

The campaign of Gov. Martin O'Malley (D) Wednesday called on former Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich Jr. (R) and his allies to "come clean" about their work on behalf of a [casino developer seeking to build a slots parlor at Arundel Mills Mall](#)

The campaign suggested in a conference call with reporters that it had been stymied in its efforts to obtain public records that would show contact between Anne Arundel County's elected officials and employees of Ehrlich's law firm. But, like the county government, Ehrlich's campaign said it had nothing to hide. It is well known that the Cordish Company hired Ehrlich's law firm, Womble Carlyle Sandridge Rice, to try to build support for the planned casino, which is on that ballot next month. But Cordish officials have said that the company did not retain Ehrlich himself, and that the former governor did not work on the issue. The company did retain communications specialists at the firm, including Paul Schurick, a top aid to the former governor. O'Malley campaign officials Wednesday sought to revive the issue of Ehrlich's role at the law firm and his support for the Anne Arundel casino. In a conference call with reporters, campaign manager Tom Russell said the campaign had tried unsuccessfully since July to obtain public records of e-mail, phone and in-person contact between Anne Arundel officials and Womble Carlyle employees, including Ehrlich. "What did they get paid, what did they do and who did they talk to?" said Russell. "We think the public deserves to know." Ehrlich's communications director, Henry Fawell, said O'Malley's repeated criticism of his rival's private sector work was an effort to "distract" voters from critical issues such as unemployment and the state's budget woes. "He's willing to chase his own tail and create conspiracies that don't exist to change the subject," Fawell said. "The firm was hired for communications, not government relations work." The request was filed July 8, on behalf of the campaign, by a document retrieval company. An assistant county attorney, Michael Comeau, responded to the request by providing documents the campaign considered "incomplete at best," said O'Malley campaign spokesman Rick Abbruzzese. David Abrams, a spokesman for County Executive John R. Leopold (R), said the county had provided Leopold's calendars and at least 100 pages of e-mails that mention the word "slots" and is working to retrieve additional e-mails that belong to County Council members. Abrams said that no contact with Ehrlich had turned up because Leopold "never talked on the phone, e-mailed, wrote a letter or had a meeting with Bob Ehrlich or any of his staff members regarding slots." "The whole premise of this is complete nonsense and an invention of the campaign," Abrams said. Anne Arundel County voters will decide in November whether to allow a zoning measure necessary for Cordish to build the free-standing slots casino at the mall. In a recent Washington Post poll, only 39 percent of voters statewide said they would support a casino at a mall in their county. Those surveyed were not asked specifically about the Cordish proposal.

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