



The City of New York
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**TESTIMONY OF DOI COMMISSIONER MARK G. PETERS AT THE CITY COUNCIL HEARING
EXAMINING THE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR THE NYPD**

Good afternoon Chair Gibson and members of the Committee on Public Safety, and Chair Gentile and members of the Committee on Oversight and Investigation. I am Mark Peters, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"). Thank you for the opportunity to address the committees and provide an update on the work of DOI's Office of the Inspector General for the NYPD over the past four years, and highlight many of its successes.

It's fitting that DOI provide its first comprehensive public briefing on the work and impact of its Police Inspector General before this committee, the driving force that pushed to pass Local Law 70 in 2013, and mandated independent oversight of the New York City Police Department ("NYPD") for the very first time.

Local Law 70 required that as Commissioner of DOI, I appoint an Inspector General to "investigate, review, study, audit and make recommendations relating to the operations, policies, programs and practices of NYPD."

Our mission, consistent with the guiding principles of the law, as well as our overarching mandate under the charter to serve as the Inspector General for all City agencies, is to "enhance the effectiveness of the police department, increase public safety, protect civil liberties and civil rights, and increase the public's confidence in the police force, thereby building stronger police-community relations." I am joined here today by Philip Eure, who I appointed in 2014 as DOI's Inspector General for the NYPD, to lead the charge in our efforts.

I commend the Council's foresight and collective wisdom with which you crafted Local Law 70, ensuring that the Inspector General's office was situated within the DOI framework, which has been instrumental in conducting our oversight of the NYPD.

In particular, the statutory powers that imbue DOI with independence, gives us authority to issue subpoenas and have complete, unfettered access to all government documents, workers and information; to arrest those who we believe have committed crimes; to see across all government agencies; and to insist upon systemic changes to improve the way the City runs. These powers have ensured that we are able to carry out our investigations of the policies and practices of the NYPD, which is an unprecedented feat that would have been nearly impossible outside of DOI.

For example: our investigation of the NYPD's compliance with the court-mandated rules known as the Handschu Guidelines, which govern the investigation of religious and political groups and activity, would have been hindered significantly if the Police Inspector General did not have the powers that DOI, as a law

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enforcement agency, provides its Inspectors General to access and review sensitive and highly confidential intelligence documents that are only available to law enforcement.

Further, the creation of any new Inspector General's office is a challenge—from hiring a talented staff with a broad range of investigative skills, to setting protocols for production of documents and information and ensuring cooperation with those protocols, to crafting procedures for the conduct, scope and subjects of investigations. Establishing and enforcing these protocols and procedures with an institution as large as the NYPD would be impossible without the counterbalancing institutional power and weight of the Department of Investigation.

In accordance with Local Law 70, the Inspector General publishes written, publicly-available reports for any investigation, review, study, or audit it completes. The NYPD Commissioner is required to submit a written response to each published report within 90 days, which are made publicly available and can be accessed on the DOI website.

In its first four years, the Inspector General has been able to build an impressive collection of critical analyses of policing in the City. These include assessment of NYPD's handling of U-Visa certification requests by immigrants to ensure we all as a city are doing everything we can to push back against horrific national policies; review of NYPD's use of force in New York City, which resulted in the Department's first ever agreement to track force; and an assessment of NYPD's Body-Worn Cameras pilot program, which focused on a review of activation, policy compliance, access to footage, and retention.

This deep dive analysis of a range of critical policing issues have resulted in recommendations, many of which have been accepted by NYPD and which will further protect the rights of New Yorkers, all while improving NYPD's accountability and efficiency. Inspector General Phil Eure will provide a more detailed update on the work of his team momentarily.

Going forward, in addition to new investigations, DOI will also consistently monitor the adoption and implementation by the NYPD of our recommendations for operational reform and preventive measures, as it relates to their policies and practices.

This monitoring is particularly important because it will allow the City Council to support our efforts by holding the NYPD accountable for implementing our recommendations, which will lead to improvements in the way they do business, and protect the civil liberties and rights of all New Yorkers.

As public officials, you have an opportunity and the authority afforded to you as members of the Council, to demonstrate your commitment to increased police accountability and ensure that the important reforms we propose become reality.

I thank you for your continued support and interest in the work of DOI's Inspector General for the NYPD.

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.

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