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## Remarks as Prepared: DCWP Commissioner Levine Delivers Remarks at CUNY Citizenship Now! Drive

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Good afternoon, New Yorkers!

I'm Sam Levine, Commissioner of the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection.

To Monique Francis, the CUNY Citizenship Now team, and all the partnering organizations, elected officials, lawyers, and volunteers here today – thank you for making this extraordinary event possible. It's an honor to be included.

As I look across this room, just moments before hundreds of you are set to apply for citizenship, I see quite vividly what Frederick Douglass called our "Composite Nation."

I see a room of different backgrounds, different cultures, and different journeys. But I do not see division.

I see our country's superpower: a singular public bound not by superficial identities, but by an enduring promise — that here in America, every person is entitled to equal justice, equal dignity, and equal opportunity under the law.

Today, each of you makes that promise real. And that is no small thing. Of course, maintaining that promise takes vigilance. It demands institutions that are accountable and answerable to you, the people we serve.

So I want you to know that you have a real, dedicated partner in our agency, DCWP, which fights *every day* to protect your rights, regardless of immigration status.

Look, trusting government can take a leap of faith, especially in this fraught moment of ours.



That's why DCWP goes the extra mile to back up your rights with aggressive enforcement. We know that words on paper account for precious little if they are not felt in daily life.

Take Notarios. Many of you in this room may be personally familiar with immigration service providers that deceptively advertise themselves as lawyers and accredited professionals, issuing false guarantees, false commitments, and false prices that they can't keep.

These businesses prey on the most vulnerable, taking advantage of people trying, in good faith, to build a better future in our city. At DCWP, we are cracking down on these bad actors once and for all.

Under Mayor Mamdani's leadership, DCWP has launched sweeping investigations into fraudulent immigration service providers across the five boroughs. In March alone, DCWP conducted hundreds of inspections and issued dozens of summonses and violations.

Our message is simple: exploiting immigrant communities will not be tolerated in New York City. Today, members of our team are here sharing resources and information about your rights under City law. I encourage you to visit our table, ask questions, and learn more about the protections available to you and your families.

Know that, should you ever experience fraud or deception, you can visit us at [nyc.gov/consumers](https://nyc.gov/consumers). DCWP will step in. Completely free, completely confidential.

Because rights only matter if you know about them — and trust that someone will enforce them. You deserve nothing less. And you can expect nothing less from us. That, my friends, is how our Composite Nation endures.

Thank you, and congratulations on taking this critical step towards citizenship.