

# Madigan confidant and ex-ComEd CEO charged with bribery in lobbying scheme

Named in the indictment are Madigan friend Michael McClain, ex-ComEd CEO Anne Pramaggiore as well as former ComEd lobbyist John Hooker and Jay Doherty, the ex-president of the City Club.

By [Jon Seidel](#), [Mark Brown](#), [Rachel Hinton](#), and [Tim Novak](#) -- CHICAGO SUN-TIMES -- Updated Nov 18, 2020, 6:27pm CST



House Speaker Michael Madigan *AP*

Federal prosecutors marched deeper into House Speaker Michael Madigan's inner circle Wednesday, charging longtime confidant Michael McClain and ex-ComEd CEO Anne Pramaggiore in a bribery scheme designed to curry favor with the powerful Southwest Side Democrat.

Also named in the 50-page indictment are ex-top ComEd lobbyist John Hooker and Jay Doherty, the former president of the City Club, who was accused of helping to funnel hundreds of thousands of dollars to three people

with ties to Madigan's 13th Ward.

All four are charged in a document that also makes frequent references to ex-ComEd executive Fidel Marquez, who has already pleaded guilty to bribery. And it repeatedly mentions "Public Official A," who is not named — but is clearly identified as Madigan.



*Former City Club President Jay Doherty, ex-top ComEd official John Hooker and former ComEd CEO Anne Pramaggiore. Sun-Times file photos*

What it does not do is charge Madigan with any crime, despite an intense federal probe that clearly has him in its sights.

Joseph Fitzpatrick, a spokesman for U.S. Attorney John Lausch, said the investigation that led to Wednesday's indictment "remains ongoing."

McClain, 73, Pramaggiore, 62, Hooker, 71, and Doherty, 67, are each charged with bribery

conspiracy, bribery and willfully falsifying ComEd books and records.

Their defense attorneys vowed Wednesday to fight the latest public corruption case from Lausch's office. Doherty's attorney, Michael Gillespie, said his client was "very disappointed" and "has done nothing wrong and will plead not guilty." A spokesperson for Pramaggiore went further, saying she "unequivocally rejects the government's charges that she engaged in unlawful behavior."

And McClain attorney Patrick Cotter said the case is the "result of a misguided investigation and misapplication of the law, driven by an obvious desire to find some way to criminally implicate a current elected official, who happens to be Mike McClain's longtime friend."

The details of the new indictment track closely with those revealed in July when federal prosecutors charged ComEd with bribery in a bombshell case that has continued to reverberate

politically in the four months that have passed. It prompted a legislative probe of Madigan's dealings with ComEd, and it has led to questions about whether Madigan will be able to hold onto power.

ComEd agreed to pay a \$200 million fine — believed to be the largest criminal fine ever in Chicago's federal court. And while it formally pleaded not guilty in court, it admitted to many of the feds' allegations in a so-called deferred prosecution agreement. If ComEd abides by its terms, the bribery charge filed in July will likely be dismissed.

The new indictment alleges that McClain, Pramaggiore, Hooker and Doherty arranged for Madigan's associate and allies to get jobs, contracts and money — even while doing little or no work — “for the purpose of influencing and rewarding” Madigan.

It focuses on the retention of an unnamed law firm, the favoring of intern applicants from the 13th Ward, Madigan's attempt to have former McPier CEO Juan Ochoa appointed to ComEd's board of directors and the hiring of other individuals associated with Madigan. It also says the four would conceal the nature of their conduct by referring to Madigan not by name, but as “our Friend” or “a Friend of ours.”



*Former lobbyist and Madigan confidant Michael McClain Illinois Secretary of State photo*

The document alleges payments totaling more than \$2 million between Jan. 27, 2014, and May 3, 2019, were made to Doherty's firm, Jay D. Doherty & Associates. Then, it says Doherty made \$256,000 in payments to an unnamed individual identified by the Sun-Times as former Ald. Frank Olivo, \$325,000 in payments to a second unnamed individual, and \$144,000 in payments to a third.

It says potential intern applicants from the 13th Ward identified by McClain did not need to compete against the general intern pool in ComEd's internship program. They allegedly received favorable treatment and did not have to meet certain academic requirements.

It alleged that Pramaggiore signed a false document in support of the renewal of a contract for Doherty's firm, making it falsely seem the large amount of money paid to it was for its “unique insight & perspective to promote ComEd and its business matters.” The indictment also expanded on a notorious quote from the ComEd bribery case, in which McClain complained about the retention of the unnamed law firm.

He allegedly told Pramaggiore and Hooker in an email that, “I know the drill and so do you,” and that “Our Friend will call me and then I will call you. Is this a drill we must go through?”

“I just do not understand why we have to spend valuable minutes on items like this when we know it will provoke a reaction from our Friend,” McClain allegedly wrote.

*Contributing: Madeline Kenney*