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**MADIGAN FILES LAWSUIT OVER VACATION TRAVEL CLUB SCAM*****Suit Alleges Global Discovery Vacation Program Ripped Off Consumers of Nearly \$80,000***

**Chicago** — Chicago – Attorney General Lisa Madigan has filed a lawsuit against a Kansas-based company and two of its Chicago area sales agents that scammed Illinois residents out of at least \$80,000 for membership in a bogus travel club that failed to deliver on its promises of vacation destinations across the globe.

Madigan filed the lawsuit in Cook County Circuit Court against Global Connections Inc., of Overland Park, Ks., and Madmol Inc., based in Crystal Lake, Ill., and GVN Illinois, based in Tinley Park.

The lawsuit alleges the companies operate a bogus travel club called Global Discovery Vacation Program. Madigan alleges the club scams as much as \$8,000 in upfront payments and \$398 annual fees from consumers for membership in the program that in reality provides no discounts and instead charges consumers even more money to book vacations.

The Global Discovery Vacation Program is sold through direct mail solicitations and telemarketing calls that claim recipients have won a free prize or free roundtrip airfare. Many consumers reported receiving a fake check or letter made out to them from legitimate-sounding airlines, including "US Airlines" or "American Airways." When consumers contacted the company to claim their free prize and airfare, they learned they first had to attend a sales presentation for the Global Discovery Vacation Program. The presentation billed the program as an exclusive club, promising consumers access to hundreds of properties across the country and around the world for a discount.

"This operation has all the makings of a scam," Madigan said. "Any time you are offered a 'free' prize or a supposed award, that's a red flag. If you receive solicitations like this, your first and only move should be to throw it in the trash."

The suit alleges consumers who signed up for the travel club had access to few of the promised vacation properties, if any at all. The few consumers who were able to book a vacation found substandard conditions of the vacation properties, including reports of hotels infested with cockroaches and broken appliances.

The lawsuit seeks to ban the companies from operating in Illinois, provide full restitution to affected consumers and assess penalties based on violations of the Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act.

Assistant Attorneys General Janice Parker and Kimberly Slider are handling the case for Madigan's Consumer Fraud Bureau.

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