PRESS RELEASE

Florida Enforcement Leaders Hold Inaugural Meeting of the Florida Anti-fraud Task Force to Enhance Federal-State Cooperation to Detect, Investigate, and Prosecute Fraud

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For Immediate Release
U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Florida


MIAMI – Today, Florida United States Attorneys Jason A. Reding Quiñones, Gregory W. Kehoe, and John “Jack” P. Heekin, and Florida Attorney General James Uthmeier convened the inaugural meeting of the Florida Anti-fraud Task Force (“FATF”), a federal-state task force formed with a mandate to eliminate fraud within federal government benefit programs in Florida.

“President Trump has made clear that protecting American taxpayers from fraud is an enforcement priority, and under the leadership of Attorney General Todd Blanche and Assistant Attorney General Colin McDonald, the Justice Department is building an aggressive, data-driven strategy to do just that,” said U.S. Attorney Jason A. Reding Quiñones for the Southern District of Florida. “The Florida Anti-fraud Task Force puts that strategy into action by bringing federal and state prosecutors, investigators, inspectors general, and data together to identify fraud faster, prosecute those responsible, and recover stolen taxpayer dollars. Florida is once again leading the way, and we intend for this partnership to serve as a model for fighting fraud across the country."

"The Middle District of Florida is committed to protecting taxpayer-funded programs from fraud," said U.S. Attorney Gregory W. Kehoe for the Middle District of Florida. "Our dedicated staff and law enforcement partners will work zealously with the members of the Florida Anti-Fraud Task Force to investigate crimes, enforce the law, and prosecute those who commit fraud against our federal programs."

"Thanks to the leadership of President Donald J. Trump and Attorney General Todd Blanche, the Department of Justice is committed to fulfilling the fiduciary duty we owe U.S. taxpayers to safeguard their money against fraud, waste, and abuse," said U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Florida, John "Jack" P. Heekin. "My district is aggressively pursuing frauds both large and small, and we are restoring the zero-tolerance threshold for crime that our citizens deserve."

"The USDA Office of Inspector General is committed to partnering with federal, state, and local agencies to combat fraud in USDA programs that impact our communities," said USDA Inspector General John Walk. "Leveraging resources across agencies at every level of government is key. I am proud to participate in the Inaugural Florida Anti-Fraud Task Force meeting which ensures strong collaboration going forward to fight fraud and hold those responsible who steal from Floridians and American taxpayers."

The FATF is a first-of-its-kind task force that answers the call by Justice Department leaders and Florida citizens to build a model of federal-state cooperation to prevent and detect, investigate, and prosecute government program fraud and recover stolen taxpayer dollars. The meeting builds on the Justice Department's recent announcement of the launch of the Fraud Division's National Fraud Detection Center (NFDC), a prosecutor-led, multi-agency team designed to investigate the most harmful actors defrauding federal government programs, including illicit actors overseas and those operating fraud schemes across federal programs. The NFDC will bring together law enforcement agencies and analytical capabilities to generate criminal leads to drive more impactful prosecutions and enhance fraud-fighting results for the American people. The NFDC solves for a lack of cross-program visibility that has long hindered efforts to deter fraud on taxpayer-funded programs and has enabled some fraud actors to further perpetrate schemes across multiple taxpayer-funded programs without detection. The NFDC closes this gap by bringing partners across federal and state government together to break down silos and work collaboratively in a whole-of-government approach to eliminate fraud.

The NFDC's success relies directly on the collaborative strength of partners across state and federal government. To that end, in July, the State of Florida's Secretary of State and

CFO joined several other southern states and entered into data sharing agreements with the Fraud Division and NFDC that provide access to publicly available corporate registration and public benefits payment data held by these state agencies, data which will help enforcers proactively identify connections and patterns across both business entities and public benefits payment activity. And, in August, the Fraud Division and NFDC announced data sharing agreements with fifteen federal agencies.

FATF will use leads generated by the NFDC to drive more impactful prosecutions and enhance fraud-fighting results for Floridians. FATF will also leverage the relationships, tools, and resources of other well-established and highly-effective anti-fraud task forces operating in Florida, including the Florida IG Council and the Florida Strike Force, a joint effort among the Fraud Division, the U.S. Attorney's Offices for the Southern and Middle Districts of Florida, the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General, FBI, and the Florida Medicaid Fraud Control Unit.

Federal and State Partners Represented at the FATF Meeting:

Federal Prosecutors: U.S. Department of Justice, National Fraud Enforcement Division (Fraud Division), the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Florida, and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Florida.

Federal Agencies: FBI, U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of Inspector General, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Education Office of Inspector General, Environmental Protection Agency Office of Inspector General, Export-Import Bank of the United States Office of Inspector General, FDIC OIG, FHFA Office of Inspector General, Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General, General Services Administration Office of Inspector General, Homeland Security Office of Inspector General, IRS Criminal Investigations, Department of Justice Office of Inspector General, Department of Labor Office of Inspector General, Postal Service Office of Inspector General, Small Business Administration Office of Inspector General, Department of Transportation Office of Inspector General, Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General, Department of War Office of Inspector General/Defense Criminal Investigative Service, Amtrak

Florida Prosecutors: Florida Attorney General James Uthmeier, Statewide Prosecutor Brad McVay, Associate Deputy Attorney General and Medicaid Fraud Control Unit Director Kathleen Von Hoene.

Florida State and Local Agencies and Law Enforcement: Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Florida Department of Financial Services, Florida Agency for Health Care

Administration (AHCA), Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF), Miami-Dade Office of Inspector General, City of Miami, Palm Beach County Office of Inspector General, and Broward Sheriff's Office.

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