



**STATE OF NEW YORK  
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT**

**DIVISION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL**

STATE LIQUOR AUTHORITY

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**MEDIA ADVISORY**

For Immediate Release

May 31, 2007

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**LIQUOR AUTHORITY BUSTS BOGUS PERMITS SCAM  
SLA Investigation Uncovers Counterfeit Catering Permits**

ROCHESTER – (May 31, 2007) Investigators from the New York State Liquor Authority (SLA) recently uncovered an operation where counterfeit catering permits were being sold to unsuspecting event promoters. During the course of a regular investigation of a licensed establishment neighboring the Auditorium Center at 875 East Main Street in Rochester, SLA Beverage Control Investigator Martin Semrau learned that Black Tie Catering Inc, at 1011 Culver Road in Rochester, was providing catering services for events at the Auditorium Center without a license or permit. Upon request, the Auditorium Center's landlord provided SLA Investigators with what were assumed to be valid catering permits for use by promoters at the Auditorium. Upon receipt of the documents, BCI Investigator Semrau discovered the permits were forged and requested copies of all past permits for the location.

SLA Investigators determined that a total of eight previous catering permits used at the Auditorium Center were fraudulent. On May 26, Senior Investigator Bartikofsky and Investigator Semrau made a disclosed visit to the Auditorium during a scheduled catered event. During the visit, SLA Investigators were presented with a ninth counterfeit permit from Jeffery Friedman, owner of Black Tie Catering Inc. Freedman admitted to creating the phony permits and selling them to unwitting event organizers. Freedman, who does not hold a license to sell alcoholic beverages, stated that he charged event promoters \$500 to \$900 for the one day permits. Under the ABC Law, a caterer's permit is available only to those currently holding an on-premise license. The cost for the one day permit is \$38 with a \$10 filing fee.

Freedman, reportedly a former employee of a club licensed to sell alcohol, used a previously valid caterers' permit taken from his previous employer to create the false documents. The alcoholic beverages were removed from the premises and SLA Investigators referred the matter to the Rochester Police Department. Freedman was subsequently arrested and charged with nine counts of violating Section 170.10 (3) of the New York State Penal Law, felony forgery in the 2<sup>nd</sup> degree. The Auditorium Theater, housed in the same building at 875 East

Main Street in Rochester, is a licensed establishment and was not part of this investigation.

“I want to commend Investigators Bartikofsky and Semrau for their outstanding work in this case,” said SLA Chairman Daniel B. Boyle. “This action sends a clear message that those who attempt to circumvent the licensing process will face serious consequences.”

The State Liquor Authority regulates and controls the manufacture, sale and distribution of alcoholic beverages within the State. The Authority works with local law enforcement agencies and localities across the State to ensure compliance with the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law. In addition, the Authority issues and renews licenses and permits to manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers and retailers of alcoholic beverages.

On the Web: [www.abc.state.ny.us](http://www.abc.state.ny.us)

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