



**For Immediate Release  
October 19, 2007**

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**MADIGAN: VERNON HILLS WOMAN SENTENCED FOR  
DEFRAUDING STATE OF MEDICAID TRANSPORTATION FUNDS**

Chicago – Attorney General Lisa Madigan today announced a Vernon Hills woman will serve more than five years in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) and pay \$2 million in restitution for defrauding the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (IDHFS).

Cook County Circuit Court Judge James Linn sentenced Irit Gutman, 63, to prison for her conviction earlier this year on charges of public aid vendor fraud, theft and money laundering. The Attorney General's office prosecuted the case.

The case began when IDHFS received an application from a prospective vendor, Universal Public Transportation, Inc. (UPT), in January 2001 to provide transportation for Medicaid recipients. Gutman and co-defendant Ilya Lubenskiy disguised their ownership of UPT, listing Mike Tishel as the sole owner of the company because Gutman and Lubenskiy previously had been permanently excluded from the Illinois Medicaid transportation program following a 1999 federal civil settlement.

After IDHFS approved the transportation services application, UPT billed the state for services that it never provided to Medicaid recipients, submitted false claims for reimbursement that included excessive mileage charges, and falsely billed the state for higher-rate special-needs vehicles instead of standard vehicles at lower cost.

In an ongoing effort to conceal her stake in UPT, Gutman laundered money through various personal and corporate accounts and received laundered funds indirectly from UPT. She used the money to pay for various personal expenses.

Lubenskiy plead guilty in November 2004 to vendor fraud. The court sentenced Lubenskiy to serve 63 months in prison and ordered him to pay \$180,000 in restitution.

The Illinois State Police Medicaid Fraud Control Unit investigated the case. Assistant Bureau Chief Frederick Crystal and Senior Assistant Attorney General June Acton prosecuted the case for Madigan's Medicaid Fraud Bureau.

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