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DOI ARRESTS THREE INDIVIDUALS ON BRIBERY CHARGES BASED ON TIPS FROM CITY BUILDINGS INSPECTORS

—Since 2003, DOI has arrested more than 70 individuals as a result of tips from DOB personnel—

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (“DOI”), announced the arrests of a contractor and, separately, a property owner and his associate on charges of offering bribes to inspectors with the City Department of Buildings (“DOB”) in unsuccessful efforts to induce them to overlook electrical and construction violations at residential properties in Brooklyn. Because DOB inspectors had notified DOI of bribe offers at the locations, the defendants paid the bribes - of \$60 and \$5,000 - to undercover operatives working under DOI’s direction, according to the criminal complaints. The office of Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes is prosecuting the cases.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, “Paying off a City inspector to overlook violations will backfire and add an arrest, criminal prosecution, and possibly a prison sentence to the legal sanctions. I commend the City Buildings Inspectors who immediately alerted DOI about these offers, stopping the corruption in its tracks. DOI continues to work with DOB to protect the integrity of buildings inspections.”

DOB Commissioner Robert D. LiMandri said, “Our inspection work is critical to the safety of New Yorkers, and these inspectors recognized how important it is to immediately report those who try to circumvent the law. I commend the great work of these inspectors who exemplify the honor and integrity of so many Department employees. I also would like to thank Commissioner Gill Hearn and her staff for their work on these investigations. These arrests send a clear message that there are serious consequences for those who attempt to cut corners at the expense of public safety.”

On June 8, 2010, SHU MING LI, 46, of Brooklyn, and YOU Q. LIANG, 57, of Manhattan, were charged with Bribery in the Third Degree, a class D felony. Upon conviction, a class D felony is punishable by up to seven years in prison.

According to the criminal complaint, on May 5, 2010, a DOB inspector observed the basement of a home under construction in the Gravesend section of Brooklyn. The basement was being transformed into what appeared to be an apartment, although no paperwork had been filed with DOB and DOB had not granted permission for the construction. LI introduced himself as the owner of the property, and with LIANG present, LI agreed to give \$5,000 in exchange for the Inspector not issuing a violation and stop work order. LI instructed LIANG to place the money on the floor to complete the transaction.

The Inspector had notified DOI about the incident.

On May 26, 2010, GERMAN A. LEYBINSKY, 42, of Staten Island, who is employed as a contractor, was charged with Bribery in the Third Degree, a class D felony.

According to the criminal complaint, on January 22, 2010, a DOB inspector conducted an electrical inspection at a home in Coney Island, Brooklyn, and noticed that workers were doing electrical work without a permit. The defendant offered money to the Inspector in exchange for not issuing a violation and the defendant provided his phone number to arrange a time for payment. The DOB Inspector notified DOI, which

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followed-up with an undercover operation on January 25, 2010, in which LEYBINSKY paid the undercover operative \$60.

DOB has re-inspected each of the residential sites.

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked DOB Commissioner Robert D. LiMandri and Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes and their staffs for their assistance in these investigations.

These investigations were conducted by DOI's Office of Inspector General for the Department of Buildings.

Criminal complaints are accusations. Defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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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