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ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN DISTRIBUTES \$1.2 MILLION TO ILLINOIS' EIGHT REGIONAL FOOD BANKS***Funds from Legal Settlement Will Feed People in Need in All 102 Counties***

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today distributed \$1.2 million from a legal settlement to food banks across Illinois to help feed families and people in need. Madigan said the money will make food available to local food pantries in each of Illinois' 102 counties.

Attorney General Madigan was joined today by Kate Maehr, executive director and chief executive officer of the Greater Chicago Food Depository, and Joanne Ekberg, director of North Park Friendship Center, 3448 W. Foster Ave., to announce the contribution. The Friendship Center is one of 650 agencies served by the Greater Chicago Food Depository, which received \$655,000 and is one of the state's eight regional food banks.

"These are very tough times and people all over the state are struggling to make ends meet," said Attorney General Madigan. "No one should go hungry. This settlement will help feed thousands of families across Illinois and bring hope to many who are hurting in this economy.

"This money will allow Illinois' eight regional food banks to purchase food and distribute it through their local food pantries, which reach all Illinois counties and help families in need all over the state," Madigan said.

The funding comes at a time when the food banks are seeing demand steadily increasing as unemployed Illinoisans struggle to make ends meet.

The Greater Chicago Food Depository estimates that from 2006 to 2009 the number of people they have fed has grown by 36 percent, serving 678,000 people last year alone. From July through October of this year, which is the most recent data collected by the Food Depository, there were 1.7 million visits to its food pantries throughout the Chicago area.

The organization estimates every \$1 it receives translates to more than five pounds of food.

"We are humbled to receive this donation as we serve record numbers of people at pantries, soup kitchens and shelters in Cook County," Maehr said. "These funds will allow us to purchase nutritious food, including fresh produce, which will be distributed to thousands of our neighbors."

The funds that the Attorney General distributed to battle hunger comes from a \$25 million settlement reached by her office and 22 other states with nearly a dozen vitamin manufacturers.

The settlement resolved the remaining claims from an international conspiracy in the 1990s by vitamin manufacturers to fix the price of vitamins and overcharge in order to make a larger profit – in violation of federal and state antitrust laws. The court ordered the settlement funds to be used toward improvements in the areas of health, nutrition or science.

Illinois received nearly \$1.4 million from the settlement, of which Madigan is distributing \$1.2 million to the food banks. The remainder will be used to fund consumer education and enforcement of Illinois' antitrust laws.

The following is a breakdown of the \$1.2 million donation:

- Greater Chicago Food Depository, Chicago, serving 650 agencies: \$655,000
- Northern Illinois Food Bank, St. Charles, serving 510 agencies: \$259,116.71

- Eastern Illinois Food Bank, Urbana, serving 220 agencies: \$62,500
- Central Illinois Food Bank, Springfield, serving 160 agencies: \$54,000
- River Bend Food Bank, Moline, serving 100 agencies: \$37,500
- St. Louis Area Food Bank, Bridgeton, Mo., serving 160 Illinois agencies: \$63,000
- Peoria Area Food Bank, Peoria, serving 127 agencies: \$30,000
- Tri-state Food Bank, Evansville, Ind., serving 44 Illinois agencies: \$22,000

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