

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Eastern District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, February 10, 2021

New York City Department of Buildings Inspector Charged in Queens Bribery Scheme

Defendant Accepted Bribe Payment to Not Issue a \$25,000 Fine to Construction Company

A criminal complaint was filed today in federal court in Brooklyn charging New York City Department of Buildings (DOB) Inspector Francesco Ginestri with solicitation and receipt of a bribe in exchange for his agreement to ensure that DOB would not issue a fine in connection with a stop work order. Ginestri was arrested this morning and made his initial appearance via videoconference this afternoon before United States Magistrate Lois Bloom. The defendant was released on a \$150,000 bond.

Seth D. DuCharme, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, announced the arrest and charge.

“As alleged, Ginestri, a buildings inspector who was entrusted with protecting public safety at city construction sites, instead exploited his position to line his pockets with a cash bribe,” stated Acting United States Attorney DuCharme. “This Office will vigorously prosecute those who would betray their public trust for personal gain.”

Mr. DuCharme thanked the Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, and the New York City Department of Investigation, for their exemplary work on the case.

According to the complaint, on July 31, 2020, Ginestri re-inspected a construction site in Flushing, New York, after a stop work order was issued for safety violations earlier in the month. After learning that construction had continued during the pendency of the stop work order, Ginestri solicited a \$1,200 cash bribe from an employee of the construction company in exchange for the defendant's agreement to ensure that DOB would not issue a \$25,000 fine to the company. In August 2020, an employee of the construction company met Ginestri at a bakery and provided him with the \$1,200 bribe payment. The meeting was recorded under the supervision of federal law enforcement agents.

The charge in the complaint is an allegation, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty. If convicted, the defendant faces a maximum sentence of five years' imprisonment.

The government's case is being handled by the Office's Public Integrity Section. Assistant United States Attorneys Tanya Hajjar and Alicia N. Washington are in charge of the prosecution.

The Defendant:

FRANCESCO GINESTRI
Age: 36
Queens, New York

E.D.N.Y. Docket No. 21-MJ-169

Attachment(s):

[Download Ginestri Complaint](#)

Topic(s):
Public Corruption

Component(s):
USAO - New York, Eastern

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