

April 6, 2003

**CONSUMER AFFAIRS LAUNCHES INITIATIVE TO PROTECT NEW YORKERS
FROM PASSOVER OVERCHARGES**

DCA Enforcement Will Be On Alert and Ready to Respond to Complaints

In order to protect New Yorkers observing the Passover holiday, New York City Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Commissioner Gretchen Dykstra, joined by State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, community leaders and other elected officials, announced today that consumers should report any overcharges on Kosher-for-Passover items to DCA by calling 311, the City's citizen service hotline. DCA inspectors will be on alert and ready to investigate any complaints received from now until April 24.

"Starting today, and throughout Passover, we are urging consumers to report any overcharges on Kosher-for-Passover items," said Commissioner Dykstra. "We will be ready to respond to any complaints we receive about vendors who may be taking advantage of the holiday."

"For years, I have worked to protect New Yorkers from unscrupulous price-gouging during the Passover holiday," said Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver. "The City hotline will give people a measure of confidence and the ability to immediately communicate their concerns."

Others supporting the initiative include City Council members Simcha Felder, David Weprin, Melinda Katz, the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty, the UJC of the East Side, and the Jewish Community Relations Council.

DCA enforces the consumer protection laws, as well as other related City and State laws, at thousands of businesses throughout New York City. DCA licenses more than 60,000 businesses in 55 different categories in New York City and educates both consumers and businesses alike through free community seminars, licensing forums, and other informational materials.