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Crime Commission Looking For Support On Statewide Agency

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HOLLYWOOD — The Broward County Crime Commission asked state legislators and police officials Tuesday to support creating a statewide crime commission that would consolidate intelligence for all law enforcement agencies in the state.

But State Rep. Irma Rochlin, D-Hallandale, said she thought the Florida Department of Law Enforcement already was doing that job.

“I will have to study the proposal closely before judging its value,” said Rochlin. “It sounds good, but I have questions that the present updating of the FDLE could serve the same purpose.”

Frank Pinter, chairman of the Broward County Crime Commission, presented the idea, likening it to a 24-hour-a-day, year-round grand jury.

Pinter said the commission would be based on crime commissions in other states that have been successful in investigating organized crime and public fraud.

“What we are looking at is a nonpolitical civilian agency, a super, statewide commission unbounded by jurisdictional jealousies and interagency infighting,” Pinter said.

He said the commission should be given powers of subpoena, arrest, immunity and contempt and be shielded from liability.

Pinter said the proposal was supported by the Broward County Chiefs of Police Association.

Pinter suggested a state crime commission last year just before the legislative session, but the proposal went nowhere.

Critics dismissed the idea, saying it would duplicate duties already performed by the FDLE, the Governor’s Council on Organized Crime and the state grand jury.

A bill encompassing a similar suggestion was passed by the state House in 1978 but did not reach the Senate, Pinter said.