



February 15, 2017

ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN: ESSEX TOWNSHIP CLERK ARRESTED FOR THEFT, OFFICIAL MISCONDUCT & FINANCIAL INSTITUTION FRAUD***Madigan Pursues Public Corruption Charges of Kankakee Area Official Over Brazen Theft of Taxpayer Money***

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan and the Office of the Inspector General for the FDIC (FDIC-OIG) today announced Essex Township Clerk Traci Freytag was arrested after she allegedly used taxpayer money for personal expenses including two trips to Florida.

Freytag, 50, of Essex, in Kankakee County, was appointed township clerk in August 2014. She was arrested today by authorities in Aiken, South Carolina and will be transported back to Kankakee on the pending charges. Freytag was charged with theft of government property, a Class 1 felony, financial institution fraud, a Class 2 felony and two counts of official misconduct, a Class 3 felony. If convicted, she could face up to 15 years in prison.

Madigan alleged that between November 2014 through May 2016, Freytag deposited approximately \$94,000 of Essex township checks into her personal bank account. As clerk, Freytag had access to Essex township bank accounts and was able to write checks from those accounts. The scheme was uncovered after a township employee indicated that his payroll check from the township had bounced. A FDIC-OIG investigator then inquired with the State Bank of Herscher, which holds the Essex township account, and discovered the funds had been completely depleted. He also discovered multiple Essex Township checks written to and signed by Freytag that were deposited into her personal US Bank account.

"Stealing taxpayer money to use for personal enjoyment is a brazen form of public corruption," Madigan said. "I appreciate the Office of the Inspector General of the FDIC helping us bring this defendant to justice, as well as the Kankakee County Sheriff's Office and the Aiken, South Carolina Police Department for their assistance."

"The FDIC Office of Inspector General promotes the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of FDIC programs and operations, and protects against fraud, waste, and abuse," FDIC-OIG Special Agent in Charge Joseph Moriarty said. "When these types of crimes occur within FDIC-insured institutions, we ensure that those involved are held responsible."

The public is reminded that the defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Assistant Attorney General Nicole Sutcliff is handling the case for Madigan's Special Prosecutions Bureau. The FDIC-OIG referred the case to Madigan's office.

-30-

[Return to February 2017 Press Releases](#)