



DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

News Release

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR

Mark J. Bennett, Attorney General
Phone: (808) 586-1500
Fax: (808) 586-1239

For Immediate Release: September 14, 2005

News Release No. 2005-45

Real estate agents charged for nonpayment of \$575,000 in general excise taxes

(HONOLULU) Penal summons complaints have been filed against twelve real estate agents and the husband of a real estate agent who failed to timely report and pay their general excise taxes on sales commissions for the past seven years. Another real estate agent is pending grand jury indictment for a felony tax offense.

During the seven-year period, the real estate agents earned more than \$9 million in sales commissions, but failed to pay more than \$575,000 in general excise taxes, including penalties and interest.

Penal summons complaints have been issued against Heather H. Chung (51), Steven D.H. Chung (59), Glen H. Fujihara (58), Mero V. Giasolli (68), Guy V. Kidder (53), Craig A. Lindner (41), Linda M. McCabe (59), Russell K. Nishimoto (49), Fukuyuki Puckett (44), Karen N. Robertshaw (56), Ronald B. Staton (56), Lloyd T. Tanaka (47) and Bruce W. Yanagihara (58).

Failure to timely file a general excise tax return is a misdemeanor punishable by up to one year of imprisonment and a \$25,000 fine. A penal summons is only an accusation. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty at trial.

“All of Hawaii’s citizens have an obligation to comply with tax laws,” Attorney General Mark Bennett said. “We will continue to vigorously prosecute those who fail to report and pay general excise taxes.”

The prosecution of these cases is the result of a joint effort between the Department of the Attorney General and the Department of Taxation. A recent audit of the ten real estate firms (by sales volume) by the Department of Taxation revealed that these real estate agents failed to timely pay their general excise taxes or underreported their sales commissions. The Department of Taxation investigator also referred 45 real estate agents to the Civil Audit section.

Real estate agents charged for nonpayment of \$575,000 in general excise taxes
September 14, 2005
Page 2

To report a failure to report or pay general excise taxes, please contact the Department of Taxation, Criminal Tax Investigation Section at (808) 587-1795.

###

For more information, contact:

Susan Won

Deputy Attorney General

Criminal Justice Division

(808) 586-1160

hawaiiag@hawaii.gov

www.hawaii.gov/ag