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**MAYOR BLOOMBERG AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS COMMISSIONER MINTZ
CELEBRATE THE 10,000TH FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT CENTER CLIENT**

*More Than \$4.2 Million of Consumers' Debt Has Been Paid Down with Counseling at the City's
Financial Empowerment Centers*

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Department of Consumer Affairs Commissioner Jonathan Mintz joined the City's Financial Empowerment Center's 10,000th client today at a ceremony at Gracie Mansion. The City's Financial Empowerment Centers have provided free, one-on-one, professional financial counseling to thousands of New Yorker for the last two years. Since 2009, the Centers' financial counselors have conducted more than 18,700 counseling sessions, reviewed more than 7,100 credit reports, created more than 5,200 budgets, helped New York City residents pay down more than \$4.2 million in debt and build more than \$367,000 in savings.

"Today we marked an important milestone in our efforts to empower New Yorkers to take hold of their financial situations: recognizing the 10,000th client served by the City's growing network of Financial Empowerment Centers," said Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg. "This one-on-one counseling is made available thanks to the generosity of private funding partners and we're making sure their dollars earn a significant return in the number of people we help, the quality of services provided and the positive impact on our clients' financial futures. Already we've made a big difference in the lives of thousands of New Yorkers—paying down more than \$4.2 million in debt and building more than \$367,000 in savings."

"Harriet Spear is one of the thousands of New Yorkers who, in the last two years, visited one of the City's Financial Empowerment Centers, realizing that when your financial situation gets complicated there's no substitute for sitting down, one-on-one, with a professional financial counselor," said Commissioner Jonathan Mintz. "With the help of one of our counselors, she has managed to tackle more than \$20,000 of debt, create a realistic budget, is working to rebuild her credit and has been connected to housing counseling services and she did it all for an unbeatable price. All of the services at the City's more than 20 Financial Empowerment Centers are available for free by calling 311."

As part of the Bloomberg Administration's aggressive efforts to fight poverty in New York City, the City's Financial Empowerment Centers were created as the first initiative of the Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) to offer free, one-on-one professional financial counseling in person and in multiple languages. The pilot Financial Empowerment Center opened in the Bronx in June 2008 and today there are more than 20 Financial Empowerment Center locations in the City. The Centers help clients with money management, budgeting, credit counseling, negotiating with creditors, finding affordable banking services, dealing with

