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NEWS

From the Office of the New York State Comptroller
Thomas P. DiNapoli

May 12, 2014, Contact: Press Office (518) 474-4015

DiNapoli Expands Anti-Corruption Initiative

State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli today announced that he has expanded his anti-corruption initiative and created a new Division of Investigations to build on efforts which resulted in 30 arrests and the restitution of \$3 million last year. The division will be headed by Deputy Comptroller and Counsel for Investigations Nelson Sheingold.

Sheingold previously served as the Comptroller's legal counsel for investigations. Prior to joining the Comptroller's office in 2011, he was chief counsel to the state Inspector General, an assistant attorney general in the state Attorney General's office and an assistant district attorney in New York County.

"Time after time my auditors and investigators have uncovered fraud by government officials, employees and vendors," DiNapoli said. "This new division will boost our scrutiny and strengthen the oversight of public funds. Nelson Sheingold's dogged pursuit of those who line their pockets at taxpayers' expense makes him the perfect choice to head this division. We will continue to expose those who abuse their public duty and rip off taxpayer dollars."

Since taking office, DiNapoli has implemented several measures to maximize the Comptroller's fraud-fighting ability, including his groundbreaking partnership with state Attorney General Eric Schneiderman's office in the Joint Task Force on Public Integrity. This partnership has resulted in numerous criminal actions statewide, including last week's indictment of New York City Councilman Ruben Wills and the convictions of former state Senator Shirley Huntley and former executives of the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty.

DiNapoli's office has also worked cooperatively with U.S. Attorneys' offices, mostly notably in the review of former Assemblyman William Boyland, Jr.'s per diem spending for which he was convicted in federal court.

DiNapoli's fraud oversight of special education providers recovered more than \$2 million, prompted six arrests, four convictions and resulted in legislation enhancing the Comptroller's oversight of the state's \$1.4 billion preschool special education program.

Other anti-fraud initiatives by the Comptroller resulted in:

- Restitution of more than \$680,000 and prison time for Lawrence Bruckner, who ran a multi-million dollar Medicaid dental fraud in Brooklyn by exploiting homeless patients;
- Restitution of nearly \$500,000 and prison time for former Charlton Fire District treasurer Virginia DeCapria, who embezzled public money to pay for plastic surgery and iPods;
- A federal conviction and restitution of more than \$360,000 from Joseph Junkovic of the Bronx who stole money that was meant to promote cancer screening for indigent New Yorkers; and
- The arrests and convictions of various local officials from the Woodstock Fire Co. treasurer to the city of Binghamton's parks and recreation director.

Sheingold's salary is \$150,000.

Anyone with additional information on public corruption is encouraged to contact the Comptroller's office by calling the toll-free fraud hotline at 1-888-672-4555; filing a complaint

online at investigations@osc.state.ny.us; or mailing a complaint to: Office of the State Comptroller, Investigations Unit, 110 State Street, 14th floor, Albany, N.Y. 12236.

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