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**46 CHARGED IN MAJOR DRUG SWEEP FOLLOWING UNDERCOVER
INVESTIGATION AT LEFRAK CITY HOUSING COMPLEX**

*Hundreds of Undercover Drug Buys Made; Some From Licensed Child Day Care Center;
Pit Bull Allegedly Attacked Officer Executing Search Warrant At TLC Inspector's Apartment*

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown, joined by New York City Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly, today announced the filing of criminal charges against 46 individuals on drug and other charges following a seven-month undercover investigation at LeFrak City, a housing complex in central Queens. Nuisance abatement orders were also served on five apartments in the complex.

The defendants – who range in age from 17 to 63 – are charged with selling crack and powdered cocaine, marijuana, heroin, and other controlled substances, including prescription medications, to undercover police officers on hundreds of occasions over a seven-month period in and around LeFrak City. In one instance, it is alleged that fourteen undercover drug purchases were made from two men who were operating out of a licensed day care center at the complex. In another instance, it is alleged that in executing a search warrant at another complex apartment, the tenants – one of whom is an inspector at the City's Taxi and Limousine Commission – tried to evade arrest by releasing a pit bull whose vocal cords had allegedly been cut. The dog was captured, but not before attacking one of the officers who required medical treatment.

Queens District Attorney Brown said, "This initiative is yet another step in our continuing campaign to stop drug-dealing and drug-based violence in Queens. These arrests underscore our commitment to improve the quality of life for the residents of LeFrak City. Dealers in this operation are alleged to have hit a new low selling drugs out of a day care center where hardworking parents drop off their children in the expectation that they will be shielded from harm – not caught up in it."

Commissioner Kelly said, "When they used a day care center from which to sell drugs, dealers set a new record for how low they can go. Illegal drugs ruin lives and destroy neighborhoods, and in this case even put toddlers at risk."

The investigation began in March 2011 when detectives assigned to the NYPD's Queens Narcotics Division received information regarding drug dealing around LeFrak City. In response, the NYPD's Queens Narcotics Division and District Attorney Brown's Narcotics Investigation Bureau dispatched numerous undercover officers to purchase crack and powdered cocaine, heroin and marijuana. During the course of the investigation, undercover officers additionally purchased methadone, Ecstasy, oxycodone, codeine and Xanax, among other drugs.

District Attorney Brown added that the alleged sales occurred in and around LeFrak City, including

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in several different apartments. Fourteen drug sales were allegedly made out of 98-38 57th Avenue, apartment 2K, which is the location of the state-licensed Burke-Arthur Day Care Center whose listed owner is Diane Burke. Two of the defendants – Hector Rodriguez and Donnell Burnhill who are, respectively, Ms. Burke's son and the father of Ms. Burke's daughter's baby – are accused of selling undercover officers marijuana, crack cocaine and Ecstasy pills from the daycare center, which has the capacity to care for 12 children, ages six weeks to 12 years.

LeFrak City is one of the largest privately owned housing developments in the country and is made up of twenty 18-story apartment buildings consisting of 5,000 apartments located on 40 acres of land – situated along the Long Island Expressway in central Queens and bounded by Corona, Elmhurst, Flushing and Rego Park. The complex was built between 1960 and 1969 and is home to more than 15,000 people.

In addition to the arrests, officers executed thirteen court-authorized search warrants and allegedly recovered nearly seven pounds of marijuana, more than two pounds of cocaine, various amounts of crack cocaine, over 3,600 pills, \$3,400 in cash, and a .25-caliber semi-automatic handgun.

In executing a search warrant at 96-08 57th Avenue, apartment 4C, at 6:00 a.m. yesterday, October 19, 2011, it is alleged that police observed Eugene Griffin, a New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission lieutenant inspector, exiting the location smoking a marijuana cigarette. When told not to move by police, it is alleged that Griffin re-entered the two-bedroom apartment. It is further alleged that as police entered the apartment, a pit bull, whose vocal cords apparently had been altered to prevent the animal from barking, was released in an effort by those inside to evade arrest. The dog attacked one of the detectives, tearing through his pants and biting him on the right knee. The officer was taken to a local Queens hospital, where he received seven stitches and rabies testing.

Arrested at the location was Eugene Griffin, 62, his wife, Joanne Griffin, 62, their son, Omar R. Griffin, 30, and Ricketta Smith, 23, on multiple charges – including third-degree criminal possession of a controlled substance, second-degree criminal possession of a weapon and second-degree assault. Allegedly recovered at the apartment was 263 zip lock bags of marijuana, a black bag containing a pound of marijuana, a plastic tube containing cocaine, three electronic scales, a grinder with marijuana, a .25 caliber semi-automatic pistol and other items.

District Attorney Brown said that police served a nuisance abatement order on the day care center, the Griffins' apartment, as well as three other apartments in the complex. A nuisance abatement order allows a landlord to evict tenants who commit felonies or serious misdemeanors on their property.

The defendants are variously charged with Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance in the First Degree, a Class A-I felony punishable by up to 20 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 Possession of a Controlled Substance in the Third Degree, both Class B felonies, each punishable by up to nine years in prison; Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance in the Fourth Degree and Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the Fourth Degree, both Class C felonies, each punishable by up to 5½ years in prison; Criminal Sale of Marihuana in the Second Degree and Criminal Possession of Marihuana in the Second Degree, both Class D felonies, each punishable by up to 2½ years in prison; Criminal Sale of Marihuana in the Third Degree, a Class E felony punishable by up to 1½ years in prison; and Criminal Sale of Marihuana in the Fourth Degree and Criminal Diversion of Prescription Medications and Prescriptions in the Fourth Degree, both Class A misdemeanors, each punishable by up to one year in jail.

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In addition to drug charges, some of the defendants are variously charged with Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree, a Class C felony punishable by up to fifteen years in prison; Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Third Degree and Assault in the Second Degree, both Class D felonies, each punishable by up to seven years in prison; and Assault in the Third Degree, Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Fourth Degree, and Resisting Arrest, Class A misdemeanors, each punishable by up to one year in prison.

The investigation was conducted by Detectives Thomas Decker and Kenneth Rice, of the New York City Police Department's Queens Narcotics Division, under the supervision of Sergeant Bryan McNulty and Sergeant Terrence Curran and under the command of Captain Peter Esposito, Group Captain Narcotics Borough Queens, and Inspector Michael Bryan, Commanding Officer, Narcotics Borough Queens and under the overall supervision of Assistant Chief Joseph Reznick, Commanding Officer Narcotics Division, and Chief Anthony Izzo, Commanding Officer, Organized Crime Control Bureau.

Assistant District Attorney Soledad V. Diaz, of the District Attorney Narcotics Investigation Bureau, is prosecuting the cases under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Wilbert J. LeMelle, Bureau Chief, Karen J. Friedman, Deputy Bureau Chief and Supervisor Philip D. Anderson, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant 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 Editors: E-version of this press release posted at www.queensda.org

DEFENDANT ADDENDUM

INDICTMENTS (17 defendants)

Ishmel Allen, (d.o.b.1-13-1990), 96-02 57th Avenue, apt. 17D
Marie Alverio, (d.o.b. 8-7-1971), 99-04 57th Avenue, apt. 3C
George Baggett, (d.o.b. 5-4-1969), 55-15 99th Street, apt. 3B
Donnell Barnhill, (d.o.b. 5-7-1988), 98-38 57th Avenue, apt. 2K
Shirley Bello, (d.o.b. 6-4-1991), 97-22 57th Avenue, apt. 4N
Daniel Cepeda, (d.o.b. 3-6-88), 53-22 105th Street
Luis Cruz, (d.o.b. 11-30-1946), 102-09 Martense Avenue, 1st floor
Bryan Dymarkowski, (d.o.b. 5-13-1994), 103-20 Martense Avenue., 2nd floor
Galvin Ellison, (d.o.b. 12-26-1982), 97-30 57th Avenue, apt. 3N
Melbourne Jones, (d.o.b. 6-23-1971), 97-22 57th Avenue, apt. 5D, 4N
Melvin McQueen, (d.o.b. 2-11-1948), 9602 57th Avenue, apt. 3H
David Pavon, (d.o.b. 7-21-1988), 55-15 99th Street, apt. 3D
Jeffrey Regalado, (d.o.b. 10-13-1988), 55-15 99th Street, apt. 3K
Rafael Rodriguez, (d.o.b. 11-13-1990), 37-29 102nd Street
Cesar Seminario, (d.o.b. 11-9-1979), 55-25 98th Place, apt. 3L
Jair Serra, (d.o.b. 10-22-1978), 47-26 46th Street, apt. 1F
Charles Watts, (d.o.b. 4-18-1963), 98-30 57th Avenue, apt. 16G

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CRIMINAL COURT COMPLAINTS (29 defendants)

Andrea Allen, (d.o.b. 1-27-1962), 55-15 99th Street
Vincent Allen, (d.o.b. 3-20-1979), 96-02 57th Avenue
Sean Bermudez, (d.o.b. 11-6-1990), 55-25 98th Street, apt. 2A
Veronica Bethea, (d.o.b. 3-12-1957), 98-38 57th Avenue
Darren Brown, (d.o.b. 12-15-1962), 145-51 Rockaway Boulevard
Beatrice Castro, (d.o.b. 2-27-1985), 53-22 105th Street
Dwayne Corwise, (d.o.b. 5-30-1968), 98-15 Horace Harding Expressway, apt. 5L
Humberto Nikolas Da Costa, (d.o.b. 3-15-1984), 97-36 55th Avenue, 2nd floor
Devron Davis, (d.o.b. 1-9-1993), 54-39 100th Street, apt. 802
David Estrada, (d.o.b. 4-5-1987), 98-32 57th Avenue
Joshua Gaddist, (d.o.b. 1-7-1986), 98-45 57th Avenue, apt. 1H
Eugene Griffin, (d.o.b. 4-24-1949), 96-08 57th Avenue, apt 4C
Joanne Griffin, (d.o.b. 9-12-1949), 96-08 57th Avenue, apt 4C
Omar Griffin, (d.o.b. 4-7-1981), 96-08 57th Avenue, apt. 4C
Howard Harris, (d.o.b. 3-19-1968), 99-06 58th Avenue, apt. 1J
Nikeya Harrison, (d.o.b. 8-13-1981), 96-02 57th Avenue
Denzel Hazelwood, (d.o.b. 12-2-1990), 55-03 98th Street, 2nd floor
Abel Infante, (d.o.b. 10-16-1970), 97-30 57th Avenue, apt. 11C
Steven Layana, (d.o.b. 2-4-1994), 57-28 Vandorren Street, 1st floor
Luis R. Marrero, (d.o.b. 7-29-1982), 55-15 99th Street, apt. 5E
Bobby Nesmith, (d.o.b. 9-10-1962), 135-11 130th Street, South Ozone Park
Marylynn Ordan-Ferret,(d.o.b. 9-13-1987)
Quezada Paolola, (d.o.b. 3-17-1992) 55-15 99th Street
Joel Reyes, (d.o.b. 1-26-1990), 55-15 99th Street, apt. 5B
Terry Robinson-Watts, (d.o.b. 4-18-1963), 98-30 57th Avenue, apt. 166
Hector Rodriguez, (d.o.b. 2-8-1987), 98-38 57th Avenue, apt. 2K
Aderli Serrano, (d.o.b. 6-17-1993), 98-17 Horace Harding Expressway, apt. 17C
Ricketta Smith, (d.o.b. 4-18-1989), 97-28 57th Avenue, apt. 4C
Kevin White, (d.o.b. 2-15-1967), 98-45 57th Avenue, apt. 5H