

**REPORT TO CONGRESS
ON THE ACTIVITIES AND OPERATIONS
OF THE
PUBLIC INTEGRITY SECTION
FOR 2020**



**Public Integrity Section
Criminal Division
United States Department of Justice**

**Submitted Pursuant to
Section 603 of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978**

INTRODUCTION

This Report to Congress is submitted pursuant to the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, which requires the Attorney General to report annually to Congress on the operations and activities of the Justice Department's Public Integrity Section. The Report describes the activities of the Public Integrity Section during 2020. It also provides statistics on the nationwide federal effort against public corruption during 2020 and over the previous two decades. Both the activities of the Public Integrity Section and the nationwide statistics for 2020 reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on court, law enforcement, and Departmental operations.

The Public Integrity Section was created in 1976 in order to consolidate in one unit of the Criminal Division the Department's oversight responsibilities for the prosecution of criminal abuses of the public trust by government officials. Section attorneys prosecute selected cases involving federal, state, or local officials, and also provide advice and assistance to prosecutors and agents in the field regarding the handling of public corruption cases. In addition, the Section serves as the Justice Department's center for handling various issues that arise regarding public corruption statutes and cases.

An Election Crimes Branch was created within the Section in 1980 to supervise the Department's nationwide response to election crimes, such as voter fraud and campaign-financing offenses. The Director of Election Crimes reviews all major election crime investigations throughout the country and all proposed criminal charges relating to election crime.

During the year, the Section maintained a staff of approximately thirty attorneys, including experts in extortion, bribery, election crimes, and criminal conflicts of interest. The Section management included: Corey Amundson, Chief; John D. Keller, Principal Deputy Chief; Todd Gee, Deputy Chief; Robert Heberle, Deputy Chief; Jennifer Clark, Deputy Chief; Peter Nothstein, Acting Deputy Chief, and Richard C. Pilger, Director, Election Crimes Branch.

Part I of the Report discusses the operations of the Public Integrity Section and highlights its major activities in 2020. Part II describes significant cases prosecuted by the Section in 2020. Part III presents nationwide data regarding the national federal effort to combat public corruption over the last two decades.

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PART I

OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PUBLIC INTEGRITY SECTION

A. RESPONSIBILITY FOR LITIGATION

The work of the Public Integrity Section focuses on public corruption, that is, crimes involving abuses of the public trust by government officials. Most of the Section's resources are devoted to investigations involving alleged corruption by government officials and to prosecutions resulting from these investigations. Decisions to undertake particular matters are made on a case-by-case basis, given Section resources, the type and seriousness of the allegation, the sufficiency of factual predication reflecting criminal conduct, and the availability of federal prosecutive theories to reach the conduct.

Cases handled by the Section generally fall into one of the following categories: recusals by United States Attorneys' Offices, sensitive cases, multi-district cases, referrals from federal agencies, and shared cases. These categories are discussed below.

1. Recusals by United States Attorneys' Offices

The vast majority of federal corruption prosecutions are handled by the local United States Attorney's Office for the geographic district where the crime occurred, a fact demonstrated by the statistical charts in Part III of this Report. At times, however, it may be inappropriate for the local United States Attorney's Office to handle a particular corruption case.

Public corruption cases tend to raise unique problems of public perception that are generally absent in more routine criminal cases. An investigation of alleged corruption by a government official, whether at the federal, state, or local level, or someone associated with such an official, always has the potential of becoming a high-profile case simply because its focus is on the conduct of a public official. In addition, these cases are often politically sensitive because their ultimate targets tend to be politicians or government officials appointed by politicians.

A successful public corruption prosecution requires both the appearance and the reality of fairness and impartiality. This means that a successful corruption case involves not just a conviction but public perception that the conviction was

warranted, not the result of improper motivation by the prosecutor, and is free of conflicts of interest. In a case in which the local conflict of interest is substantial, the local office is removed from the case by a procedure called recusal. Recusal occurs when the local office either asks to step aside, or is asked to step aside by Department headquarters, as primary prosecutor. Federal cases involving corruption allegations in which the conflict is substantial are usually referred to the Public Integrity Section either for prosecution or direct operational supervision.

Allegations involving possible crimes by federal judges almost always require recusals of the local offices for significant policy, as well as practical reasons. Having the case handled outside the local offices eliminates the possible appearance of bias, as well as the practical difficulties and awkwardness that would arise if an office investigating a judge were to appear before the judge on other matters. Thus, as a matter of established Department practice, federal judicial corruption cases generally are handled by the Public Integrity Section.

Similar concerns regarding the appearance of bias also arise when the target of an investigation is a federal prosecutor, a federal investigator, or other employee assigned to work in or closely with a particular United States Attorney's Office. Thus, cases involving United States Attorneys, Assistant United States Attorneys (AUSAs), or federal investigators or employees working with AUSAs in the field generally result in a recusal of the local office. These cases are typically referred to the Public Integrity Section.

2. Sensitive and Multi-District Cases

In addition to recusals, the Public Integrity Section handles other special categories of cases. At the request of the Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division, the Section handles cases that are highly sensitive and cases that involve the jurisdiction of more than one United States Attorney's Office.

Cases may be sensitive for a number of reasons. Because of its importance, a particular case may require close coordination with high-level Department officials. Alternatively, the case may require substantial coordination with other federal agencies in Washington. The latter includes cases involving classified information that require careful coordination with intelligence agencies. Sensitive cases may also include those that are so politically controversial on a local level that they are most appropriately handled in Washington.

In addition to sensitive cases, this category encompasses multi-district cases, that is, cases involving allegations that cross judicial district lines and, as a result, fall under the jurisdiction of two or more United States Attorneys' Offices. In these cases, the Section occasionally is asked to coordinate the investigation among the various United States Attorneys' Offices, to handle a case jointly with one or more United States Attorney's Office, or, when appropriate, to assume operational responsibility for the entire case.

3. Federal Agency Referrals

In another area of major responsibility, the Section handles matters referred directly by federal agencies concerning possible federal crimes by agency employees. The Section reviews these allegations to determine whether an investigation of the matter is warranted and, ultimately, whether the matter should be prosecuted.

Agency referrals of possible employee wrongdoing are an important part of the Section's mission. The Section works closely with the Offices of Inspector General (OIGs) of the executive branch agencies, as well as with other agency investigative components, such as the Offices of Internal Affairs and the Criminal Investigative Divisions. In addition, the Section invests substantial time in training agency investigators in the statutes involved in corruption cases and the investigative approaches that work best in these cases. These referrals from the various agencies require close consultation with the referring agency's investigative component and prompt prosecutive evaluation.

4. Requests for Assistance/Shared Cases

The final category of cases in which the Section becomes involved is cases that are handled jointly by the Section and a United States Attorney's Office or other component of the Department. At times, the available prosecutorial resources in a United States Attorney's Office may be insufficient to undertake sole responsibility for a significant corruption case. In this situation the local office may request the assistance of an experienced Section prosecutor to share responsibility for prosecuting the case. On occasion, the Section may also be asked to provide operational assistance or to assume supervisory responsibility for a case due to a partial recusal of the local office. Finally, the Public Integrity Section may be assigned to supervise or assist with a case initially assigned to another Department component.

B. SPECIAL SECTION PRIORITIES

In addition to the general responsibilities discussed above, in 2020 the Public Integrity Section continued its involvement in a number of priority areas of criminal law enforcement.

1. Election Crimes

One of the Section's law enforcement priorities is its supervision of the Justice Department's nationwide response to election crimes. The prosecution of all forms of election crime is a high Departmental priority, and headquarters' oversight in this area is designed to ensure that the Department's nationwide response to election crime matters is uniform, impartial, and effective. In 1980, the Election Crimes Branch was created within the Section to handle this supervisory responsibility.

The Election Crimes Branch oversees the Department's handling of all election crime allegations other than those involving federal voting rights, which are handled by the Civil Rights Division. Specifically, the Branch provides advice and guidance on three types of election crime cases: (1) vote frauds, such as vote buying and absentee ballot fraud; (2) campaign-financing crimes, most notably under the Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA); and (3) patronage crimes, such as political shakedowns and misuse of federal programs for political purposes. Vote frauds and campaign-financing offenses are the most significant, and most common types of election crimes.

The additional election-related work of the Section and its Election Crimes Branch falls into the following categories:

a. Consultation and Field Support. Under long-established Department procedures, the Section's Election Crimes Branch reviews all major election crime investigations, including all proposed grand jury investigations and FBI full-field investigations, and all election crime charges proposed by the various United States Attorneys' Offices for legal and factual sufficiency. (Justice Manual 9-85.210.) The Branch is also often consulted before a United States Attorney's Office opens a preliminary investigation into a vote fraud allegation, although this is not required.

In the area of campaign-financing crimes, Department procedures require consultation with headquarters before any investigation, including a preliminary investigation, is commenced by a United States Attorney's Office. (Justice Manual 9-85.210.) The increased coordination with the Section at the initial stage of a

criminal investigation of a FECA matter enables the Department to coordinate, when necessary, with another federal agency, the Federal Election Commission, which has civil enforcement authority over FECA violations.

The Section's consultation responsibility for election matters includes providing advice to prosecutors and investigators regarding the application of federal criminal laws to vote fraud, patronage crimes, and campaign-financing crimes, and the most effective investigative techniques for particular types of election offenses. In addition, the Election Crimes Branch helps draft election crime charges and other pleadings when requested.

The majority of the Branch's consultations are in the following two categories: vote fraud, also known as election fraud or ballot fraud; and campaign financing crimes arising under the FECA. During 2020, the Branch assisted in evaluating allegations, helping to structure investigations, and drafting charges for United States Attorneys' Offices around the country in these areas of law enforcement.

b. Litigation. Section attorneys investigate and prosecute selected election crimes, either by assuming total operational responsibility for the case or by handling the case jointly with a United States Attorney's Office or other Department component.

c. District Election Officer Program. The Branch also assists in implementing the Department's long-standing District Election Officer (DEO) Program. This Program is designed to ensure that each of the Department's 94 United States Attorneys' Offices has a trained prosecutor available to oversee the handling of election crime matters within the district and to coordinate district responses with Department headquarters regarding these matters.

The DEO Program involves appointing an Assistant United States Attorney in each federal district to serve a two-year term as a DEO and providing periodic training for the DEOs in the handling of election crime and voting rights matters.

The DEO Program is also a crucial feature of the Department's nationwide Election Day Program, which takes place during the federal general elections held in November of even-numbered years. The Election Day Program ensures that federal prosecutors and investigators are available both at Department headquarters in Washington, DC, and in each district to receive complaints of election irregularities while the polls are open. As part of the Program, press releases are

issued in Washington, DC, and in each district before the November federal elections that advise the public of the Department's enforcement interests in deterring and prosecuting election crimes and protecting voting rights. The press releases also provide contact information for the DEOs, local FBI officials, and Department officials in the Criminal and Civil Rights Divisions at headquarters, who may be contacted on Election Day by members of the public who have complaints of possible vote fraud or voting rights violations.

d. Inter-Agency Liaison with the Federal Election Commission. The Election Crimes Branch is the formal liaison between the Justice Department and the Federal Election Commission (FEC), an independent federal agency that shares enforcement jurisdiction with the Department over willful violations of the Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA). The FEC has exclusive civil jurisdiction over all FECA violations, while the Department has exclusive criminal jurisdiction over FECA crimes.

e. Inter-Agency Liaison with the Office of Special Counsel. The Branch also serves as the Department's point of contact with the United States Office of Special Counsel (OSC). The OSC has jurisdiction over noncriminal violations of the Hatch Act, 5 U.S.C. §§ 1501-1509, 7321-7326, which may also involve criminal patronage crimes that are within the Department's jurisdiction.

2. Conflicts of Interest Crimes

"Conflicts of interest" is a wide-ranging and complex area of law, with many layers of administrative and oversight responsibility. Moreover, the federal criminal conflicts of interest laws overlap to some extent with the sometimes broader ethics restrictions imposed by civil statutes, agency standards of conduct, Presidential orders, and, in the case of attorneys, bar association codes of conduct.

The Public Integrity Section's work in the conflicts area falls into the following categories:

a. Criminal Referrals from Federal Agencies and Recusals. The Section's criminal enforcement role comes into play with respect to a narrow group of conflicts of interest matters, namely, those that involve possible misconduct proscribed by one of the federal conflicts of interest statutes, 18 U.S.C. §§ 203-209. These crimes are prosecuted either by a United States Attorney's Office or by the Public Integrity Section. Conflicts of interest matters are often referred to the Section by the various federal agencies. If investigation of a referral is warranted,

the Section coordinates the investigation with the Inspector General for the agency concerned, the FBI, or both. If prosecution is warranted, the Section prosecutes the case. If a civil remedy may be appropriate in lieu of criminal prosecution, the Section or the Inspector General may refer the case to the Civil Division of the Department of Justice for its review.

b. Coordination. The Public Integrity Section works with the United States Office of Government Ethics (OGE) to coordinate conflicts of interest issues with OGE and other executive branch agencies and offices. The purpose of this coordination is to ensure that the overall legislative and enforcement efforts in this area are both complementary and consistent. OGE has broad jurisdiction over noncriminal conduct by executive branch personnel, as well as the authority to provide guidance concerning the coverage of the federal criminal conflicts of interest statutes. The Section's coordination with OGE ensures that consistent guidance is provided with respect to the overlapping criminal, civil, and administrative interests implicated by the statutory and regulatory restrictions on federal personnel.

C. LEGAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

1. Training and Advice

The Public Integrity Section is staffed with specialists who have considerable experience investigating and prosecuting corruption cases. Section attorneys participate in a wide range of formal training events for federal prosecutors and investigators. They are also available to provide informal advice on investigative methods, charging decisions, and trial strategy in specific cases.

The Section also conducts a public corruption seminar, held annually, at the National Advocacy Center. Speakers at this seminar typically include both the Section's senior prosecutors and Assistant United States Attorneys from the field who have handled significant corruption cases. The seminar provides training for federal prosecutors regarding the statutes most commonly used in corruption cases, guidance in the use of the complex and difficult investigative techniques necessary to investigate government corruption, and advice from experienced prosecutors on conducting corruption trials.

2. Legal Advisor to the Integrity Committee of the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency

Pursuant to the Inspector General Reform Act of 2008, Pub. L. No. 110-409, 122 Stat. 4302 (Oct. 14, 2008), the designee of the Chief of the Public Integrity Section serves as Legal Advisor to the Integrity Committee of the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE). The CIGIE is a body composed of the Inspectors General of the various agencies of the executive branch of the federal government. The Integrity Committee of the CIGIE is charged with handling allegations against Inspectors General and senior members of their staff.

In addition, the Integrity Committee is charged with establishing policies and procedures to ensure consistency in conducting administrative investigations. The Committee's procedures, drafted with the assistance of the Public Integrity Section, provide a framework for the investigative function of the Committee. Allegations of wrongdoing by Inspectors General and their senior staff are initially reviewed by an Integrity Committee working group, with assistance from the Public Integrity Section, for potential criminal prosecution. In noncriminal matters, the procedures guide the Committee's process for reviewing or investigating alleged misconduct and for reporting on its findings. The Public Integrity Section also advises the Integrity Committee on matters of law and policy relating to its investigations.

3. Legislative Activities

An important responsibility of the Public Integrity Section is the review of proposed legislation that may affect, directly or indirectly, the investigation and prosecution of public officials and those who seek to corrupt these officials. The Section is often called upon to comment on legislation proposed by Congress, by the Administration, or by other departments of the executive branch; to draft or review testimony for congressional hearings; and to respond to congressional inquiries concerning legislative proposals. On occasion, the Section drafts legislative proposals relating to various corruption matters.

4. Case Supervision and General Assistance

Public corruption cases are often controversial, complex, and highly visible. These factors may warrant Departmental supervision and review of a particular case. On occasion Section attorneys are called upon to conduct a careful review of a sensitive public corruption case, evaluating the quality of the investigative work and the adequacy of any proposed indictments. Based on its experience in this area, the

Section can often identify tactical or evidentiary problems early on and either provide needed assistance or, if necessary, assume operational responsibility for the prosecution.

The Section also has considerable expertise in the supervision of the use of undercover operations in serious corruption cases. The Section serves on the FBI's Criminal Undercover Operations Review Committee. A number of the Section's senior prosecutors have experience in the practical and legal problems involved in such operations and have the expertise to employ this sensitive investigative technique effectively and to advise law enforcement personnel on its use.

5. International Advisory Responsibilities

The Public Integrity Section actively participates in the area of international law enforcement. The Section regularly provides briefings and training on United States public corruption issues to visiting foreign delegations and continues the efforts of the United States to assist foreign countries in their quest to combat public corruption and election crime in their respective countries. This assistance includes participation in international proceedings and coordination with other components of the Justice Department and the State Department on the Administration's positions in this area.

Section experts continue to address visiting foreign officials in investigations and prosecutions of public corruption. These presentations are generally conducted under the auspices of the State Department's Foreign Visitor Program and the Justice Department's Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance, and Training.

PART II
PUBLIC INTEGRITY SECTION
INDICTMENTS AND PROSECUTIONS
IN 2020

INTRODUCTION

As described in Part I, the Public Integrity Section's role in the prosecution of public corruption cases ranges from sole operational responsibility for the entire case to approving an indictment or to providing advice on the drafting of charges. Part II of the Report provides examples of noteworthy public corruption cases for which the Section had either sole or shared operational responsibility during 2020.

In 2020, despite limitations associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Section's case work resulted in numerous guilty pleas, as well as trial convictions in Florida and North Carolina. The Section tried two cases in 2020 resulting in the convictions of three defendants.

The descriptions of the Section's significant cases for calendar year 2020 are separated into categories, based on the branch or level of government affected by the corruption. Election crime cases are grouped separately. Unrelated cases in each category are separated by triple lines. When a conviction but not a sentencing took place in 2020, the case may be reported in this report or in a later year's report.

FEDERAL JUDICIAL BRANCH

The Public Integrity Section has sole responsibility for the investigation and prosecution of federal judges due to the potential appearance issues that might arise if a local United States Attorney's Office were to investigate an allegation of wrongdoing by a judge before whom that United States Attorney's Office appears on a regular basis. The investigation of allegations of criminal wrongdoing in the federal judicial branch is a very sensitive matter. These investigations may involve intrusions into pending federal cases, cooperation from parties or witnesses who are appearing before the court, or potential disruption of the normal judicial process. In addition, the Section must coordinate closely with supervisory judges and the Administrative Office of United States Courts to facilitate the assignment of magistrates and judges from outside of the judicial district to handle requests during the investigation, such as grand jury supervision, or applications for warrants or electronic surveillance. The Public Integrity Section has developed substantial experience and expertise in these matters over the years. During 2020, the Section brought no cases involving the federal judicial branch.

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Public Integrity Section plays a central role in the effort to combat corruption in the federal legislative branch. These cases raise unique issues of inter-branch comity, and they are always sensitive given the high-profile stature of elected officials. The Section has developed substantial expertise regarding the unique protections provided to Members of Congress and their staff by the Speech or Debate Clause set forth in Article I of the Constitution and has worked closely and effectively with House and Senate counsel and the Ethics Committees in both houses. Department procedures require consultation with the Section in all investigations involving a Member of Congress or a congressional staff member. (Justice Manual 9-85.110.) In addition to handling its own cases, the Section routinely provides advice and guidance to prosecutors across the country regarding these sensitive investigations. During 2020, the Section brought no cases involving the federal legislative branch.

FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BRANCH

The Public Integrity Section frequently receives allegations of corruption in the executive branch from federal law enforcement agencies, including the FBI, the Inspectors General for the various departments and agencies, and United States military investigators. These matters involve a careful balancing of the requirements of a criminal investigation and the operational needs of the executive offices involved. During 2020, the Section handled a number of cases involving executive branch corruption, several of which are described below.

US v. John Nettleton, Middle District of Florida

On January 17, 2020, a federal jury found John Nettleton, a former Commander of Naval Station Guantanamo Bay (GTMO), guilty of obstructing justice, concealing information, falsifying records, and making false statements, all related to the investigation of the death of Christopher M. Tur, the Loss Prevention Safety Manager at GTMO's Naval Exchange.

According to the evidence at trial, Christopher Tur was found drowned in the waters of Guantanamo Bay on Jan. 11, 2015. An autopsy revealed that he had suffered injuries prior to his drowning. At the time of Tur's death, Nettleton was the Commanding Officer of GTMO. Tur confronted Nettleton at a party at the GTMO Officers' Club on Jan. 9, 2015, with allegations that Nettleton and Tur's spouse had engaged in an extramarital affair. Later that same evening, Tur went to Nettleton's residence and a physical altercation ensued that left Tur injured. Tur was reported missing on Jan. 10, 2015, by other residents of GTMO. Nettleton did not report that Tur had accused him of the extramarital affair, that Nettleton and Tur had engaged in a physical altercation at Nettleton's residence, or that Tur had been injured. Nettleton persisted in concealment and false statements as the search for Tur continued and then during the investigation into the circumstances of his death.

On October 9, 2020, Nettleton was sentenced to twenty-four months in prison.

US v. Joseph Bongiovanni, Western District of New York

On June 4, 2020, a federal grand jury returned a superseding indictment charging Joseph Bongiovanni, a former Special Agent with the United States Drug Enforcement Agency, and Michael Massechia, a member of organized crime in the greater Buffalo area, with drug trafficking, conspiracy, bribery, and obstruction of justice. According to the allegations in the superseding indictment, Bongiovanni accepted over \$250,000 in bribes to use his position with the DEA to shield individuals involved in drug trafficking for organized crime, including Massechia, from criminal investigations. It was part of the conspiracy that Bongiovanni would feign legitimate investigations of his associates so that information about his coconspirators, and anyone seeking to cooperate against them, would be funneled to him, and to induce other members of law enforcement to defer investigation to him.

Massechia pleaded guilty for his role in the conspiracy on December 9, 2020.

US v. Garrison Courtney, Eastern District of Virginia

On June 11, 2020, Garrison Courtney, a former Drug Enforcement Administration public affairs officer pleaded guilty to defrauding at least a dozen companies of over \$4.4 million by posing falsely as a covert officer of the Central Intelligence Agency. According to court documents, Courtney falsely claimed to be a covert officer of the CIA involved in a highly-classified program or “task force” involving various components of the United States Intelligence Community and the Department of Defense. Courtney devised a scheme in which a supposed classified program sought to enhance the intelligence gathering capabilities of the United States government. In truth, Courtney had never been employed by the CIA, and the task force that he described did not exist. To accomplish the fraud, Courtney approached numerous private companies with some variation of this false story, and claimed that the companies needed to hire and pay him to create what Courtney described as “commercial cover,” i.e., to mask his supposed affiliation with the CIA.

On October 28, 2020, Courtney was sentenced to seven years in prison.

US v. Elliott Broidy, District of Columbia

On October 20, 2020, Elliott Broidy, former Finance Chair and Deputy Finance Chair for a national political party pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to violate the Foreign Agents Registration Act. According to admissions made in connection with his plea, between March 2017 and January 2018, Broidy agreed to lobby the President of the United States, the Attorney General, and other high level officials in the Administration and the Department of Justice to drop civil forfeiture proceedings and related matters concerning the embezzlement of billions of dollars from 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB), a strategic investment and development company wholly owned by the Government of Malaysia. For his efforts, Broidy was paid \$9 million by Low Taek Jho (“Jho Low”), a Malaysian national and the alleged architect of the 1MDB scheme. Broidy also agreed to lobby the Administration and DOJ on behalf of Foreign National A and People’s Republic of China (PRC) Minister A, to arrange for the removal and return of PRC National A – a dissident of the PRC living in the United States. Broidy concealed from the officials whom he lobbied that he was being paid millions of dollars by Low with the expectation of tens of millions more in success fees. The lobbying campaigns were ultimately unsuccessful.

Broidy was granted a presidential pardon on January 19, 2021.

George Higginbotham, a former Justice Department employee, previously pleaded guilty for his role in the scheme on Nov. 30, 2018, in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Lum Davis, a Hawaii businesswoman, previously pleaded guilty for her role in the scheme on Aug. 31, 2020.

STATE AND LOCAL CORRUPTION

The Public Integrity Section plays a major role in combating corruption at all levels of government, including corruption relating to state or local public officials. During 2020, the Section handled a number of cases involving state and local corruption, several of which are described below.

US v. Greg Lindberg & John Gray, Western District of North Carolina

On March 5, 2020, a federal jury convicted Greg Lindberg, the founder and chairman of Eli Global LLC (Eli Global) and the owner of Global Bankers Insurance Group (GBIG), and Lindberg's consultant, John Gray, of conspiracy to commit honest services wire fraud and federal program bribery following an approximately three-week trial. From April 2017 to August 2018, Lindberg and Gray engaged in a bribery scheme involving independent expenditure accounts and improper campaign contributions for the purpose of causing the elected Commissioner of the North Carolina Department of Insurance (NCDOI) to take official action favorable to Lindberg's company. Lindberg and Gray gave, offered, and promised the Commissioner millions of dollars in campaign contributions and other things of value in exchange for the removal of NCDOI's Senior Deputy Commissioner, who was responsible for overseeing regulation and the periodic examination of GBIG. In order to conceal the bribery scheme, at the direction of Lindberg, two corporate entities were set-up to form an independent expenditure committee with the purpose of supporting the Commissioner's re-election campaign, and Lindberg funded the entities with \$1.5 million as promised to the Commissioner.

On August 19, 2020, Lindberg and Gray were sentenced to eighty-seven and thirty months in prison, respectively.

US v. David Romero & Bruno Suarez-Soto, Southern District of California

On June 11, 2020, Romero, former Calexico City Council Member and Mayor Pro Tem, and Suarez-Soto, a former commissioner on the city's Economic Development and Financial Advisory Commission, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit federal program bribery. According to their plea agreements, Romero and Soto accepted \$35,000 in cash bribes from an undercover FBI agent who they believed represented investors seeking to open a cannabis dispensary in Calexico. In return, Romero and Soto guaranteed the rapid issuance of a city permit for the dispensary, and to revoke or hinder other applicants if necessary to ensure that the bribe payer's application was successful. Both men admitted they had taken bribes from others in the past. Referring to this \$35,000 payment, they told the undercover agent, "This isn't our first rodeo."

US v. Ryan Kamada, District of Colorado

On June 30, 2020, Kamada, a former state district court judge, pleaded guilty to obstructing a federal task force investigation of a large-scale cocaine trafficking organization. According to the stipulated facts contained in the plea agreement, in or around October 2018, a federal task force was investigating a drug trafficking organization that was distributing large quantities of cocaine throughout northern Colorado. One of the members of the organization was a drug trafficker who lived in Greeley, Colorado. Kamada had known the drug trafficker since high school. While serving as the "on call" judge in April 2019, Kamada received a phone call from a task force officer who was seeking a search warrant related to the investigation into the drug trafficker. The task force officer pointed out to Kamada that he was associated with the drug trafficker on social media. As a result, Kamada recused himself from the case. But early the next morning, Kamada called his best friend, Geoffrey Chacon, who had also known the drug trafficker since childhood. Kamada told Chacon that law enforcement was "watching" the drug trafficker's house, car and phone, and instructed Chacon to "stay away" from the drug trafficker. Chacon subsequently informed the drug trafficker about the warrant and modified Chacon's own behavior in order to avoid law enforcement attention. The

information that Chacon provided to the drug trafficker also caused the drug trafficker to change his pattern of conduct and substantially interfered with the task force's investigation.

Chacon pleaded guilty for his role in the offense on November 21, 2019.

US v. Charbonier et al., District of Puerto Rico

On August 17, 2020, a federal grand jury returned an indictment charging legislator María Milagros Charbonier-Laureano, a member of the Puerto Rico House of Representatives, as well as her husband Orlando Montes-Rivera, their son Orlando Gabriel Montes-Charbonier, and her assistant Frances Acevedo-Ceballos, for their alleged participation in a years-long conspiracy. According to the allegations in the indictment, from early 2017 until July 2020, Charbonier, Montes, Montes-Charbonier, and Acevedo executed a scheme to defraud the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico by engaging in a theft, bribery, and kickback scheme. For several years, Charbonier inflated her assistant Acevedo's salary by roughly \$2,000 per paycheck so that Acevedo would kick back between \$1,000 and \$1,500 to Charbonier, Montes, and Montes-Charbonier. Acevedo kept the excess inflated salary for herself.

The indictment also charges Charbonier with obstruction of justice. After learning of the existence of the investigation into illegal activities in her office and after learning that a warrant had been obtained for one of her phones, Charbonier allegedly deleted certain data on the phone, including nearly the entire call log, WhatsApp messages, and iMessages.

FEDERAL ELECTION CRIMES

As described in Part I, during 2020, the Public Integrity Section continued its nationwide oversight of the handling of election crime investigations and prosecutions. Set forth below are examples of the Section's 2020 casework in this area.

US v. John Keeler and Darryl Waltz, Southern District of Indiana

On September 29, 2020, a federal grand jury returned an indictment charging Darryl Waltz, a former Indiana state senator and 2016 primary candidate for the office of the U.S. House of Representatives representing the Ninth District of Indiana, and John Keeler, a gaming executive, with violations of federal campaign finance laws, false statements, and falsification of records, for making illegal corporate contributions and conduit contributions to fund Waltz's congressional campaign.

According to the indictment, Waltz agreed with Keeler and Kelley Rogers, a Maryland-based political consultant, to cause New Centaur, LLC to transfer thousands of dollars from its accounts to Rogers as a way to funnel illegal corporate contributions into Waltz's 2016 congressional campaign. Upon receiving the payments from New Centaur, LLC, Rogers recruited several straw donors to contribute to Waltz's campaign. The straw donors were reimbursed by Rogers using the money from New Centaur, LLC. Rogers also transferred a large portion of the New Centaur, LLC money to Waltz, who recruited additional straw donors to donate to his campaign. Waltz either reimbursed or paid these straw donors in advance. Waltz and Keeler concealed these illegal contributions from campaign officials, causing them to unwittingly file materially false reports with the Federal Election Commission.

Kelley Rogers pleaded guilty to wire fraud on January 17, 2020, and admitted his role in the scheme and was sentenced to three years in prison and three years of supervised release.

US v. Domenick DeMuro, Eastern District of Pennsylvania

On March 16, 2020, DeMuro, a former elected Philadelphia municipal Judge of Elections, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to deprive persons of the right to vote and using interstate facilities in aid of bribery. During his guilty plea hearing, Demuro admitted that from 2014 through 2016, he accepted bribes in the form of money and other things of value in exchange for adding ballots to increase the vote totals for certain candidates on the voting machines in his jurisdiction and for certifying tallies of all the ballots, including the fraudulent ballots. Demuro further admitted that a local political consultant gave him directions and paid him money to add votes for candidates supported by the consultant. Demuro admitted that the votes he added in exchange for payments by the political consultant increased the number of votes fraudulently recorded and tallied for the consultant's clients and preferred candidates, thereby diluting the ballots cast by actual voters.

PART III

NATIONWIDE FEDERAL PROSECUTIONS OF CORRUPT PUBLIC OFFICIALS

INTRODUCTION

The tables in this section of the Report reflect data that is compiled from annual nationwide surveys of the United States Attorneys' Offices and from the Public Integrity Section.

As discussed in Part I, most corruption cases are handled by the local United States Attorney's Office in the district where the crime occurred. However, on occasion, outside prosecutors are asked either to assist the local office on a corruption case, or to handle the case entirely as a result of recusal of the local office due to a possible conflict of interest. The figures in Tables I through III include all public corruption prosecutions within each district including cases handled by the United States Attorneys' Offices and the Public Integrity Section. *

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TABLE I

**NATIONWIDE FEDERAL PROSECUTIONS
OF CORRUPT PUBLIC OFFICIALS
IN 2020**

Federal Officials	
Charged	242
Convicted	207
Awaiting Trial	154

State Officials	
Charged	55
Convicted	30
Awaiting Trial	48

Local Officials	
Charged	135
Convicted	110
Awaiting Trial	129

Others Involved	
Charged	196
Convicted	122
Awaiting Trial	230

Totals	
Charged	628
Convicted	469
Awaiting Trial	561

TABLE II

**PROGRESS OVER THE LAST TWO DECADES:
FEDERAL PROSECUTIONS BY UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS' OFFICES
OF CORRUPT PUBLIC OFFICIALS**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
FEDERAL OFFICIALS										
Charged	502	478	479	424	445	463	426	518	425	422
Convicted	414	429	421	381	390	407	405	458	426	397
Awaiting Trial as of 12/31	131	119	129	98	118	112	116	117	107	103
LOCAL OFFICIALS										
Charged	95	110	94	111	96	101	128	144	93	168
Convicted	61	132	87	81	94	116	85	123	102	108
Awaiting Trial as of 12/31	75	50	38	48	51	38	65	61	57	105
PRIVATE CITIZENS INVOLVED IN PUBLIC CORRUPTION OFFENSES										
Charged	266	249	318	410	313	295	303	355	294	298
Convicted	261	188	241	306	311	266	249	302	276	251
Awaiting Trial as of 12/31	121	126	139	168	136	148	179	184	161	200
TOTALS										
Charged	1087	1,136	1,150	1,213	1,163	1,150	1,141	1,304	1,082	1,184
Convicted	920	1,011	868	1,020	1,027	1,030	1,014	1,129	1,061	1,036
Awaiting Trial as of 12/31	437	413	412	419	453	439	487	489	473	554

TABLE II (continued)






	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Totals
FEDERAL OFFICIALS											
Charged	412	381	337	364	458	354	383	275	300	242	8,088
Convicted	392	369	315	364	402	326	334	250	307	207	7,394
Awaiting Trial as of 12/31	110	108	113	111	153	170	169	165	131	154	
STATE OFFICIALS											
Charged	93	100	133	80	123	139	63	85	60	55	2,071
Convicted	143	78	119	109	97	125	68	72	63	30	1,893
Awaiting Trial as of 12/31	41	68	68	33	66	74	53	59	46	48	
LOCAL OFFICIALS											
Charged	282	319	334	231	259	234	223	171	213	135	5,188
Convicted	276	295	303	252	200	213	208	175	199	110	4,579
Awaiting Trial as of 12/31	127	135	149	100	135	148	150	110	111	129	
PRIVATE CITIZENS INVOLVED IN PUBLIC CORRUPTION OFFENSES											
Charged	295	278	330	241	262	255	194	234	207	196	5,593
Convicted	296	318	300	264	205	222	227	198	165	122	4,968
Awaiting Trial as of 12/31	191	144	169	106	150	177	149	145	163	230	
TOTALS											
Charged	1082	1078	1134	916	1102	982	863	765	780	628	20,940
Convicted	1107	1060	1037	989	904	886	837	695	734	469	18,834
Awaiting Trial as of 12/31	469	455	499	350	504	569	521	479	451	561	

TABLE III

**UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS' OFFICES
FEDERAL PUBLIC CORRUPTION CONVICTIONS
BY DISTRICT OVER THE PAST DECADE**

U.S. Attorney's Office	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Totals
Alabama, Middle	9	8	9	8	6	2	4	3	5	2	56
Alabama, Northern	14	13	12	11	13	8	7	11	8	4	101
Alabama, Southern	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	8
Alaska	4	4	2	1	4	4	1	0	0	2	22
Arizona	18	34	40	29	18	8	18	29	26	12	232
Arkansas, Eastern	7	12	4	3	10	14	15	2	3	5	75
Arkansas, Western	1	3	0	2	3	0	1	4	4	1	19
California, Central	27	39	19	66	53	32	23	13	41	23	336
California, Eastern	20	4	4	10	12	14	12	8	8	3	95
California, Northern	3	7	3	9	12	8	12	4	11	4	73
California, Southern	2	39	37	10	7	10	13	7	5	5	135
Colorado	6	9	3	2	0	3	1	6	8	2	40
Connecticut	0	8	13	9	6	0	0	1	4	0	41
Delaware	2	3	5	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	15
District of Columbia	39	47	18	15	8	7	10	19	21	11	195
Florida, Middle	24	25	20	28	27	10	24	14	13	4	189
Florida, Northern	3	9	8	9	14	8	9	5	13	8	86
Florida, Southern	13	28	21	27	42	38	26	39	30	23	287
Georgia, Middle	11	11	9	10	11	2	6	1	4	0	65
Georgia, Northern	32	27	11	33	22	67	24	19	11	11	257
Georgia, Southern	2	4	7	4	1	4	5	2	0	0	29
Guam & NMI	5	1	2	3	10	1	0	2	2	2	28
Hawaii	3	2	0	4	5	0	2	2	5	4	27

TABLE III (continued)

U.S. Attorney's Office	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Totals
Idaho	3	6	4	1	3	4	1	7	2	2	33
Illinois, Central	2	1	6	10	0	1	4	0	3	1	28
Illinois, Northern	30	36	45	18	16	30	25	13	26	22	261
Illinois, Southern	9	7	18	4	3	4	5	5	3	8	66
Indiana, Northern	4	25	15	7	7	10	5	5	5	5	88
Indiana, Southern	2	7	8	10	5	10	4	4	1	4	55
Iowa, Northern	2	1	1	2	4	3	2	0	5	2	22
Iowa, Southern	1	3	2	2	2	6	2	2	0	1	21
Kansas	9	8	4	2	2	0	2	12	16	3	58
Kentucky, Eastern	25	19	12	15	10	17	15	7	14	15	149
Kentucky, Western	13	13	3	4	3	3	6	2	6	5	58
Louisiana, Eastern	29	29	20	10	12	16	14	11	10	8	159
Louisiana, Middle	13	4	5	7	9	3	9	0	0	0	50
Louisiana, Western	9	19	25	4	6	22	9	10	12	8	124
Maine	4	2	2	3	4	5	0	1	0	0	21
Maryland	58	26	47	38	31	23	80	17	11	11	342
Massachusetts	19	13	22	18	16	17	19	11	26	4	165
Michigan, Eastern	18	17	19	13	4	25	20	24	16	3	159
Michigan, Western	6	0	0	6	2	9	7	3	7	1	41
Minnesota	8	0	6	5	4	5	3	3	7	3	44
Mississippi, Northern	4	9	11	8	3	4	3	3	2	0	47
Mississippi, Southern	13	0	7	10	8	3	6	4	2	5	58
Missouri, Eastern	10	11	10	10	5	6	3	6	5	4	70
Missouri, Western	4	10	0	9	6	12	11	15	11	8	86
Montana	5	2	5	27	8	26	19	10	16	13	131

TABLE III (continued)

U.S. Attorney's Office	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Totals
Nebraska	2	3	3	4	3	6	8	14	8	9	60
Nevada	6	6	2	6	0	0	1	5	2	3	31
New Hampshire	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	4
New Jersey	28	27	30	33	23	28	21	31	35	15	271
New Mexico	4	4	2	10	12	4	6	1	4	5	52
New York, Eastern	10	13	5	9	28	8	12	16	17	11	129
New York, Northern	3	5	1	0	4	2	1	2	3	1	22
New York, Southern	24	21	13	13	19	20	15	33	1	8	167
New York, Western	15	18	7	19	17	18	18	2	1	2	117
North Carolina, Eastern	10	4	10	6	13	15	5	16	4	2	85
North Carolina, Middle	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	4
North Carolina, Western	2	0	7	2	4	2	4	3	4	6	34
North Dakota	2	2	0	0	1	0	2	3	3	0	13
Ohio, Northern	28	16	8	11	18	13	12	8	7	11	132
Ohio, Southern	3	9	11	9	12	1	0	2	5	8	60
Oklahoma, Eastern	11	9	14	11	10	4	12	4	11	2	88
Oklahoma, Northern	2	5	3	4	4	5	0	5	0	2	30
Oklahoma, Western	11	12	5	7	6	4	9	4	7	2	67
Oregon	7	2	3	4	3	0	1	5	0	0	25
Pennsylvania, Eastern	23	30	29	36	27	26	26	29	21	9	256
Pennsylvania, Middle	7	7	0	1	14	3	14	7	6	5	64
Pennsylvania, Western	7	10	10	6	8	3	8	4	2	2	60
Puerto Rico	130	30	19	47	13	41	13	28	25	7	353
Rhode Island	8	2	8	4	3	0	1	0	1	0	27

TABLE III (continued)

U.S. Attorney's Office	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Totals
South Carolina	11	2	5	7	3	6	0	7	10	0	51
South Dakota	8	9	3	1	6	1	15	6	13	6	68
Tennessee, Eastern	8	10	8	11	8	4	2	5	3	2	61
Tennessee, Middle	1	9	4	0	5	7	5	5	0	0	36
Tennessee, Western	8	12	18	8	21	9	10	13	0	2	101
Texas, Eastern	2	0	3	6	3	4	4	0	1	2	25
Texas, Northern	19	28	27	39	48	49	18	8	16	13	265
Texas, Southern	43	26	83	29	11	3	12	6	17	2	232
Texas, Western	24	47	53	28	29	30	33	8	11	13	276
Utah	2	1	3	2	0	2	1	0	0	3	14
Vermont	5	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	12
Virgin Islands	3	0	5	2	1	0	0	4	4	2	21
Virginia, Eastern	57	41	53	34	40	32	32	16	26	26	357
Virginia, Western	0	0	3	5	8	4	3	0	3	1	27
Washington, Eastern	2	0	0	0	0	7	1	0	3	0	13
Washington, Western	5	7	5	7	5	9	7	7	7	5	64
West Virginia, Northern	4	4	7	18	3	3	3	2	2	4	50
West Virginia, Southern	1	3	4	4	2	1	4	11	10	5	45
Wisconsin, Eastern	5	8	6	4	5	3	2	8	7	6	54
Wisconsin, Western	5	6	7	5	2	4	6	0	1	1	37
Wyoming	5	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11