-space-designer-genevieve-gorder-red-wall) | Dark meaning of bubble-gum Pumped Up Kicks is tough to chew (/2011-10-03/entertainment/ct-ent-1004-foster-lyrics-20111004\_1\_school-shooting-pop-music-song)

## Related Articles

Blagojevich on guilty verdict: 'I, frankly, am stunned' (/2011-06-27/news/chi-blagojevich-jurors-going-into-their-10th-day-20110627\_1\_political-corruption-crime-spre- abraham-lincoln-roll-new-jury)

*June 27, 2011*

The Ryan factor (/2006-04-19/news/0604190343\_1\_george-ryan-rod-blagojevich-republican-ryan)

April 19, 2006

Controversy swirls around a 3rd Ryan juror (/2006-04-19/news/0604190205\_1\_juror-jury-selection-george-ryan)

April 19, 2006

Ryan's trial a battle of heavyweights (/2005-09-26/news/0509260068\_1\_courtroom-jurors-lawrence-warner)

September 26, 2005

Jury convicts Fawell, Ryan campaign of fraud (/2003-03-20/news/0303200301\_1\_ryan-campaign-scott-fawell-george-ryan)

March 20, 2003

---

Terms of Service  
(<http://www.chicagotribune.com/tos/>)

Privacy Policy  
(<http://www.chicagotribune.com/privacy/>)

Index by Date  
(/2006/apr/18)

---

Index by Keyword  
**Connect**  
(/keywords)  
 Like us on Facebook  
[www.chicagotribune.com](http://www.chicagotribune.com)  
(<https://www.facebook.com/chicagotribune>)  
 Follow us on Twitter  
(<http://twitter.com/#!/chicagotribune>)

---

**Chicago Tribune**

(Page 2 of 3)

## Ryan guilty

### A Juror's View

**'I feel a little wiser now. ... I think I saw an up-close view of real life, how government works.'**

### Ex-governor's Reaction

**'This decision today is not in accordance with the kind of public service that I've provided to the people of Illinois over 40 years.'**

### The Appeal

**Attorney Dan Webb said, 'I can promise you we will file an appeal.'**

April 18, 2006 | By Matt O'Connor and Rudolph Bush, Tribune staff reporters. Tribune staff reporter David Heinzmann contributed to this report.



The issue arose after a caller to a radio talk show, identifying himself as a dry cleaner owner named "Dennis," claimed last month that a juror had talked about the case with him. Pallmeyer said last week she had conducted a brief inquiry into the matter.

The verdicts were a resounding victory for the prosecution. The jury found Ryan guilty on all 18 counts of racketeering conspiracy, mail fraud, lying to the FBI, obstructing the Internal Revenue Service and filing false tax returns. Warner was convicted on all 12 counts of racketeering conspiracy, extortion, money laundering and evading cash-reporting requirements.

Ryan faces as much as 10 to 15 years in prison under federal sentencing guidelines, veteran criminal-defense lawyers said. But his prison term could be substantially lower because of his age--72--and his lengthy public service.

Pallmeyer scheduled sentencing for Aug. 4.

The judge must also still decide if Ryan and Warner must forfeit at least \$3.1 million as well as properties Warner owned in Joliet and Bellwood that were sites of lucrative leases.

The heart of the indictment charged that Warner and three other close Ryan friends--Arthur "Ron" Swanson, Donald Udstuen and Harry Klein--pocketed a combined \$4.77 million in sweetheart state deals engineered by Ryan in return for vacations, gifts and other benefits to the former governor and his family.

Ryan was also convicted of diverting state resources and staffers to half a dozen political campaigns, including his 1998 election as governor; steering a lucrative lease to Klein after arranging for Klein to secretly pay him back for annual vacations at Klein's Jamaican villa; and sharing in hidden payments from the 1996 presidential campaign of former Sen. Phil Gramm.

Prosecutors also pounded hard at the fact that Ryan's handpicked inspector general scuttled numerous investigations into the selling of driver's licenses for bribes by secretary of state employees under pressure to peddle Ryan's political fundraising tickets, endangering public safety.

In a 1994 memo to Ryan, Scott Fawell, his top aide, recommended that investigators be brought in who "won't screw our friends" by looking into the sale of fundraising tickets--evidence Collins on Monday called "the closest thing to a smoking gun in the case."

A month before Fawell's infamous memo, Dean Bauer, Ryan's inspector general and longtime friend, blocked an investigator from looking into a Wisconsin wreck that killed six children of Rev. Duane "Scott" and Janet Willis, a horrific tragedy that came to symbolize the licenses-for-bribes scandal.

Convicted of lying

While much of the corruption came in his tenure as secretary of state, Ryan was also found guilty of misconduct as governor for lying to federal authorities in three interviews; leaking the selection of a state prison site to Swanson, who improperly profited on the tip; and arranging a lucrative make-work lobbying deal for Swanson with the public agency that runs McCormick Place.

Warner's lawyer, Edward Genson, said he also plans to appeal the verdict.

Warner questioned what role Ryan's controversial death-penalty stand played in the trial's outcome, though Pallmeyer barred mention of the issue at the trial.

"How much of it goes back to letting people off Death Row?" Warner said. "I feel that must have had a tremendous impact, even though it was downplayed."

- - -

WHAT OTHERS HAD TO SAY



Blagojevich on guilty verdict: 'I, frankly, am stunned' (/2011-06-27/news/chiblagojevich-jurors-going-into-their-10th-day-20110627\_1\_political-corruption-crime-spree-abraham-lincoln-roll-new-jury)

*June 27, 2011*

The Ryan factor (/2006-04-19/news/0604190343\_1\_george-ryan-rod-bлагоjevich-republican-ryan)

*April 19, 2006*

Controversy swirls around a 3rd Ryan juror (/2006-04-19/news/0604190205\_1\_juror-jury-selection-george-ryan)

*April 19, 2006*

Ryan's trial a battle of heavyweights (/2005-09-26/news/0509260068\_1\_courtroom-jurors-lawrence-warner)

*September 26, 2005*

Jury convicts Fawell, Ryan campaign of fraud (/2003-03-20/news/0303200301\_1\_ryan-campaign-scott-fawell-george-ryan)

*March 20, 2003*

---

---

Terms of Service

(<http://www.chicagotribune.com/tos/>)

Privacy Policy

(<http://www.chicagotribune.com/privacy/>)

Index by Date


(/2006/apr/18)

---

Index by Keyword

**Connect**

(/keywords)

 Like us on Facebook

[www.chicagotribune.com](http://www.chicagotribune.com)

(<https://www.facebook.com/chicagotribune>)

(<http://www.chicagotribune.com>)

 Follow us on Twitter

(<http://twitter.com/#!/chicagotribune>)

---

**Chicago Tribune**



(Page 3 of 3)

## Ryan guilty

### A Juror's View

**'I feel a little wiser now. ... I think I saw an up-close view of real life, how government works.'**

### Ex-governor's Reaction

**'This decision today is not in accordance with the kind of public service that I've provided to the people of Illinois over 40 years.'**

### The Appeal

**Attorney Dan Webb said, 'I can promise you we will file an appeal.'**

April 18, 2006 | By Matt O'Connor and Rudolph Bush, Tribune staff reporters. Tribune staff reporter David Heinzmann contributed to this report.



--TAMMY RAYNOR, WHISTLE-BLOWER IN LICENSES FOR BRIBES

"It's a huge black eye for our state, and it's sad and disappointing."

--HOUSE GOP LEADER TOM CROSS

"I feel badly for the entire Ryan family. I feel badly for all of them. But I feel bad for the state too. George, George, you know, he had a lot of years of good service to the state. I think it's a shame to see it end this way."

--FORMER U.S. REP. GLENN POSHARD,

WHO LOST TO RYAN IN THE 1998 RACE FOR GOVERNOR

---

The trial of George Ryan and Lawrence Warner

2005

SEPT. 19: Jury selection starts.

SEPT. 28: Opening arguments in trial of Gov. George Ryan and codefendent Lawrence Warner begin.

SEPT. 29: Scott Fawell, former top political aide to Ryan and the government's star witness, takes the stand for the first of 10 days of testimony.

OCT. 11: Under questioning by the defense, Fawell says he doesn't believe that he or Ryan committed any crimes and says he has no "bomb" to drop on Ryan.

OCT. 24: After attending the trial, Janet and Rev. Duane "Scott" Willis, six of whose children were killed in a 1994 highway accident that sparked the Operation Safe Road probe, say there must be justice for the children.

NOV. 8: Prosecutors seek limits on questions by Ryan's attorney, Dan Webb, charging that he abused the truth.

NOV. 17: Former Sen. Phil Gramm, a onetime presidential hopeful, refers to Ryan as a political prostitute. Prosecutors allege Ryan pocketed more than \$100,000 in consulting fees for Gramm's campaign in Illinois.

DEC. 8: Donald Udstuen, Ryan's former top adviser, testifies that Warner, once told him he would "take care of George."

DEC. 13: The battle between attorneys turns bitter when Assistant U.S. Atty. Patrick Collins takes offense to Webb's suggestion to jurors that a prosecutor and FBI agent had coerced a key witness to change his recollection of events.

2006

FEB. 6: Testimony by a secretary of state employee reveals that Ryan was given several thousand dollars from employees as Christmas gifts, including about \$12,500 in cash during his last weeks as governor.

FEB. 22: After weeks of speculation, Ryan declines to testify. The defense rests its case.

MARCH 27: Amid deliberations, Judge Rebecca Pallmeyer dismisses two jurors after a Tribune investigation finds that both failed to disclose arrest records. She replaces them with alternates.

APRIL 17: The reconstituted jury finds Ryan guilty on all 18 counts against him. Warner is convicted on all 12 counts.

Source: News reports

Chicago Tribune

-----

mo'connor@tribune.com

rrbush@tribune.com

Prev (/2006-04-18/news/0604180306\_1\_probe-of-judicial-corruption-guilty-verdicts-

ryan/2) | 1 (/2006-04-18/news/0604180306\_1\_probe-of-judicial-corruption-guilty-verdicts-MORE:

Q. Every morning, I find dried blood in my nose and blood... (/1998-12-08/news/9812090034\_1\_nose-medical-detective-headaches)

Fluorescent Lights Complex, But Problem's Easy To Fix (/1988-09-23/entertainment/8802010971\_1\_tube-fluorescent-sockets)

Striking similarity of dying words (/2013-06-19/news/ct-x-dying-words-0619-20130619\_1\_hospice-nurse-maggie-callanan-death-awareness)

Q. What happens to the umbilical cord inside a mother once... (/1994-10-25/news/9410260009\_1\_umbilical-cord-uterus-placenta)

Q. My vaginal area is very itchy. After urination, it... (/1999-12-23/news/9912240353\_1\_yeast-infections-vaginal-infections-miconazole)

Following a D&C, go slowly as you resume normal sex life (/2013-11-13/lifestyle/sns-201311130000--tms--harvmedctnme-a20131113-20131113\_1\_miscarriage-uterus-cervix)

## Related Articles

Blagojevich on guilty verdict: 'I, frankly, am stunned' (/2011-06-27/news/chibлагоjevich-jurors-going-into-their-10th-day-20110627\_1\_political-corruption-crime-spree-abraham-lincoln-roll-new-jury)

*June 27, 2011*

The Ryan factor (/2006-04-19/news/0604190343\_1\_george-ryan-rod-bлагоjevich-republican-ryan)

*April 19, 2006*

Controversy swirls around a 3rd Ryan juror (/2006-04-19/news/0604190205\_1\_juror-jury-selection-george-ryan)

*April 19, 2006*

Ryan's trial a battle of heavyweights (/2005-09-26/news/0509260068\_1\_courtroom-jurors-lawrence-warner)

*September 26, 2005*

Jury convicts Fawell, Ryan campaign of fraud (/2003-03-20/news/0303200301\_1\_ryan-campaign-scott-fawell-george-ryan)

*March 20, 2003*

---

Terms of Service  
(<http://www.chicagotribune.com/tos/>)


Privacy Policy  
(<http://www.chicagotribune.com/privacy/>)

Index by Date  
(/2006/apr/18)

---

Index by Keyword  
**Connect**  
(/keywords)

 Like us on Facebook  
(<https://www.facebook.com/chicagotribune>)

 Follow us on Twitter  
[www.chicagotribune.com](http://www.chicagotribune.com)  
(<http://twitter.com/#!/chicagotribune>)  
(<http://www.chicagotribune.com>)

---

**Chicago Tribune**