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DOI COMMISSIONER MARK PETERS DELIVERS REMARKS AT TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL SEMINAR ON ETHICS IN NEW YORK CITY GOVERNMENT

DOI is pleased to be here and to support this Ethics Conference.

As everyone in this room knows, corruption, fraud, and waste have a profound effect, sapping the efficiency and effectiveness of New York City government and how it serves its people.

Each bribe, each fraudulent document submitted, each conflict uncovered, chips away at the public trust and confidence that are so essential to preserving good government and allowing for our democracy to thrive. And there has never been a more urgent time in which we need to promote and demonstrate honesty and efficiency in government.

Building and maintaining strong ethics in government is a shared responsibility – by agencies like COIB and DOI – and by each and every one of you in this room at your respective agencies.

We all have a common goal: Fortifying our government against the threat of corruption and maintaining its integrity.

DOI's investigations – those we do that support the conflicts of interest laws and the criminal probes we conduct – cut to the core of New York City's ability to do its job. Our approach must be comprehensive – through systemic investigations, preventative controls and operational reforms to improve how government runs.

That mission, that mandate, would be much harder to carry out without the people in this room, and City employees who come forward from each of your agencies when they suspect wrongdoing.

We've seen it time and again in our cases:

- A tip by an individual at an EMS station who saw a suspicious disability claim on top of a photo copy machine led DOI to expose a complex Insurance Fraud scheme and arrest 13 former and current City employees of the FDNY and NYPD.
- City Health inspectors coming forward when they've been offered a bribe to look the other way on inspections and award A-letter grades to dirty restaurant owners and operators that allow DOI to shut down those who try and corrupt City safety rules.
- A City Housing Inspector who stepped forward about a bribe offer – taking us on a two-year journey that ultimately exposed an extensive bribery scheme uncovering dozens of building violations that had been unaddressed and causing potentially dangerous conditions. That investigation led to the arrests of 50 individuals – 16 of whom were City employees.

Successfully tackling corruption is a team effort. It means it must be discussed, people must be educated about it, and we must challenge wrongdoing that we see and expose. That common goal makes today's seminar ever more important.

And with perseverance, we can ensure that integrity and honesty remain the mainstays of our City government.

Thank you and I look forward to many robust discussions at today's sessions.

DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country and New York City's corruption watchdog. 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. DOI's strategy attacks corruption comprehensively through systemic investigations that lead to high-impact arrests, preventive internal controls and operational reforms that improve the way the City runs.

**DOI's press releases can also be found at twitter.com/doinews
Bribery and Corruption are a Trap. Don't Get Caught Up. Report It at 212-3-NYC-DOI.**