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WILL COUNTY BUSINESS OWNER PLEADS GUILTY TO TAX FRAUD

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today announced that a Plainfield business owner pleaded guilty to defrauding the state out of more than \$400,000 in sales tax revenue.

Jamal Hussein, 46, of Plainfield, pleaded guilty earlier today before Will County Circuit Court Judge Daniel Kennedy to tax fraud for failing to file a sales tax return for his business, Burning Leaf Cigars Inc., which has retail locations in Plainfield, Aurora and Geneva. Hussein was sentenced to two and a half years in prison and ordered to pay more than \$465,000 in restitution.

In 2015, Madigan charged Hussein for underreporting more than \$4.2 million in taxable sales between January 2011 and September 2015. As a result of the scheme, the state lost more than \$465,000 in sales tax revenue.

“Individuals who operate businesses in Illinois are required to pay sales taxes, and this case clearly demonstrates that there are consequences for business owners who illegally shirk their tax obligations,” Madigan said.

The investigation was conducted by the Illinois Department of Revenue’s (IDOR) Criminal Investigations Division.

“Today’s plea sends a clear message that attempts to defraud the public by filing falsely prepared tax returns will not be tolerated,” said Connie Beard, IDOR Director. “Together with the Attorney General’s Office, Revenue’s Criminal Investigations Division will continue to pursue individuals who do not comply with Illinois tax law.”

Assistant Attorneys General James Rustik and Anshuman Vaidya handled the case for Madigan’s Special Prosecutions Bureau.

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