

Government Affairs Update



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State Government Affairs Update

Federal Investigation in Illinois

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On Friday July 17, 2020, the United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois publicly released a one-count criminal indictment for bribery against Commonwealth Edison, one of the state's largest public utilities. The indictment outlines numerous actions that ComEd took in order to influence Michael Madigan, the Speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives. Speaker Madigan is named as the "Speaker of the Illinois House" in the indictment. The US Attorney's Office also at that time released what is known as a "Deferred Prosecution Agreement."

Under a Deferred Prosecution Agreement, the criminal defendant agrees to pay a fine and to adhere to a number of conditions laid out in the Agreement for a specific period of time. If those conditions are met to the satisfaction of the US Attorney's Office, the charges are dropped at the end of the time period. In this case, ComEd paid a \$200 million fine and agreed to a number of conditions, including its continuing cooperation in this far reaching federal investigation.

Around mid-day on Friday, the US Attorney held a press conference in Chicago to outline the charges. The US Attorney asked the public to contact the FBI with any information they may have relative to the case. The US Attorney was accompanied by representatives of the FBI and the Internal Revenue Service.

Later on Friday, Speaker Madigan's Springfield legislative office at the State Capitol was served an in-person subpoena by federal agents requesting records related to the investigation. Still later, the Speaker's Office publicly released the subpoena, which requested records related not only to ComEd, but also to Illinois-based companies Walgreens and AT&T, and Rush University Medical Center.

Speaker Madigan has not been charged. He released a statement saying that he has done nothing wrong and that he will cooperate with federal authorities in the investigation. Governor Pritzker reacted to a media inquiry about the events, saying, "If the allegations are true, then the Speaker should resign."

A number of Speaker Madigan's House Democratic caucus members also weighed in, stating "If the allegations are true, then he should step down as Speaker."