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CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

**MAYOR DE BLASIO APPOINTS MELANIE LA ROCCA AS COMMISSIONER OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS**

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio today announced the appointment of Melanie La Rocca as Commissioner of the Department of Buildings. As Commissioner, she will intensify efforts to ensure the safety of workers by regulating the city’s real estate and construction industries, and enforce the agency’s laws to protect tenants from construction harassment. The New York City Department of Buildings regulates and promotes the safe and lawful use of nearly 1.1 million buildings and more than 45,000 active construction sites in New York City. She will begin June 3.

“Construction workers are the backbone of our growing city, and the Department of Buildings is the City’s frontline defense to ensure safety on every job site,” said **Mayor de Blasio**. “I am confident that Melanie La Rocca’s experience and strong ties in our community will ensure she continues strengthening the Department’s role as an agency that looks out for the safety of all New Yorkers.”

“As a life-long New Yorker, I understand how the construction industry plays a key role in ensuring New York City adapts to the changing needs of our business and local communities,” said **Commissioner La Rocca**. “I know first-hand what it takes to deliver a high-quality project in a fast-paced environment, and I understand the need to connect with all stakeholders, especially with members of the community. I want to thank Mayor de Blasio and Deputy Mayor Anglin for the opportunity to lead the agency and continue its mission to strengthen protections for workers while building bridges with key stakeholders in one of the City’s biggest industries.”

“The Department of Buildings plays a critical role in the development of New York City, and it is necessary to have a leader there who understands all the moving parts,” said **Deputy Mayor for Operations Laura Anglin**. “Melanie La Rocca’s experiences managing complex projects have given her a bird’s eye view of the construction industry, which will be essential to helping her ensure the Department of Buildings continues to guard the safety of every worker on every jobsite across the city.”

La Rocca currently serves as Vice President of Development and External Affairs at the School Construction Authority (SCA), where she oversees the Real Estate Group and all site development, as well as Design and Construction Services and special projects. In this role, she works closely with key stakeholders – including the Department of Buildings and other groups within the construction industries – to identify potential school sites and develop plans to construct new facilities for New York City students. Over the last eight years, the SCA has never missed a school opening.

Through this work, she has developed a deep understanding of the construction industry and its fast-paced nature, as well as the critical role served by the Department of Buildings. As Buildings Commissioner, she will continue expanding the agency’s modernization efforts to develop systems that better reflect the needs of the industry it serves.

“I have known Melanie for many years and I have always been impressed with her intelligence, passion, and dedication to public service. I am confident that she will bring all of those qualities and more to her new role. This is an exciting new chapter for the Department of Buildings,” said **New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson**.

“Melanie La Rocca is a long-time public servant who really gets how things work. She's collaborative and responsive, which are great qualities for any commissioner. I look forward to working with her in this new capacity," said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**.

State Senator Brad Hoylman said: “I’ve worked with Melanie La Rocca for over a decade at the community, city and state level. She has a stellar record of public service and I know she’ll be an outstanding new Commissioner of the Department of Buildings. I congratulate and thank Mayor de Blasio for this excellent appointment and look forward to working closely with Commissioner LaRocca on the multitude of issues of construction and development confronting my constituents that the Department of Buildings oversees.”

“Melanie La Rocca is an excellent choice for Commissioner for the NYC Buildings Department,” said **Assembly Member Richard Gottfried**. “I have worked with Melanie for over ten years and have always been impressed by her knowledge and ability. We need a Commissioner who will protect tenants by keeping buildings safe and preventing harassment while also providing a pragmatic approach to the department's mission. Melanie La Rocca can be that Commissioner.”

"With years of experience spearheading projects that strengthen communities and building strategic partnerships across the five boroughs, Melanie La Rocca knows what it takes to keep our city moving forward. She is deeply committed to all New Yorkers, and to making their lives better, and I look forward to continuing to work with her in this new role," said **Assembly Member Nily Rozic**.

"Melanie La Rocca has a proven track record of going above and beyond for the City of New York," said **Council Member Adrienne Adams**. "As the new Commissioner of the Department of Buildings I'm sure her tremendous expertise will serve her well and I look forward to working with her in this new capacity."

"This is a great move. Commissioner La Rocca has long been respected and is known for getting the job done," said **Council Member Joseph Borelli**.

"Melanie La Rocca is a dear friend and a total rock star. She is a bona fide bureaucracy-buster who knows what it takes to get things done. Melanie has been a partner that I can count on, time and time again, to get to the bottom of any situation, figure out what needs to be done, and find the best way to get there," said **Council Member Justin Brannan**. "Melanie knows that before government can serve as an instrument to advance equity, it must stand and deliver on a fundamental level. We need more no-nonsense people like Melanie in municipal government. I will miss her at the School Construction Authority but I know we will have plenty to work on together at the Buildings Department. A terrific choice!"

"As a veteran of New York City government with experience working on the Community Board, City Council and Mayoral levels, Melanie La Rocca has demonstrated a strong understanding of the intricacies of City government, which will serve her well as the Commissioner of the Department of Buildings. I congratulate Ms. La Rocca on her appointment, and look forward to working with her to strengthen protections for tenants in neighborhoods across New York City," said **Council Member Margaret Chin**.

"I could not think of a better person to oversee the Department of Buildings than Melanie La Rocca," said **Council Member Costa Constantinides**. "From her time as a City Council staffer through her amazing tenure at the School Construction Authority, she has been a model public servant who makes government run for the people. In western Queens, she was instrumental in getting hydroponic science labs into almost every one of our Council District's schools in a timely fashion and was vital in getting transportable classroom units out of our schoolyards. It

has always been an honor to call her a friend, a fellow lifelong Queens resident, and now DOB commissioner. I wish her the best of luck and look forward to working with her in this new role.”

“The appointment of Melanie La Rocca as DOB commissioner is welcome news for our city,” said **Council Member Daniel Dromm, chair of the Finance Committee**. “La Rocca has dedicated years to public service and enjoys an excellent track record. She and I have worked closely together to build new schools in Queens thereby ensuring that young people in the borough receive a quality education. Our city has benefited from La Rocca's leadership and I am confident that the DOB will also thrive with her at its helm.”

”Melanie La Rocca has been an invaluable partner in upgrading long-neglected schools in my district, and in building a new school in East New York. Her new role as Commissioner is a massive undertaking, but I know that she is the force of positive change that the Department of Buildings critically needs. I look forward to continuing to work with her to protect tenants, low-income homeowners, and address the systemic issues the agency and our City face,” said **Council Member Rafael Espinal**.

“I am excited to work with Melanie La Rocca as the New Commissioner of the Department of Buildings. I have worked closely with her during her time at the School Construction Authority and through our collaborative commitment to timely and responsible projects. I’m sure her expertise and commitment to the city’s construction industry and overall infrastructure needs will demonstrate how fitting this new role is. I congratulate her and look forward to working with her in this new capacity,” said **Council Member Vanessa Gibson**.

“Every day for the past five years Melanie La Rocca has helped manage hundreds if not thousands of construction projects, both preservation and new, from start to finish, with tenants in place in the heart of residential communities. In fact, her clients have been students, parents, educators and communities. To her credit she helped build hundreds of school seats in my district and every single one opened on time,” said **Council Member Ben Kallos**. “She has the experience she needs to lead our Department of Buildings.

“I have worked closely with Melanie La Rocca for more than a decade in the various positions that she has held. She has proven herself a dedicated public servant, hardworking, industrious and someone who always gets the job done. I can think of no one more capable of leading

NYC's Department of Buildings and am sure she will bring the same outstanding work ethic to this new endeavor," said **Council Member Karen Koslowitz**.

"Congratulations to Melanie La Rocca on being appointed Commissioner of the Department of Buildings," said **Council Member Stephen Levin**. "Melanie has a strong record of leadership in city government and understands the critical role that construction and design plays in the wellbeing of our communities. I look forward to working with her in her new role and advancing opportunities to strengthen protections for workers and residents across New York City."

"I applaud the Mayor's Office for its announcement of Melanie La Rocca as the new Commissioner of the Department of Buildings. Melanie has consistently demonstrated a genuine commitment to serving the people of New York, and as the VP of Development and External Affairs at SCA, Melanie helped bring stalled projects to life, making projects that would address community needs a reality. Examples of her leadership are abundant in District 38, where there are seven new schools that are scheduled to open and in design as we speak. This required bringing administrative leadership and resources to address the calls from community leadership. I have no doubt she will continue to bring this type of leadership to the DOB, and to take the DOB to its next chapter," said **Council Member Carlos Menchaca**.

"The Department of Buildings plays a crucial role in safeguarding the rights and safety of our city's construction workers and protecting tenants from harassment. I congratulate Melanie La Rocca on her new role and look forward to continuing to work with her on safely and equitably delivering for New Yorkers," said **Council Member Francisco Moya**.

"The Department of Buildings plays a vital role in protecting tenants by overseeing the real estate and construction industries and enforcing building safety laws. Melanie La Rocca has a history of success working at SCA that will be an asset to this job. I am thrilled to congratulate Melanie on her new post and look forward to working together," said **Council Member Keith Powers**.

"I hope continue working alongside the new Commissioner of the Department of Buildings, Melanie La Rocca. We need to raise the bar when it comes to ensuring the safety and maintenance of our constructions sites and buildings," said **Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez**.

“Warm congratulations to Melanie La Rocca on her appointment as Commissioner of the Department of Buildings. Melanie is a highly talented and dedicated public servant. I look forward to working with her to ensure that the city’s real estate and construction industries operate with the highest possible level of safety – for the well-being of New York City residents and communities,” said **Council Member Helen Rosenthal**.

“As Chair of the Committee on Education and someone who has significantly invested in school capital projects, I have worked extensively with Melanie La Rocca for years. There are few people in New York City government who so capably cut through red tape and bureaucratic confusion, and keep capital projects on-time and on-budget. I am confident that Melanie will make an excellent DOB Commissioner, and will continue the track record of effective management and responsiveness that has defined her tenure at SCA,” said **Council Member Mark Treyger, Chair of the Committee on Education**.

“Melanie La Rocca’s stellar leadership has already left an everlasting impact on our City throughout her tenure as Vice President of Development and External Affairs at the School Construction Authority. Her strong skillset cuts through bureaucratic red tape and she is the right person to lead an agency that interacts with one of New York City’s largest industries. I applaud Mayor de Blasio on this excellent choice,” said **Council Member Paul Vallone**, Chair of the Committee on Economic Development.

“I have had the true pleasure of working with Melanie for a number of years. She is an excellent problem solver and gifted administrator. During her tenure at both the New York City Council and the School Construction Authority, she helped drive successful, large scale projects. The City is truly lucky to have her in this new role,” said **Gail Benjamin, former Director of the New York City Council Land Use Division**.

“Worker's Justice Project (WJP) welcomes Melanie La Rocca as Commissioner of the Department of Buildings. We look forward to developing a co-enforcement partnership that prevent workplace fatalities and injuries in construction, New York City's deadliest industry. As we work together to create a culture of safety in the construction industry, we envision a collaboration that is centered in protecting the most vulnerable workers — particularly immigrant Latino workers who are more likely to die or get injured on the job," said **Ligia Gualpa, Executive Director of Worker's Justice Project (WJP)**.

“I look forward to working with Commissioner Melanie La Rocca to ensure all construction workers in NYC have a safe and dignified place to work. We must promptly address the crisis of deaths and accidents and set a national example of safety standards that puts workers and their families ahead of profits,” said **Gonzalo Mercado, Executive Director, La Colmena.**

“On behalf of our members, most of whom are newly arrived immigrants who depend on the construction industry for work, we congratulate Melanie La Rocca on her appointment as commissioner of New York City’s Department of Buildings” said **Manuel Castro, Executive Director of New Immigrant Community Empowerment (NICE).** “Just last week, to commemorate Workers Memorial Day, we held a vigil and procession with families and friends of workers who have died while working in construction in New York City. For our members, and their families, addressing the surge of deaths and injuries of immigrant and Latino construction workers is our main priority. We look forward to working with Commissioner La Rocca on this and other issues that impact our community.”

“Congratulations to Melanie La Rocca on her appointment as Commissioner of the NYC Department of Buildings. We look forward to working with her on continuing to find ways to ensure the safety of all construction workers across the five boroughs.” said **Gary LaBarbera, president of the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York.**

“The iconic New York City skyline was built on the backs of laborers, and we are encouraged by the Department of Buildings' new regulations to hold accountable bad actors who put at risk the safety and security of construction workers,” said **Pat Purcell, Executive Director, NYS/GNY Laborers Education Fund.** “We are pleased to see that Mayor de Blasio has appointed Melanie La Rocca to the agency, given her strong connections to our community and her track record of leading organizations to create significant projects in a timely manner.”

“The New York Building Congress congratulates Melanie La Rocca on being appointed Commissioner of the Department of Buildings. Her years of public service and proven track record at the School Construction Authority and New York City Council will serve DOB, the building industry and all New Yorkers well. The Building Congress and our members look forward to working with Commissioner La Rocca and her team as we continue to experience historic levels of construction and the introduction of new technologies in all aspects of building,” said **Carlo A. Scissura, Esq., President & CEO, New York Building Congress.**

“Melanie La Rocca is an outstanding choice. She has been an effective and progressive leader at the SCA and will bring those qualities to an agency that can have a positive impact on the built environment,” said **Louis J. Coletti, President and CEO, Building Trades Employers’ Association of New York.**

“NYCOSH congratulates Melanie La Rocca in her new role as Commissioner of the Department of Buildings, and is looking forward to working closely with the Department of Buildings to ensure the safety of New York City’s workers. Given an increase in construction injuries reported by the DOB, we recognize that the DOB’s work is essential to safeguarding workers and the general public from safety and health violations. Having a strong worker advocate at the helm is essential to the agency’s success in improving construction safety for all New Yorkers,” said **Charlene Obernauer, Executive Director, New York Committee for Occupational Safety & Health (NYCOSH).**

“We congratulate Melanie La Rocca on her appointment as Buildings Commissioner. The critical task of ensuring the City can grow in a safe and thoughtful way is reliant upon the close cooperation between our industry and the Department of Buildings. We look forward to working with Ms. La Rocca and supporting her efforts to create new housing and commercial space needed to accommodate job growth, generate tax revenue to fund city services, and have a positive impact on the lives of everyone who lives, works, and builds in New York City,” said **Real Estate Board of New York President, John H. Banks.**

“As a leader in the LGBTQ community, Melanie La Rocca has helped countless people. She enthusiastically shares her broad experience in city government without hesitation, helping everyday New Yorkers, often from marginalized communities, cut through bureaucracy on a day-to-day basis. An obsessive problem-solver and defender of what is fair, Melanie will strike the right balance and make many people happy in this role,” said **Rod Townsend, President, Stonewall Democratic Club of NYC.**

“Melanie La Rocca has been training for this position her entire career. She has been an advocate for communities when developers have gone awry and a force for balanced and appropriate planning. She is one of the most competent and dynamic people I know. She will raise the voices of our neighborhoods at DOB like never before, and she will increase effectiveness and speed in DOB which is critical to our partners in real estate. I couldn’t have picked a better person myself,” said **Christine C. Quinn, President & Chief Executive Officer, Win.**

“Melanie is smart, fair and dedicated to all of the city's neighborhoods. Her incredible track record speaks for itself and the City is fortunate to have her incredible leadership at the helm of DOB,” said **Former State Senator Tom Duane**.

About Melanie La Rocca

Melanie La Rocca joined the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA) in January of 2014 as Chief of Staff to the President and CEO, Lorraine Grillo. Since then, she has risen to the position of Vice President of Development and External Affairs where she oversees the Real Estate Group and all site development, intergovernmental affairs, community relations and communications, as well as Design and Construction Services and special projects. While at SCA, La Rocca was instrumental in the implementation of the Mayor’s Universal Pre-K initiative (UPK), where she oversaw the creation of more than 8,800 new UPK seats across the five boroughs, and the implementation of the Mayor’s newest initiative – 3K for All, where the SCA will once again identify, design, and construction early childhood centers serving the City’s youngest students.

Prior to joining SCA, La Rocca served as Chief of Staff to Christine C. Quinn, former Speaker of the New York City Council. She previously served as a member of Queens Community Board 1. Additionally, she was a member of the Stonewall Democratic Club of New York City (SDNYC) for nearly a decade, previously serving as Executive Vice President. La Rocca obtained a Bachelor’s degree from Fordham University, where she majored in Political Science with a concentration in Public Administration. Melanie is a native New Yorker and a lifelong Queens resident.