



For Immediate Release

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December 5, 2006

MADIGAN SUES FORMER METRO EAST WOMAN FOR DEFRAUDING CONSUMERS OUT OF CARIBBEAN CRUISE DEPOSITS

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today filed a lawsuit in St. Clair County alleging that a former Centreville resident illegally held herself out to be a travel coordinator for a Caribbean cruise, collected cruise deposits from couples expecting to travel and then spent the money to cover her personal expenses.

Madigan filed the lawsuit against Agnes Davis, now a resident of Arkansas. According to the complaint, Davis lived in Centreville when she convinced several couples to entrust their money to her for a Caribbean cruise aboard a Royal Caribbean cruise ship. The planned cruise was to have taken place in March of this year. The lawsuit alleges that Davis previously had planned a successful trip for the small group and after gaining their confidence, she was able to convince them to give her their deposits for this trip. Madigan's complaint alleges that Davis collected the deposits, made a small payment to Royal Caribbean on behalf of the group, but then placed the bulk of the money in her own personal accounts. Later, Davis allegedly obtained a refund from Royal Caribbean for the money she had given to the cruise line to pay for the trip.

After learning that Davis had not deposited all the monies with the cruise line and had withdrawn the initial deposit, the consumers attempted to obtain refunds from Davis. Davis allegedly promised to repay the consumers, but failed to deliver on the promise. Davis later left the Metro East area and moved to her hometown in Jonesboro, Arkansas. The consumers' unrefunded deposits total more than \$13,000.

"This cruise should have been a source of rest and relaxation for these consumers but instead it was a source of anxiety," Madigan said.

Madigan's lawsuit alleges that defendant Davis' conduct violated the Illinois Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act. The suit also alleges that Davis violated the Illinois Travel Promotion Consumer Protection Act by holding herself out as a travel promoter, arranging for a cruise and collecting deposits as payment, and then failing to safeguard the consumers' deposits.

In the complaint Madigan asks the court to permanently prohibit Davis from arranging travel, acting as a travel coordinator and collecting money from

Illinois consumers planning to travel. The lawsuit also seeks a court order compelling Davis to reimburse consumers for the money they paid to her. Finally, the lawsuit seeks a civil penalty of \$50,000, and additional penalties of up to \$50,000 per violation found to be committed with the intent to defraud and \$10,000 per violation found to be committed against a person 65 years or older.

Assistant Attorney General Avonne M. Seals is handling the case for Madigan's Consumer Fraud Bureau.

-30-

[Return to December 2006 Press Releases](#)