

# THE PELOSI-FEINSTEIN CARTEL KEEP THE PAYOLA AND GRAFT IN ONE LITTLE FAMILY NETWORK

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*The Pelosi-Feinstein-Newsom Cartel of insider trading, election rigging quid pro quo would implode if demented Feinstein let the cat out of the bag about how it works*

A quiet caretaking arrangement has raised questions about whether Nancy Pelosi has the ailing senator's personal interests at heart.



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Nancy Carinne Prowda, left, accompanies Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) as she leaves the Capitol on Thursday, May 11, 2023. | Bill Clark/CQ Roll Call via AP Images

By [RACHAEL BADE](#)

- When Sen. Dianne Feinstein walked into the Capitol last week, ending a monthslong medical absence, she was accompanied by Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, a small entourage of aides — and a close personal confidant with a storied political pedigree.

Nancy Carinne Prowda blended into the swarm around the legendary California Democrat. [The San Francisco Chronicle made note](#) of her presence but left unreported amid the spectacle was the larger role that Prowda, the eldest child of former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, has come to play in Feinstein's life as the 89-year-old has dealt with the absence of her deceased husband, the departure of trusted staffers, a nasty case of shingles and spiraling concerns about her fitness for office.

Not only did Prowda escort Feinstein around Capitol Hill last week, she was again at her side yesterday, helping aides surround the senator in a Capitol hallway as a reporter tried to speak to her. Multiple people familiar with the arrangement say it's only the most visible part of a quiet but critical role the Pelosi family has played in helping to take care of the ailing senator, both in Washington and San Francisco.

By all accounts, the arrangement is rooted in a long and friendly relationship between Feinstein and the Pelosis — twin pillars of San Francisco politics. But among some of those who are aware, it has also raised uncomfortable questions about whether Nancy Pelosi's political interests are in conflict with Feinstein's personal interests.



Nancy Corinne Prowda walks with Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and staff at the Capitol on Thursday, May 11. | Francis Chung/POLITICO

The intrigue surrounds the future of Feinstein's seat. Pelosi has endorsed Rep. Adam Schiff, her longtime protégé and former hand-picked House Intelligence Committee chair, to succeed Feinstein after her sixth and final term ends next year. Schiff (D-Calif.) is a household name in California and already has a \$15 million campaign cash advantage over his nearest competitor.

But if Feinstein were to bow to pressure and retire early, Schiff's advantage could disappear. Gov. Gavin Newsom (D-Calif.) has pledged to appoint a Black woman to serve out her term, and one of Schiff's declared opponents, Rep. Barbara Lee (D-Calif.), would fit the bill.

"If DiFi resigns right now, there is an enormous probability that Barbara Lee gets appointed — thus, it makes it harder for Schiff," one Pelosi family confidant told Playbook, adding that the relationship between Pelosi, her daughter and the senator is "being kept under wraps and very, very closely held."

Durbin: Feinstein must decide 'for herself' if she can serve

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"It's very tricky, and political, because they want her to stay" in the Senate, said the person, who spoke on condition of anonymity to speak candidly about a sensitive situation. "The political thinking is that if DiFi stays as long as possible, it helps Schiff as well."

Pelosi's office confirmed in a statement to Playbook that her daughter "has been supporting her in her shingles recovery." Spokesman Aaron Bennett said Prowda has been friends with Feinstein for "decades," as has Pelosi herself.

But Bennett rejected suggestions that Pelosi was seeking to influence Feinstein's decisions about her future. "Anyone who knows Senator Feinstein knows that her service in the Senate is entirely her own decision, and Speaker Emerita Pelosi would never suggest otherwise," he said.

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Yet Pelosi has been among Feinstein's most vocal defenders as more and more Democrats have raised questions about her ability to serve. Last month, when Feinstein's extended absence due to shingles prompted some Democrats to [call for her immediate retirement](#), Pelosi moved quickly to shut down those calls.

"I've never seen them go after a man who was sick in the Senate," [Pelosi told reporters](#) after Reps. Ro Khanna (D-Calif.) and Dean Phillips (D-Minn.) spoke out. The resignation push quickly petered out.

Now Feinstein is back in the Senate, but the questions about whether she can serve out her term continue to swirl. Aside from her bout with shingles, concerns about Feinstein's deteriorating mental state — first aired in an April 2022 [San Francisco Chronicle report](#) — have only risen.

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Just two days ago, Feinstein appeared to have no memory of the fact that she'd been out of the Senate for several months. "No, I haven't been gone," Feinstein told reporters from [Slate](#) and the [L.A. Times](#) who asked about the reception she's gotten since her return. "I haven't been gone. I've been working. ... I've been here. I've been voting."

Feinstein's office confirmed that Prowda has "been spending time with the senator as she continues to recover from shingles," but did not address further details. Neither Feinstein's nor Pelosi's office responded to questions about whether Prowda is living with the senator, why she was chosen for the job, whether she is getting paid for her duties or whether she's been encouraging Feinstein to remain in office.

Regardless, the appearance of conflict associated with the caregiving setup could further perturb Democrats who want a more active participant in the Senate.

Meanwhile, the questions about Feinstein's future are not going away.

Senate Judiciary Chair Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) [told CNN yesterday](#) he's "monitoring her medical condition almost on a daily basis" due to her pivotal vote on judicial confirmations. Added Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), "As a friend, you can see she's hurting."