For well over two years, John Daley's 11th Ward organization has carried state Representative Patricia Bailey (D-Chicago) on its back. Daley is Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley's brother. Bailey's mother was one of a very small handful of influential African Americans who endorsed Rich Daley during his first successful mayoral race in 1989. The Daleys don't forget that kind of loyalty. Mrs.Bailey has also been an 11th Ward precinct captain.

It wasn't much of a surprise, then, when Pat Bailey was tapped to run for the House in 2002.

Representative Bailey just barely won her first primary, and that victory was mostly because of the 11th Ward's massive efforts. The 11th dragged her across the finish line just barely ahead of her more qualified and much more active opponent.

This year, Bailey faced two less-than-stellar rivals: Jerry Washington, a former state representative who was best known in the 1980s and early 1990s for trying to bring street gangs into city politics; and Aaron Patterson, a former gang member who served time on death row until he was released by George Ryan. But the Daleys don't like to take chances, and they pulled out every stop for Bailey.

Things started to go sour during the campaign, however. The *Chicago Tribune* reported that the address Bailey listed as her residence appeared to be vacant. The building's owner said she didn't live there, and Bailey refused to supply the newspaper with any documents, such as utility bills, to back up her claim. The
Trib
reported that Bailey most likely lived with her mother, outside her House district.

There's not much doubt where she really lives, legal niceties aside. A guy who ran in a neighboring House district two years ago told me recently that when he was out knocking on doors one day he came upon a neighborhood of Pat Bailey supporters. "I'm not with you, I'm with Bailey," he heard over and over. When he tried to tell the voters that Bailey was running in a different district, they were deeply offended. "She lives right there!" they reportedly said, "With her mother!"

Residency beefs are pretty common, but the issue is one of the most difficult aspects of state election law to prove. You have to prove a subjective case, that she never intended to live at her legal address, with objective evidence, like utility bills, the habitable condition of her residence, etc.

Never before, though, has the Chicago Board of Elections referred a felony residency case to the Cook County State's Attorney about an incumbent politician. Its decision to do just that with Bailey last week was an unprecedented bombshell.

According to the board, Bailey allegedly committed perjury and fraud, both felonies. The perjury came when she allegedly filed her nominating petitions from a fake address, and the alleged fraud was committed when she voted at that address.

Several high-level sources say the Bailey case will almost definitely be bumped up to the

Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan's office because Representative Bailey's mother works for the state's attorney.

Madigan might also have a conflict, however, because Bailey is a member of the Illinois House and Madigan's father is House Speaker Michael Madigan. This could eventually wind up in the hands of a special prosecutor who probably won't be beholden to the political structure. A nonpolitical prosecutor could mean big trouble for Bailey.

Nobody can remove Bailey from the ballot. The time has long passed to challenge her ballot status. But a felony conviction would force her removal from the House. A House member could also file a complaint against her, but nobody has yet stepped forward, and the Republicans don't appear to be interested in stirring up trouble.

Word also came down last week that the Daleys have had enough. Bailey has been cut loose. With the feds nosing around every nook and cranny of the Daley operation, protecting an alleged felon might not be prudent. Even if she survives the legal case, she may not get another term.

Bailey is a huge fan of *The Sopranos* television show. Her Statehouse office is plastered with posters of the show's actors, and she was even showing off a brand-new shirt with the show's logo on the House floor last week.

So, she may recognize this quote from Tony Soprano, the show's main character, that appears to describe the Daleys' new attitude toward Bailey's political prospects: "He died, that's all. Work-related death. It's just sad when they go so young."

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