



## Illinois Department of Revenue

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### **Tobacco Distributor Charged with Computer and Mail Fraud**

#### *Alleged to have avoided paying \$1 million in tobacco and income taxes*

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Revenue and Attorney General Lisa Madigan’s office today announced that Mohammad Aburish was charged with providing false information about tobacco sales for Suha & Janna Company to the company’s tax preparer. The underreporting of more than \$5.5 million in tobacco sales led to the filing of fraudulent tax returns costing the state more than \$1 million in unpaid tobacco and income taxes during 2010 and 2011.

“With the recent increase in tobacco taxes, the Department of Revenue is focusing resources on possible tax violators,” said Brian Hamer, Director, Department of Revenue. “Sellers of these products who violate the tax laws should know that we are prepared to seek criminal penalties when we discover businesses that cheat.”

Aburish worked as the day-to-day manager for Suha & Janna Company, a licensed tobacco distributor in Illinois. He was responsible for providing sales information to the tax preparer for monthly and annual tax filings. In addition to his failure to report the appropriate amount of tobacco taxes, his underreporting led to understated income based on tobacco sales for the company’s 2010 income tax return. In 2011, Suha & Company failed to file an Illinois income tax return.

“My office is committed to holding dishonest business owners accountable for defrauding the state and taxpayers,” Madigan said.

The activities and scheme of this business was identified, developed, and investigated by the Illinois Department of Revenue, Bureau of Criminal Investigation, through tobacco enforcement activities.