

State of New Jersey Commission of Investigation



**Immediate release
November 28, 2012**

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TWO NEW SCI COMMISSIONERS SWORN IN

TRENTON — Two former judges with significant legal and government-related experience were sworn in Wednesday to serve as Commissioners of the New Jersey State Commission of Investigation.

The new members are Eric S. Pennington, a South Orange attorney and former Municipal Judge, appointed to the Commission by General Assembly Speaker Shelia Y. Oliver, and Joseph F. Scancarella, a former Passaic County Superior Court Judge whose appointment to the SCI by Gov. Chris Christie was announced two weeks ago. Mr. Scancarella retired in 2004 after serving on the bench for more than 21 years.

With these appointments, a full membership complement has been restored to the Commission, an independent state watchdog agency that investigates organized

crime, government waste and corruption. Current members are Chairman Patrick E. Hobbs and Commissioner Robert J. Martin.

“These gentlemen will bring a wealth of experience and expertise to the SCI’s vital mission of safeguarding the public trust,” Chairman Hobbs said. “Their credentials and impartial leadership skills more than qualify them for this important role, and we look forward to the work the Commission will undertake during their tenure.”

Under the SCI’s unique enabling statute, the Governor appoints two Commission members and designates the Chairman. The President of the State Senate and the Speaker of the General Assembly each appoint one member.

Prior to launching his own law firm in 1999, Mr. Pennington was employed by the Newark-based firm of Gibbons, Del Deo, Dolan, Griffinger & Vecchione, now Gibbons P.C., working in the firm’s labor and employment group. Prior to that, he was an associate with Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison in New York City, working in the firm’s litigation section as well as its corporate department.

Starting in 2000, Mr. Pennington was a Municipal Court Judge in the City of Orange for a decade, serving as the Chief Judge from 2004 to 2010. He also served as general counsel to the Village of South Orange Parking Authority from 2008 to 2010.

Mr. Pennington began his legal career as a law clerk for the late Hon. Robert N. Wilentz, Chief Justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court, and to the Hon. Damon J. Keith,

A 1987 graduate of Thomas A. Edison State College, Mr. Pennington was employed by New Jersey Bell Telephone/Bell Atlantic for 13 years before embarking on a legal career. He earned his law degree from Rutgers School of Law in Newark in 1992.

Mr. Pennington is a member of the New Jersey Supreme Court Advisory Committee on Continuing Legal Education and is a board member of the Visiting Nurses Association of Central Jersey, Inc. He is a former member of the Board of Trustees of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, where he served as vice chairman and acting chairman. He is also a former trustee of the Garden State Bar Association.

Mr. Scancarella, a graduate of Villanova University and Fordham Law School, served as a Superior Court Judge in Passaic County from 1982 to 2004. During his tenure, he oversaw cases in the Family Part, the Special Civil Part and the Criminal Division. During the latter part of his judicial career, he sat in the Civil Division and, beginning in 1996, served as its Presiding Judge until retirement.

A former member of the New Jersey Legislature, Mr. Scancarella was elected to the General Assembly from Passaic County in 1967 and served in the position until 1972. He served as Passaic City Attorney from 1971 to 1976, as Little Falls Planning Board Attorney from 1975 to 1982 and as Assistant Passaic County Counsel from 1977 to 1982. Prior to his appointment to the bench, he was an attorney in private practice in partnership with the late Sidney Reiss, former Criminal President Judge in Passaic County.

Mr. Scancarella currently handles arbitration and mediation matters for several North Jersey law firms on an as-needed basis.



The State Commission of Investigation is an independent New Jersey watchdog agency established in 1968 to investigate organized crime and corruption, waste of tax money and other abuses of the public trust. Copies of reports are available at the Commission's offices or via its Web site at www.state.nj.us/sci.