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DOI STATEMENT ON REFORMS TO CITY COUNCIL DISCRETIONARY FUNDING PROCESS

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), issued the following statement regarding City Council Speaker Christine Quinn's announcement today on reforms to the City Council's discretionary funding process:

"An important part of DOI's mission is to share with City entities the corruption vulnerabilities we uncover during our investigations so corrective action can be taken to prevent recurrence.

In this case, it's been very clear from the investigations DOI conducted - including of former City Councilman Miguel Martinez; Asquith Reid, Chief of Staff to former City Councilman Kendall Stewart; and City Councilman Larry Seabrook, among others - that discretionary funds are a temptation for individuals inclined to engage in corruption or conflicts of interest. Most individuals and nonprofits are not so inclined. But when there is a vulnerable process you must establish controls to safeguard integrity.

It is in that vein that DOI met several times with Speaker Quinn and her staff, sharing our observations and recommendations stemming from DOI's ongoing examination into this complicated discretionary funding arena. DOI is pleased that Speaker Quinn has continued to be both proactive as well as receptive to recommendations that make this a better and less vulnerable process. She has exhibited determination over the past two years in addressing this complex area, weighing many views, in a process that is ultimately about the delivery of important services to New Yorkers. These and earlier reforms were developed as a result of collaboration with the Speaker's office. I also want to acknowledge the significant work by the Mayor's Office, including the Mayor's Office of Contract Services, in implementing reforms and instituting increased training and vetting. Their actions are a vital part in improving this process.

DOI's investigation has not only exposed and stopped corruption of individuals, a number of whom have been convicted of crimes, but also has become the catalyst for crucial change. I am thankful that DOI played an integral and ongoing role in spurring reform, and in ensuring that precious City money is spent appropriately."

DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country. The agency investigates and refers for prosecution City employees and contractors engaged in corrupt or fraudulent activities or unethical conduct. Investigations may involve any agency, officer, elected official or employee of the City, as well as those who do business with or receive benefits from the City.

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