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**62 CHARGED IN MAJOR DRUG SWEEP FOLLOWING SIX-MONTH UNDERCOVER
INVESTIGATION AT TWO QUEENS HOUSING COMPLEXES**

Hundreds of Undercover Drug Buys Made; Some Of Buys Allegedly Within Drug-Free School Zones

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown and New York City Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly today announced the indictment of fourteen individuals and the arrest of forty-eight others as part of a large-scale undercover narcotics investigation at two Jamaica, Queens, housing complexes: the Baisley Park Housing Development and Rochdale Village.

The defendants – who range in age from 16 to 62 – are charged with selling powdered and crack cocaine, heroin, marijuana and such so-called recreational drugs as oxycodone, ecstasy and BZP (benzylpiperzine) to undercover police officers on hundreds of separate occasions over a six-month period in and around the housing complexes. Ten of the defendants are charged with selling drugs within a drug-free school zone.

Queens District Attorney Brown said, “The vast majority of the residents of these two housing complexes are decent, hard-working citizens who have been virtually held hostage by the gangster lifestyle of a relatively few individuals who are alleged to have operated with near impunity – allegedly selling a cornucopia of illegal drugs in their building stairwells and in the parking lots of a nearby fast food restaurant and pharmacy, while a seemingly defiant ten are alleged to have sold their illicit products near neighboring schools on more than thirty separate occasions.”

The District Attorney continued, “These arrests – and the seizure of drugs, guns and other contraband resulting from this investigation – should serve as a warning to both drug dealers and violent criminals alike that the law enforcement community – in spite of the City’s economic difficulties – will continue to aggressively track down those individuals who traffic in drugs and seek to put them in prison for long period of time.”

Commissioner Kelly said, “The arrests in this case illustrate the determination and persistence of both police and prosecutors in attacking drug trafficking in and around public housing in order to improve the quality of life for law-abiding residents there. While dealers have frequently attempted to use public housing as a convenient marketplace, law enforcement will persist – as it did in this case – in jailing them, especially when they sell near schools.”

The investigation began in August 2010 when detectives assigned to the NYPD’s Queens Narcotics Division received information that drug dealers were engaged in operations around the housing

complexes. In response, the NYPD's Queens Narcotics Division and District Attorney Brown's Narcotics Investigations Bureau dispatched numerous undercover officers to purchase crack and powdered cocaine, heroin and other drugs. During the course of the investigation, undercover officers allegedly purchased narcotics, controlled substances and marijuana on hundreds of separate occasions – including 33 sales within 1,000 feet of P.S. 72, located at 133-25 Guy Brewer Boulevard, P.S. 123, located at 145-01 119th Avenue, and John Adams Annex-Jump Start Academy, located at 120-27 141st Street. Other alleged drug sale locations included the Popeye's restaurant parking lot at 122nd Street and Guy Brewer Boulevard and the Walgreens pharmacy parking lot at 145-80 Farmers Boulevard.

In addition to the arrests, officers executed fourteen court-authorized search warrants and allegedly seized a total of 60 pounds of marijuana, more than four ounces of cocaine and other narcotics, approximately \$30,000 in cash, and seven weapons – including a .40 caliber High Points, a .9mm Taurus semi-automatic pistol, a .9mm Ruger semi-automatic pistol, a .380 caliber Davis, a .38 caliber Revolver Rexio Fabricade Armas, a .45 caliber Springfield Armor and a .44 caliber revolver. In addition, six vehicles were seized for forfeiture: a 2010 Honda Pilot, a 2005 Dodge Magnum, a 2004 Hyundai Sonata, a 2003 BMW, a 1995 Chevy Extreme pick-up truck and a 1994 Nissan Maxima.

The Baisley Park Housing Development, located at 164-01 Foch Boulevard in Jamaica, Queens, is part of the New York City Housing Authority's network of housing developments. The Baisley Park Houses were completed in 1961 and consist of five eight-story buildings in which 1,003 people reside in 378 apartments. Rochdale Village, located at 169-65 137th Avenue, is a privately funded and federally subsidized housing complex consisting of 6,000 apartments in 20 buildings.

The defendants are variously charged with the crimes of Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance in the First Degree, a Class A-I felony punishable by up to twenty years in prison; Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree, which is a Class C felony punishable by up to fifteen years in prison; Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance in the Second Degree, a Class A-II felony punishable by up to ten years in prison; Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance in the Third Degree and Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance In or Near School Grounds, both Class B felonies, each punishable by up to nine years in prison; and Criminal Sale of Marijuana in the Fourth Degree, a Class A misdemeanor punishable by up to one year in jail.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Frank Bleier, of the New York City Police Department's Queens Narcotics Division, under the supervision of Sergeant Vito Ardito, Lieutenant John Natoli and Captain James Fulton, under the command of Inspector Michael E. Bryan, and under the overall supervision of Deputy Chief Joseph Reznick, Commanding Officer of the Narcotics Division, and Chief Anthony Izzo, Commanding Officer, Organized Crime Control Bureau.

Assistant District Attorney Jennifer S. Michael, of the District Attorney's Narcotics Investigations Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Wilbert J. LeMelle, Bureau Chief, Karen J. Friedman, Deputy Bureau Chief, and Philip D. Anderson, Supervisor, and the overall supervision of Executive District Attorney for Investigations Peter A. Crusco and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Linda M. Cantoni.

It should be noted that indictments and criminal complaints are merely accusations and that defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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Note to Editor: An e-version of this press release is posted on QDA website at www.queensda.org.