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Office of New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer

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NEW ATTORNEY GENERAL ANNOUNCES SENIOR STAFF APPOINTMENTS

Independent Legal Observers Hail Spitzer Selections

Attorney General-Elect Eliot Spitzer today announced a series of top legal and administrative appointments that he said would enhance the capabilities and stature of the New York State Department of Law.

"My first priority is to recruit staff members whose professional credentials and integrity are unquestioned," Spitzer said. "In addition, I have sought dynamic individuals who will challenge me and challenge each other to be as creative and aggressive as possible in serving the people of New York."

"I am extremely proud of this extraordinary group. I believe it will quickly become known as one of the most successful legal teams in the nation."

All of the appointments already have top-level experience in the public and private sectors, and a clear record of academic and professional achievement.

The legal appointments were cited by independent observers:

Retired Court of Appeals Judge Stuart Hancock said: "Spitzer has carefully selected experienced and well-qualified attorneys ... he appears to be off to a good start as Attorney General."

James C. Moore, President of the New York State Bar Association, said: "Attorney General-Elect Spitzer has provided us with the names and qualifications of his senior staff appointments. We think it commendable that he appears to be making these appointments based on professional qualifications and accomplishments. We applaud his

commitment to ensuring the Attorney General's office will be well staffed to meet the needs of the citizens of New York."

Key legal appointments and their most recent positions include the following:

First Deputy Attorney General: Michele Hirshman, Assistant U.S. Attorney, Southern District, Criminal Division

Assistant First Deputy Attorney General: Pamela Jones Harbour, Deputy Attorney General, Public Advocacy Division.

Deputy Attorney General for State Counsel: Richard Rifkin, Executive Director, New York State Ethics Commission.

Deputy Attorney General for Public Advocacy: Dietrich L. Snell, Assistant U.S. Attorney, Southern District, Criminal Division.

Counsel to the Attorney General: David M. Nocenti, Counsel to the Queens Borough President.

Special Counsel to the Attorney General: Peter B. Pope, Vice President and Inspector General, New York City School Construction Authority.

Key administrative appointments and their most recent positions include:

Chief of Staff: Rich Baum, former Minority Leader, Orange County Legislature.

Chief Administrative Officer: Richard E. Warnke, Chief Administrative Officer, New York State Banking Department.

Director of Communications: Darren Dopp, Communications Director, Office of the Majority Leader, New York State Assembly.

Press Secretary: Scott R. Brown, Press Secretary to the Erie County Executive.

(Additional biographical information on each of the appointments is attached.)

Lloyd Constantine, Chair of the Attorney General-Elect's transition team, said: "Eliot's reputation as an attorney and his pledge to make appointments based strictly on merit have produced an overwhelming response for opportunities in the new administration. From this pool of very accomplished applicants, Eliot has made some outstanding appointments."

The pay levels for the appointments have yet to be finalized. The

salaries will be comparable, however, to the existing salaries for the department heads in Attorney General's office. A number of the appointees are forgoing salaries several times greater in the private sector to be a part of the new Spitzer administration.