



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

MARK G. PETERS
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Council Member Vincent J. Gentile
Chair, Committee on Oversight and Investigations
The New York City Council
250 Broadway, Room 1747
New York, NY 10007

Re: New York City Department of Investigation Comments on Proposed Intro 1618

Dear Council Member Gentile:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments to the Committee on Oversight and Investigations on proposed Intro 1618, which requires the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI) to "conduct public outreach campaigns and issue annual reports on complaints received."

DOI agrees with the Committee on the importance of transparency, effectively communicating with and informing the public, and enlisting all stakeholders as active participants in the overarching mission of the agency to root out fraud and corruption. We agree that to fulfil our charter mandated mission to serve as the City's independent inspector general, DOI must not only investigate corruption, fraud, waste and abuse; DOI must also appropriately report to all stakeholders, including the public, on this work. Public outreach, when done in a thoughtful way, can result in very significant benefits. However, the specific data points to be examined and reported, as delineated in the Bill, present specific difficulties for DOI (that would require diverting staff from important investigations to compile) and may prove to be less valuable to the Committee in reaching its goals.

To that end, I recommend that the language in Intro 1618, beginning at the end of line 8 and through line 10 be removed completely. In its place, I recommend the language underlined below:

3 § 808. Public outreach and reporting. (a) The department shall conduct annual outreach
4 campaigns to educate the public on forms of government corruption, fraud, and waste, and
5 provide information regarding how the public can submit complaints to the department. Such
6 outreach campaigns shall include the use of print, radio, and public forums. (b) The department
7 shall post a report on its website by March 1st of each year regarding public complaints received
8 by the department for the preceding year. Such reports shall include the total number

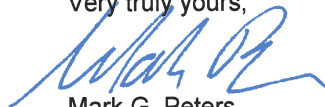
9 complaints and a summary of relevant outreach activities.

10 Section 2. This local law take effect in 120 days.

While there is value to studying any data received as a result of DOI's public outreach campaigns, I believe the outlined categories in the Bill will prove to be limiting and would provide very little in terms of measuring the effectiveness of the public outreach campaigns.

Once again, I thank you and the other members of the Committee on Oversight and Investigations for the opportunity to comment on Intro 1618. I remain available to discuss my comments and answer any questions you may have.

Very truly yours,



Mark G. Peters
Commissioner