

I.

GOOD MORNING LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

MY NAME IS GERRY FELDHAMER AND I AM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NEW YORK STATE ADVISORY BOARD ON KOSHER LAW ENFORCEMENT. ON BEHALF OF THE NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE ADVISORY BOARD I AM HAPPY TO WELCOME YOU TO THE SECOND SESSION OF THE NEW YORK STATE PUBLIC HEARINGS ON KOSHER LAW ENFORCEMENT. THESE HEARINGS ARE THE FIRST OF THEIR KIND ANYWHERE, NEW YORK STATE, WHICH HAS MORE KOSHER CONSUMERS THAN ALL

II.

OTHER STATES COMBINED, HAS LONG LED THE WAY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEGAL PROTECTION FOR THE KOSHER CONSUMER AGAINST THE FRAUDULENT SALE OF NONKOSHER FOOD AS KOSHER. FROM THE TIME OF THE ENACTMENT OF THE FIRST KOSHER CONSUMER PROTECTION LAW IN 1915 TO THE ENSUING YEARS LEADING TO THE PRESENT NEW YORK STATE HAS PRODUCED AN IMPRESSIVE ARRAY OF PROTECTION AND PIONEERED IN MAKING THE NEEDS OF THE KOSHER CONSUMER A LEGITIMATE AND SIGNIFICANT FOCUS OF ATTENTION.

III.

IT IS, THEREFORE, ALTOGETHER FITTING AND PROPER THAT THESE IN DEPTH OFFICIAL INQUIRIES INTO THE PROTECTIONS ACCORDED THE KOSHER CONSUMER BE CONDUCTED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF NEW YORK STATE.

AT THE OUTSET I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS SINCERE THANKS TO GOVERNOR MARIO CUOMO FOR HIS UNSTINTING SUPPORT FOR THE LEGAL PROTECTION OF THE KOSHER CONSUMER AND HIS CONTINUING LEADERSHIP IN THIS VITAL

HE IS ABLY REPRESENTED TODAY BY COMMISSIONER STEPHEN HARAUZ AND COMMISSIONER ANTHONY PAPA. THESE GENTLEMEN SUPERVISED EVERY DETAIL OF THESE HEARINGS, ASSISTED BY MRS. RENEE SHERMAN, AND, OF COURSE, OUR THANKS TO RABBI SCHULEM RUBIN, THE TIRELESS DIRECTOR OF THE KOSHER LAW ENFORCEMENT UNIT IN THE DEPARTMENT. THROUGH HIS EXTRAORDINARY DIRECTION NOT ONLY HAS THE PROTECTION FOR THE KOSHER CONSUMER REACHED NEW HEIGHTS BUT HE HAS SUCCEEDED IN PROJECTING THE IMAGE OF A FORCEFUL NO-NONSENSE ENFORCE-

MENT EFFORT THAT HAS EARNED THE RESPECT OF BOTH INDUSTRY AND THE KOSHER CONSUMING PUBLIC.

AS YOU KNOW FROM THE PUBLIC NOTICE OF THE HEARINGS THE PURPOSE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS IS TO SEEK CONSTRUCTIVE INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC, THE KOSHER CONSUMER, INDUSTRY, GOVERNMENTAL OFFICIALS WITH A VIEW TO ENHANCING THE PROTECTIONS AVAILABLE.

SERVING WITH ME TODAY ON THIS PANEL ARE MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

ERIC FREUDENSTEIN
 RABBI EMANUEL HOLZER
 STEVEN PRAGER
 DENNIS RAPPS
 RABBI EPHRAIM STURM

SECRETARY TO THE BOARD, RABBI PHILIP RIESS
 LEGAL CONSULTANT TO THE BOARD, DAVID STERN

WE ARE ALSO HONORED TO HAVE WITH US DENNIS BUCKLEY, COUNSEL TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE. THIS ADVISORY

THE COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE AND MARKETS. THE MANDATE OF THE BOARD IS, AND I QUOTE FROM THE STATUTE, "TO ADVISE, COUNSEL, AND CONFER WITH THE COMMISSIONER ON MATTERS OF POLICY...IN CONNECTION WITH ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT...AND TO RECOMMEND...CHANGES...AS MAY BE DEEMED ADVISABLE TO SECURE...EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT..."

THE BOARD SERVES AS A VIGOROUS ADVOCATE FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE KOSHER CONSUMER IN NEW YORK STATE.

OUR GOAL IS TO ENSURE THAT THE KOSHER LAW ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM IS A DYNAMIC AND ROBUST ONE.

I WOULD BE LESS THAN CANDID IF I DID NOT ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THERE ARE SOME WHO BELIEVE THAT THE KOSHER LAW ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM IS THE ADVERSARY OF INDUSTRY. NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH.

STATE ENFORCEMENT IS THE KEY TO GREATER CONFIDENCE IN THE INTEGRITY OF THE KOSHER MARKET PLACE AND KOSHER INDUSTRY. AS PART OF ITS RESPONSIBILITIES, THE BOARD HAS BEEN CHARGED BY THE COMMISSIONER TO SERVE AS THE

HEARING PANEL TO SIFT THROUGH THE MATERIAL THAT IS GATHERED AND TO PREPARE A REPORT WITH RECOMMENDATIONS.

THE FORMAT FOR TODAY AS PREVIOUSLY IS TO HAVE EACH WITNESS SPEAK FOR A MAXIMUM OF TEN MINUTES TO BE FOLLOWED BY APPROXIMATELY TEN MINUTES OF FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONING.

THE FOCUS OF THE HEARING TODAY IS KOSHER LAW ENFORCEMENT. I EMPHASIZE THIS SINCE THERE ARE OTHER IMPORTANT ISSUES RELATING TO THE KOSHER CONSUMER SUCH AS PRICING AND MARKETING, WHICH ARE NOT RELATED TO

THAT FOCUS. I AM PLEASED TO REPORT THAT THE WITNESSES LAST WEEK WERE MOST COOPERATIVE AND ON TARGET. THE TOPICS DISCUSSED WERE KOSHER LABELING, SALTING AND SOAKING OF MEAT, DEVEINING AND CO-MINGLING. I HOPE THAT THOSE WHO APPEAR WILL ACT ACCORDINGLY.

I MENTIONED EARLIER THAT OUR PURPOSE IS TO SECURE HARD MATERIAL FOR CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE CHANGES IN THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS GOVERNING KOSHER LAW ENFORCEMENT. I WOULD THEREFORE HOPE THAT THE PRESENTERS WILL TRY TO BE LONG ON SUBSTANCE AND SHORT ON ORATORY.

AT OUR FIRST MEETING WE WERE PRIVILEGED TO HEAR FROM SOME DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF GOVERNMENT AS WE ARE TODAY.

IT IS MY PLEASURE AND HONOR TO INTRODUCE OUR FIRST WITNESS, A FRIEND OF STRONG KOSHER LAW ENFORCEMENT AS WELL AS A PACE SETTER IN KOSHER LEGISLATION; ASSEMBLY-MAN HOWARD LASHER.