



**STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
DIVISION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL
STATE LIQUOR AUTHORITY
www.abc.state.ny.us**

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**IN REPLYING REFER TO
Albany**

**MEDIA ADVISORY
For Immediate Release
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**EMERGENCY LICENSE SUSPENSION ORDERED FOR JT WHEATFIELD'S
SLA Board Votes For Suspension Based On Drug Trafficking Charges**

Albany, NY – The New York State Liquor Authority (SLA) summarily suspended the license of JT Wheatfield's, Inc., doing business as the Raintree Restaurant at 6935 Ward Road, Wheatfield, NY. The suspension was ordered by the Members of the State Liquor Authority, Chairman Dennis Rosen, Commissioner Jeanique Greene, and Commissioner Noreen Healy at the meeting of the Full Board on Wednesday, September 16, 2009.

Following an investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), with the assistance of state and local law enforcement agencies, an owner of JT Wheatfield's was charged with participating in a drug trafficking organization and for using the licensed premises for storing and trafficking cocaine from 2005 until July 30, 2009. On July 30, 2009, federal, state and local investigators raided the bar and arrested the owner, who was found with 1.7 grams of cocaine in his possession. JT Wheatfield's was one of 15 establishments in Niagara and Erie counties raided by the FBI and other agencies in connection with the alleged drug trafficking organization. The Members of the SLA determined that the bar posed an imminent threat to the public and voted unanimously for an emergency suspension of the license. Effective immediately, no alcohol can be served or consumed on the premises.

“By suspending this license, the Members of the State Liquor Authority sent a clear message that criminal behavior will not be tolerated in licensed establishments,” said SLA Chief Executive Officer Trina Mead.

The State Administrative Procedure Act authorizes a state agency to summarily suspend a license when the agency finds that public health, safety, or welfare imperatives require emergency action. When the SLA summarily suspends a liquor license, it also serves upon the licensee a ‘Notice of Pleading’ alleging one or more disciplinary violations. In invoking a summary suspension, the SLA

has deemed the violation(s), considering each licensee's disciplinary history, to be sufficiently serious upon initial review to warrant an immediate suspension.

The SLA's decision to summarily suspend a license is not a final determination on the merits of the case. The licensee is entitled to an expedited hearing before an administrative law judge to address the alleged violation(s) that led to the suspension. An order of summary suspension remains in effect until such time as it is modified by the State Liquor Authority or reviewing court.

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.

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