

Just in time for the holidays, we learn that Florida is #1 in public corruption, #1 in mortgage fraud, #1 in foreclosures. What can Florida Hometown Democracy do about *that*? Let's connect the dots: Because **developers** need local government to approve their plans, they make it their business to **own the political process**. Not surprisingly, keeping the development machine lubed and oiled is job #1 for too many local officials. The last decade demonstrates the toxic effects of pay-to-play government letting developers go wild: corrupt land use changes, over-development and a collapsed real estate market. Hometown Democracy will help genuinely reduce influence peddling and developer-dominated politics, because it gives voters the power to decide whether and how they want their community changed by comprehensive plan changes.

Spread the word that Hometown Democracy is the *only genuine* reform on table that can begin to change the pay-to-play culture that has wrecked our economy, our environment and our quality of life. Happy Holidays!

[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/14/weekinreview/14marsh.html?\\_r=1&emc=eta1](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/14/weekinreview/14marsh.html?_r=1&emc=eta1)

Illinois Is Trying. It Really Is. But the Most Corrupt State Is Actually . . .

By BILL MARSH

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Where is officialdom most crooked? Last week, many guessed it must be Illinois, after news that Gov. Rod Blagojevich was taped making brazen personal demands in exchange for his selection of a Senate successor to President-elect Barack Obama.

### **Number of Guilty Officials**

The state's image took a hit despite its long history of producing famously principled political figures, from the bowtied Senator Paul Simon to the

great man on the penny.

But bloggers from competing hotbeds of wrongdoing proclaimed that theirs were the worst officials in the land, thank you. New Jerseyans seemed especially sure that their leadership came out on top in the race to the bottom.

Not so. And not so for Illinois , either.

There are several ways to gauge levels of government corruption, all of them a bit, well, corrupt. We present three methods here in the interest of keeping the arguments going.

### **The Guilty, per Capita**

In a Department of Justice tally covering the last decade, Florida wins by its sheer number of guilty. The report, released last week, itemizes convictions in federal public corruption cases at local, state and federal levels in the 50 states, the District of Columbia and three United States territories.

Illinois ranks only seventh, with 502 convictions.. At the squeaky-clean end of the scale, Nebraska barely managed an average of about one guilty official per year.

**READ THE FULL STORY HERE:**

[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/14/weekinreview/14marsh.html?\\_r=1&emc=eta1](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/14/weekinreview/14marsh.html?_r=1&emc=eta1)

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