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QUEENS DISTRICT ATTORNEY MELINDA KATZ
INTRODUCES THE OFFICE'S MAJOR ECONOMIC CRIMES BUREAU

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today the creation of the Major Economic Crimes Bureau in her newly reorganized Investigations Division. This Bureau combines the former Organized Crime and Rackets Bureau with components of the former Economics Crimes Bureau. This new crime fighting team will investigate and prosecute a broad array of large-scale financial crimes that often fuel dangerous criminal enterprises in our communities.

District Attorney Melinda Katz said, "When I became your District Attorney, I set out to re-organize the Office to better serve the needs of our communities. At the helm of this new and modernized Major Economic Crimes Bureau will be a veteran prosecutor with a wealth of experience fighting on behalf of the people of Queens County."

The Major Economic Crimes Bureau will target organized groups engaging in check-cashing and credit card fraud, fishing and identity theft schemes, auto theft, insurance fraud rings, gambling and loan sharking operations, as well as dismantling medical mills. The Bureau will collaborate with a variety of local, state, and federal law enforcement partners -- often in combination -- to achieve these ends. These investigations will utilize sophisticated crime fighting strategies, such as wiretapping and location data, and make use of New York's Enterprise Corruption statute where appropriate.

As part of her vision for the future, DA Katz has implemented a comprehensive approach to crime fighting with the knowledge that economic crimes frequently have ties to violent criminal organizations that pose a threat to the community. To that end, the Major Economic Crimes Bureau will work closely with the District Attorney's Violent Criminal Enterprises Bureau, as well as other bureaus, in a collaborative partnership designed to fully dismantle criminal organizations operating in Queens County.

The District Attorney has selected Assistant District Attorney Mary Lowenburg to lead this Bureau. A 22-year veteran of the Office, Bureau Chief Lowenburg had previously served as Deputy Bureau Chief in the former Organized Crimes and Rackets Bureau, as well as Chief of the Auto Crime Unit. Throughout her career, Chief Lowenburg has investigated and prosecuted

numerous Queens-based criminal organizations engaging in crimes ranging from organized auto crime, larceny and identity theft schemes to narcotics and firearms trafficking operations. The Major Economic Crimes Bureau will be staffed with a talented and dedicated team of prosecutors and investigators who will use their years of experience and expertise to uncover and prosecute these crimes that will ultimately make our communities safer for everyone.

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Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted at www.queensda.org.