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MADIGAN, DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE: GAS STATION OPERATOR IN CUSTODY FOR TAX FRAUD

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan and the Illinois Department of Revenue (IDOR) today announced that the operator of a Chicago area gas station surrendered to law enforcement after he and his brother-in-law pleaded guilty last week to charges of defrauding the state of Illinois of more than \$450,000 in sales taxes. These cases are the latest actions in a joint operation to crack down on gas station operators who evade sales tax payments to the state.

Kantibhai Patel, 50, of Des Plaines, was taken into custody today after pleading guilty to charges of filing a fraudulent sales tax return. Patel was sentenced to one year in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) and ordered to pay over \$401,000 in restitution. His brother-in-law, Dineshkumar Patel, 46, of Hanover Park, also pleaded guilty last week to misdemeanor charges of failing to keep books and records and was ordered to pay more than \$57,000.

In August 2015, Madigan charged the defendants for underreporting gasoline sales at two suburban Chicago gas stations. Kantibhai Patel operated Goga Petroleum located at 415 W. Virginia St. in Crystal Lake, and Dineshkumar Patel ran Gayatri Petroleum located at 339 W. Virginia St. in Crystal Lake. Between January 2008 and April 2011, the defendants underreported gasoline sales, defrauding the state out of over \$450,000.

"These defendants intentionally defrauded the state out of hundreds of thousands of dollars," Madigan said. "Our ongoing investigations and enforcement efforts have uncovered egregious cases of fraud against the taxpayers of Illinois."

"By successfully investigating and prosecuting gas station tax fraud, we ensure those businesses that play by the rules are not operating at a competitive disadvantage," said Connie Beard, Revenue Director. "I commend the hard work of Revenue's Criminal Investigations Division and the Attorney General's office in this ongoing joint operation."

Madigan's Special Prosecutions Bureau and the IDOR investigate and prosecute gas station owners and operators who defraud the state by evading sales tax payments. Since the operation began in 2010, \$110 million has been recovered on behalf of the state.

Assistant Attorneys General Lori Jordan and Victor Turla handled the cases for Madigan's Special Prosecutions Bureau.

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