

programs serving the needs and general welfare of New Yorkers. To learn more about the Mayor's Fund, or to make a contribution to the Tax Credit Coalition Campaign, visit nyc.gov or call 311 and ask about making financial contributions to New York City.

DCA enforces the Consumer Protection Law and other related business laws throughout New York City. Ensuring a fair and vibrant marketplace for consumers and businesses, DCA licenses more than 71,000 businesses in 57 different industries. Through targeted outreach, partnerships with community and trade organizations, and informational materials, DCA educates consumers and businesses alike about their rights and responsibilities. DCA's Office of Financial Empowerment is the first municipal office of its kind in the nation with a mission to educate, empower and protect New Yorkers with low incomes. DCA's OFE administers a citywide network of Financial Empowerment Centers and other products and services that help these New Yorkers make the best use of their financial resources to move forward economically. For more information, call 311 or visit DCA online at nyc.gov/consumers.

Thursday, January 21, 2010

Kay Sarlin/Elizabeth Miller, (212) 487-4283

**DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS COMMISSIONER
JONATHAN MINTZ KICKS OFF TAX SEASON BY ANNOUNCING
THE CITY'S FIRST EVER FREE 'TAX REFUND SUPER SATURDAY'
EVENT**

***City Launches 8th Annual Earned Income Tax Credit Coalition
Campaign with One-Day Event Offering Free Tax Preparation for
Hundreds of New Yorkers who Qualify to Claim Tax Credits That Put
Money Back in their Pockets***

Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Commissioner Jonathan Mintz today announced the City's first ever free 'Tax Refund Super Saturday' event. 'Tax Refund Super Saturday' will be held at the CUNY Graduate Center (365 Fifth Avenue, between 34th and 35th Streets) on Saturday, January 23 from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., kicking off the City's 8th Annual Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Coalition Campaign. The Saturday event will offer free tax preparation for New Yorkers who have dependent children and earn less than \$50,000, and City residents who have no children and earn less than \$18,000. Tax preparers will check if City residents qualify for the EITC, the NYC Child Care Tax Credit and other tax credits that could put money back in their pockets. The average EITC refund alone is \$2,700. Tax preparation

will be provided by Beehive, Food Bank for New York City, Ariva and the National Association of Black Accountants. The event will also include free one-on-one financial fitness check-ups in English and Spanish, free group workshops on credit, homeownership and other important financial topics, provided by the Financial Planner's Association, Phipps Community Development Corporation, Credit Where Credit is Due, The Financial Clinic and Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation.

"New Yorkers will begin receiving their W-2 forms this week, so we urge those who qualify to take advantage of 'Tax Refund Super Saturday' this weekend so they can get their tax returns prepared for free and claim refundable tax credits like the EITC," said Consumer Affairs Commissioner Jonathan Mintz. "While the economy is recovering, it is critical that we help New Yorkers get back the money they are owed, which is why we have more sites than ever offering free income tax preparation. So if you can't come to this event, just call 311 or visit nyc.gov/ofe to find out if you are eligible for the EITC and other tax credits, and if you qualify for free tax preparation services across the City."

Coordinated by DCA's Office of Financial Empowerment (OFE), this year's Tax Credit Campaign aims to increase awareness about tax credits that can put money back in the pockets of working New Yorkers. Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites throughout the City will prepare tax returns for filers with dependents who make less than \$50,000, or filers with no dependents earning less than \$18,000, free of charge. Volunteers at the City's VITA sites will also help City residents file for many tax credits including the EITC and the New York City Child Care Tax Credit (CCTC). In 2008, New Yorkers claimed approximately \$2.3 billion in total EITC tax credits and obtained an average EITC refund of \$2,700. VITA sites helped more than 77,000 New Yorkers file their taxes for free last year. With the CCTC, families earning \$30,000 or less could be eligible to receive up to \$1,733 to reimburse out-of-pocket costs for child care for children up to the age of 4. The City's 311 phone system fielded more than 37,000 EITC-related inquiries during the 2009 tax season.

New York City's Tax Credit Campaign is supported in part by donations made to the Mayor's Fund. Funders include H&R Block, Bank of America, BNY Mellon, Citi, ConEd, Fidelity Investments and M&T Bank. The campaign includes partnering city agencies, non-profit organizations, the IRS and media sponsors the Daily News, El Diario and Hot 97.

The Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City is a not-for-profit organization established to strengthen public programs serving the needs and general welfare of New Yorkers. To learn more about the Mayor's Fund, or to make a contribution to the EITC Campaign, visit nyc.gov or call 311 and ask about making financial contributions to New York City.

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Friday, January 15, 2010

Kay Sarlin/Elizabeth Miller, (212) 487-4283

**STATEMENT OF NYC DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
COMMISSIONER JONATHAN MINTZ ON REPORTS OF INTEREST IN
DOWNGRADING THE PROPOSED CONSUMER FINANCIAL
PROTECTION AGENCY TO A NON-INDEPENDENT MISSION**

"As the current financial crisis has proven, when consumer protection in the financial services marketplace is not the primary mission of a government agency, consumers are not protected. America's need for an independent Consumer Financial Protection Agency in which consumer protection is paramount is no less just because some in the Senate may have lost their zeal, as reported today."