

December 23, 2020

RAOUL: PARKING GARAGE OPERATOR CHARGED FOR DEFRAUDING COOK COUNTY OUT OF MORE THAN \$100,000 IN PARKING TAXES

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today announced that a Cook County parking garage operator has been charged with defrauding Cook County out of more than \$100,000 in parking taxes.

William Sommerfeld, 63, of Western Springs, Ill., was charged in Cook County Circuit Court with theft of government property over \$100,000, a Class X felony punishable by up to 30 years in prison; theft of governmental property exceeding \$10,000 and not exceeding \$100,000, a Class 1 felony punishable by up to 15 years in prison; and wire fraud, a Class 3 felony punishable by up to five years in prison.

“Cook County’s parking lot tax is an important revenue source for vital county services,” Raoul said. “I am committed to continuing to partner with local authorities to hold accountable individuals who try to defraud Illinois residents for their personal gain.”

“I am pleased that our Department of Revenue was able to work with Attorney General Raoul’s office and Sheriff Dart pursuing this tax avoidance. This was a successful collaboration and important step to protect taxpayers and businesses through proper, consistent and equitable enforcement of taxes,” said Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle.

The Cook County Parking Lot and Garage Operations Tax requires parking lot operators to remit tax revenues collected from customers to the Cook County Department of Revenue. According to the indictment, between Jan. 1, 2017 and Jan. 20, 2018, Mid-City Parking, Inc. collected more than \$100,000 in taxes that Sommerfeld allegedly did not remit to Cook County.

Sommerfeld’s bond was set at \$100,000, and a hearing was set for Jan. 29. The public is reminded that the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Assistant Attorney General Victor Turla is handling the case for Raoul’s Revenue Prosecutions Unit, and Assistant Attorney General Regina Jeon is handling the case for Raoul’s Financial Crimes Unit.