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ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN, DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE SECURE GUILTY PLEA AGAINST CHICAGO BRIDAL BUSINESS OWNER***House of Brides Owner Convicted of Failing to Pay More Than \$250,000 in Sales Tax***

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan and Director Brian Hamer of the Illinois Department of Revenue today announced a Wheaton man was convicted of failing to pay more than \$250,000 in sales tax from his bridal sales business.

Dale Budziecki, 64, president and owner of House of Brides, Inc., located in Glen Ellyn, IL, pled guilty in Cook County Circuit Court today to one count of Filing a Fraudulent Sales Tax Return, a Class 3 felony. The court ordered Buziecki to serve 30 months of probation and pay \$279,569.71 in restitution. Buziecki is also required to perform 250 hours of community service and to make a donation of 500 dresses each year for the next three years to the Glass Slipper Project, an Illinois organization that collects formal dresses and accessories to distribute to Chicago high school students who are unable to purchase dresses for prom.

"I am pleased to have worked with the Department of Revenue to obtain a guilty plea in this case," Madigan said. "As a result of this work, the State will recover the sales tax owed and, through the required community service, many young women who want to attend their high school prom will have that opportunity."

"This conviction sends a clear message to taxpayers that they must comply with the state's tax laws, said Brian Hamer, Director, Illinois Department of Revenue. "When businesses fail to meet their obligations not only do they cheat other taxpayers but they risk prosecution and punishment."

As president of House of Brides, Inc., Buziecki is responsible for filing monthly sales tax returns with the Illinois Department of Revenue and payment of the sales tax collected. From November 2005 through June 2006, Buziecki understated the amount of sales and overstated the amount of deductions on his company's sales tax returns. These two figures are used by the Illinois Department of Revenue to calculate the amount of sales tax due to the State. Investigators from the Illinois Department of Revenue Bureau of Criminal Investigation established that Buziecki had under-reported more than \$5 million in sales from House of Brides locations in Glen Ellyn, Norridge, Schaumburg, Oak Lawn and Chicago.

Assistant Attorneys General James A. Rustik and Kristina Waldron handled the case for Attorney General Madigan's Special Prosecution Bureau.

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