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CHANNAHON VILLAGE PRESIDENT CHARGED WITH FAILING TO FILE FEDERAL INDIVIDUAL AND CORPORATE INCOME TAX RETURNS

CHICAGO — The village president of Channahon, which straddles Will and Grundy counties approximately 50 miles southwest of Chicago, was charged with failing to file federal income tax returns for four years during which he allegedly earned approximately \$250,000 in gross income from two public jobs and a private consulting business. The defendant, **Joseph Cook**, 45, of Channahon, was charged in a six-count criminal information filed late yesterday, Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, announced today together with Alvin Patton, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division in Chicago, and Robert D. Grant, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Cook allegedly earned income as the president of the Channahon village trustees, as an employee of the Will County engineering department, and as the sole owner of a private engineering consulting business, Phase One Solutions, Inc. He was charged with four counts of failing to file federal individual income tax returns for 2005-08 and two counts of failing to file federal corporate

tax returns for Phase One for 2007-08. All six counts are misdemeanors. Cook will be ordered to appear for arraignment at a later date in U.S. District Court.

According to the charges, Cook earned gross income from at least three sources — Channahon, Will County and Phase One — totaling approximately \$69,672 in 2005, \$82,542 in 2006, \$60,304 in 2007, and \$39,066 in 2008, but did not file federal individual tax returns. He also allegedly failed to file federal corporate tax returns for Phase One, which Cook incorporated in December 2006.

The government is being represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Brandon Fox.

Each count of failing to file a federal income tax return carries a maximum penalty of one year in prison and a \$100,000 fine. In addition, defendants convicted of tax offenses face mandatory costs of prosecution and remain civilly liable to the Government for any and all back taxes, as well as a civil fraud penalty of 75 percent of the underpayment plus interest. If convicted, the Court, must impose a reasonable sentence under the advisory United States Sentencing Guidelines.

The public is reminded that an information contains only charges and is not evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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