



GLENN SELIG

DETECTIVE V. STATE ATTORNEY - May 8, 2003

FOX13 Investigates has learned that Hillsborough County State Attorney Mark Ober is being sued.

A police officer who's been on the Tampa PD for almost 20 years filed the lawsuit today.



Det. Dale "Chip" DeBlock

Det. Dale "Chip" DeBlock accuses Ober of making false and defamatory statements. DeBlock is the same detective we've been telling you about for more than a year who claims his career was ruined after he tried to expose corruption at the Hillsborough County Courthouse.

He says he wants Ober to pay for ruining his career:

DeBlock is still a detective with the Tampa Police Dept. But he no longer works undercover investigating the sex industry. He says he was reassigned after he discovered evidence of corruption at the Hillsborough County State Attorney's office.

He makes the claim in this lawsuit. It alleges Mark Ober, the Hillsborough County State Attorney, "wrongfully sought to have (DeBlock) removed from his position..." to a dead end job. The lawsuit also accuses Ober of making "false and defamatory" statements to the press about DeBlock on May 9, 2001.

That's just days after police internal affairs cleared DeBlock of any wrongdoing.

"I would be remiss in my duty," Ober told FOX13 two years ago, "if we were to call him as a witness in a case, he has no use to us because he has no credibility"



Hillsborough County State Attorney Mark Ober

DeBlock says Ober's remarks permanently damaged his reputation.

"As a police officer all you have is your credibility," DeBlock told Investigative Reporter Glenn Selig. "To this day I cannot go to church, a high school reunion... without someone bringing something about this up."

The lawsuit is filed against Ober individually and in his capacity as state attorney.

It seeks damages in excess of \$15-thousand.

The suit was filed late in the afternoon. Ober's office had no comment.

Since being removed from the Criminal Intelligence Bureau (CIB), DeBlock has been transferred several times from one division to another.

He is now investigating domestic violence.

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Website started by Det. DeBlock to help whistleblower officers and those who become targets of Internal Affairs investigations.

