

ILLINOIS ATTORNEY GENERAL LISA MADIGAN

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**For Immediate Release
October 24, 2010**

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**ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN, DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE ANNOUNCE
THAT ACTIONS AGAINST GASOLINE TAX EVADERS ARE PAYING OFF**

More Than \$22 Million Recovered To Date

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan and the Illinois Department of Revenue (DOR) announced today that they have collected more than \$22 million in unpaid tax payments from gasoline station owners and operators since they began an aggressive enforcement effort.

In October 2009, the Department of Revenue and Madigan's Office implemented a voluntary disclosure compliance program, increased audit activity and intensified collection of unpaid taxes from gasoline station owners. These efforts generated \$12.7 million in revenue between October 2009 and August 2010.

In August, Madigan and DOR Director Brian Hamer increased the efforts to collect revenues owed to the state by announcing criminal charges against five owners and operators of gas stations who were among the most egregious of the offenders. Since the indictments were announced in August, an additional \$9.3 million has been collected for a total of approximately \$22 million.

“We are aggressively investigating and pursuing businesses that try to evade paying their fair share of taxes,” Attorney General Madigan said. “The significant amount of money recovered for the state demonstrates that our enforcement efforts are effectively encouraging businesses owing back taxes to come forward and make payments.”

“We are gratified that the criminal enforcement actions we took earlier this year have sent the appropriate message to gas station owners who underpaid their taxes,” said Brian Hamer, Director, Illinois Department of Revenue. “We will continue to work hard to make sure that all businesses pay the taxes they owe and that honest businesses are not placed in a competitive disadvantage.”

Gasoline sales are reported to the State of Illinois on a monthly basis. Through investigations, Madigan's office and DOR determined that a fraudulent practice had developed of evading the payment of the taxes by falsely reporting gasoline sales figures, resulting in the loss of millions of dollars in State revenue.

Court appearances for three of the five defendants indicted by the Attorney General in August are scheduled for later this month and in November. Meanwhile, warrants are outstanding for two defendants: Muzaffar Jameel, 47, of Harwood Heights, for failure to appear for arraignment in Cook County Circuit Court, and Abdelmomen Abdallah, 33, of Peoria as a result of the indictment. He was never arrested.

Bureau Chief Vincenzo Chimera, Supervising Attorney Patrick Jennings, and Assistant Attorneys General Lori Jordan, Kristina Waldron, Kathleen Farrell, James Rustik and Gene Bian are handling the cases for Madigan's Special Prosecutions Bureau.