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December 5, 2018

ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN FILES LAWSUIT OVER TICKET SCHEME

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today filed a lawsuit against a California woman who has used dozens of aliases and assumed business names to create and sell tickets for fake events in Illinois and throughout the country that never occurred. In Illinois, the scammer stole over \$30,000 from unsuspecting consumers.

Madigan's lawsuit was filed today in Cook County Circuit Court against Kristen Yvette Martin, individually and doing business as Expo Network, Fanoomies and dozens of other aliases and assumed business names, for advertising and selling tickets to a variety of fake events. Martin promoted, for example, "all you can eat" taco, sushi and crab fests, as well as 5K zombie races across the country. Madigan alleges that Martin advertised the events on Facebook and other social media sites and sold tickets for a range of prices through ticketing platforms including Groupon, Active Network and Shopify. On occasion, Martin set up short-term websites for certain events to sell tickets and make the events appear valid.

"Scammers' outrageous ideas never cease to amaze me," Madigan said. "I filed my lawsuit to put an end to the promotion of these fake events and prevent Illinoisans from losing their money."

Madigan's lawsuit alleges Martin typically advertised events that were completely fabricated, at locations that did not exist or that could not take place due to logistical issues. Madigan also alleges that in some cases Martin paid a deposit to rent an event space but failed to pay the balance or obtain the proper permits, resulting in the event being canceled. In addition, Madigan alleges Martin typically canceled an event after too much time had elapsed for people to contest charges on their credit cards. Martin often advertised the tickets as non-refundable and sold only online. In addition, Madigan alleges Martin used multiple aliases and assumed business names when promoting events and often used multiple email addresses when communicating with people.

In Illinois, Martin advertised several events that never occurred, including the "Skull Run Chicago" to be held October 7, 2018; the "Taco Fest Chicago" to be held June 8, 2018; the "Chicago Bacon and Beer Fest" to be held at 980 N. Michigan Ave. on January 20, 2018; and the "Hot Garlic Crab Feed" to be held in Chicago at 1 S. Dearborn St., on January 16, 2016. Martin also advertised an "All-You-Can-Eat Crab Fest" in Lake County, Ill. Each of these events was advertised under different names on multiple online platforms.

Madigan's lawsuit seeks full restitution for people impacted by Martin's scheme and asks the court to ban her from doing business in Illinois.

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

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