



December 14, 2011

MADIGAN FILES SUIT OVER PHONY YELLOW PAGES ADS

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today filed suit against a Chicago company for targeting local businesses with phony solicitations for advertisements in popular phone book directories.

Madigan's lawsuit, filed in Cook County Circuit Court, alleges Lena Lockwood and Julia Drahos operated Yellow Page Quick Reference Index, a dissolved Illinois corporation, and sold fictitious advertising space to local businesses for local directories, such as Dex.

"Small businesses are already struggling in this difficult economy. The last thing business owners need is to be targeted for false advertising opportunities that clearly have no benefit," Madigan said.

Madigan said Lockwood and Drahos charged businesses between \$250 and \$450 for advertisements that never materialized, in violation of the Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act. The defendants locked consumers into long-term contracts and refused to cancel contracts upon request. Businesses in Cook, Will, Kankakee, Kendall and Winnebago counties reported being victimized in the scheme, resulting in at least \$10,000 in losses.

The lawsuit asks the court to ban the defendants from owning or operating an advertising company in Illinois and provide restitution for affected consumers. Madigan's suit seeks a civil penalty of \$50,000 and additional penalties of \$50,000 for violations found to be committed with the intent to defraud and committed against a person 65 years or older.

Assistant Attorney General Adam Sokol is handling the case for Madigan's Consumer Fraud Bureau.

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