



candidate to run afoul even with the best efforts to comply. We must promote education and training at the state, county, and municipal level.

C. Law Enforcement and Prosecution

Law enforcement and prosecutors should receive funding in order to pursue public corruption cases.

Testimony was conveyed from law enforcement investigators and prosecutors regarding the difficulties of investigating and prosecuting public corruption cases. Public corruption cases need specially designated investigators and prosecutors who only handle these types of cases. We heard about Florida Department of Law Enforcement's (FDLE) Office of Executive Investigations which investigates criminal referrals from state agencies such as inspector general's offices and from citizen's complaints. In addition, we heard how FDLE recently started a public integrity section in Tampa. We also heard how some sheriff's offices and police departments have dedicated public corruption investigators. For example, the Miami-Dade Police Department (which covers the entire county) has around twenty-five investigators in its public corruption unit. In addition, the City of Miami Police Department has a small staff of public corruption investigators. The Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office has staffed investigators in their public corruption unit which has specially designated prosecutors.

We received testimony that law enforcement is receiving more referrals involving public corruption crimes. Unfortunately, we also heard that public corruption units have been reduced in size due to reduced budgets despite the increasing referrals. One agency we heard testimony about is FDLE, whose jurisdiction is the entire state of Florida. FDLE has continually undergone budget cuts and presently has only ten investigators in the Office of Executive Investigations and even fewer in the public integrity section in Tampa. FDLE regional offices



investigate public integrity at the municipal level and below while the Tallahassee office investigates officials at the county level and above. Although any agent with FDLE can investigate public corruption, we find that specially designated public corruption investigators within each regional office are preferable.

While we heard about designated public corruption units, they are not the norm at most agencies. We heard that only Miami-Dade, Broward, and West Palm Beach State Attorney's Offices have been able to afford dedicated resources for a public corruption prosecutor or unit. The fact that other state attorney's offices do not have a dedicated public corruption unit may be due to resources, political will, size of the office, or perceived size of the problem. While some state attorney's offices may designate one prosecutor to handle public corruption cases, this prosecutor often splits time with other duties.

Miami-Dade has also created a countywide Office of Inspector General with investigators who have specialized knowledge in handling corruption investigations. This office provides funding for dedicated prosecutors to handle its cases.

Specially trained investigators and prosecutors are needed to handle public corruption cases throughout Florida. Public corruption often involves a high ranking public official; with this comes media attention and pressure. In addition, these cases present difficult legal issues surrounding wiretaps, search warrants, and tracking devices. These cases need to be handled with sensitivity to prevent a public official from being unfairly investigated for another's political advantage. We heard that the FDLE Office of Executive Investigations looks for law enforcement officers with ten to fifteen years of experience who are promoted from within the agency. Miami-Dade State Attorney's public corruption unit includes prosecutors who have been screened for political conflict, have a minimum of three years of experience, and are trained