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**ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN SUES PROFESSIONAL FUNDRAISERS,
SEEKS TO BAN THEM FROM OPERATING IN ILLINOIS**

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan filed lawsuits against professional fundraisers based in the Chicago suburbs seeking to ban them from operating in Illinois for numerous violations of the state’s Solicitation for Charity Act.

In two separate lawsuits filed in Cook County Circuit Court, Madigan sued Community Guide Magazines Inc. (CGM) and Supplemental Security Foundations Inc. (SSF) for various fundraising violations, including making misleading representations to people during fundraising solicitations for charities.

“These fundraisers are engaged in illegal fundraising,” Madigan said. “They kept the majority of money they collected instead of giving it to the charity they claim to be raising it for. People who want to donate to a charity should contact the charity directly if they want to ensure their entire contribution benefits the charity.”

Madigan’s lawsuit against the Cicero-based CGM also names its operator Ron McMenemy, as well as professional solicitors Stephen Ashely, Ronald Chilman, Jarrod Horton, James Jindela, Peter Pearson, and Curtis McDowell. Madigan alleges that CGM and McMenemy hired professional solicitors with felony convictions to fundraise in Illinois, which is illegal under the Illinois Solicitation for Charity Act. CGM’s professional solicitors were fundraising on behalf of two charities, Vietnow National Headquarters and American Veterans Foundation (AVF). The professional solicitors submitted false documents to Madigan’s office claiming they had no criminal records that would violate the Act. The Act prevents anyone convicted of a crime involving theft, fraud, or financial wrongdoing, or any felony from soliciting Illinois residents as a fundraiser for a charity.

In her lawsuit against SSF, Madigan also sued owner Ronald Broadstone, Gary Neuburger, a professional solicitor, and the charity AVF, for engaging in illegal fundraising activities. Madigan alleges that SSF, based in Oak Forest, made misleading representations to potential donors and did not disclose that they were paid professionals, in violation of Illinois law. For example, Madigan alleges SSF’s solicitation mailings listed a local Illinois phone number and address for AVF that really belonged to employees at SSF in order to falsely represent that AVF had a local presence in Illinois.

In addition, Madigan’s lawsuit alleges that Neuburger and Broadstone falsely claimed on 2017 and 2018 forms that Neuburger had never been convicted of a felony or any crimes involving theft, fraud, or financial wrongdoing. Neuburger, in fact, is a felon with prior convictions for various crimes involving misuse of money, dishonesty and burglary. Madigan also alleges AVF allowed SSF to solicit contributions in a way that did not disclose that callers were paid professionals and to distribute materials that misrepresented who was actually soliciting prospective Illinois donors, in violation of the Solicitation Act.

Madigan is seeking to ban both CGM and SSF from soliciting in Illinois. Additionally, Madigan is seeking an accounting of all funds raised and the forfeiture of any compensation paid to these fundraisers. She is also seeking to cancel AVF’s registration in Illinois and institute a five-year ban on AVF from soliciting in Illinois.

Bureau Chief Therese Harris, Deputy Bureau Chief Barry Goldberg and Assistant Attorney General Pooja Shah are handling the cases for Madigan’s Charitable Trust Bureau.

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