

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, May 19, 2021

Former New York City Department of Buildings Inspector Pleads Guilty in Bribery Scheme

Defendant Solicited and Accepted a \$1,200 Cash Payment to Not Issue a Fine to a Construction Company

Earlier today, in federal court in Brooklyn, Francesco Ginestri, a former New York City Department of Buildings (DOB) Inspector, pleaded guilty to 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. The proceeding was held before United States Magistrate Judge Sanket J. Bulsara.

Mark J. Lesko, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, announced the guilty plea.

“With today’s guilty plea, Ginestri admits to selling his position as a building inspector in exchange for cash and to violating the public trust to ensure the safety of city construction sites,” stated Acting United States Attorney Lesko. “This Office will vigorously prosecute corrupt employees who put their official positions up for sale and endanger the safety of their communities.” Mr. Lesko 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 investigative work on the case.

In late July 2020, Ginestri, who was employed as a New York City Department of Buildings Inspector, conducted a re-inspection of a construction site located in Queens that had received a stop work order for safety violations earlier in the month. During the re-inspection, Ginestri learned that construction had continued despite the pendency of the stop work order. Instead of seeking to impose a penalty on the company for violating the stop work order, Ginestri solicited a \$1,200 cash bribe in exchange for his agreement to ensure that the DOB would not issue a \$25,000 fine to the company. Ginestri resigned from the DOB on February 10, 2021, the day he was arrested.

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 GINESTR
Age: 37
Queens, New York

E.D.N.Y. Docket No. 21-263 (ERK)

Topic(s):
Public Corruption

Component(s):
[USAO - New York, Eastern](#)

Contact:
John Marzulli

United States Attorney’s Office
(718) 254-6323