



## News Release

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

February 8, 2011

### **Former Kanabec County Sheriff Facing Felony Tax Charges**

**Saint Paul** – The Minnesota Department of Revenue announced today that the Kanabec County Attorney's Office charged Von Thompson, 55, of Mora, with ten felony tax crimes.

Thompson is charged with five counts of willful failure to file tax returns and five counts of willful failure to pay taxes for tax years 2003 through 2007. In addition to the tax related charges, he is also facing four charges of theft by swindle and five charges of theft through temporary control.

Thompson failed to file and pay income taxes between 2003 and 2007. The Minnesota Department of Revenue set up six different payment plans with him between 2004 and 2008 but he allegedly failed to follow through with the payment plans.

According to the complaint, Thompson was Kanabec County Sheriff from 1983 to 1999. An investigation uncovered an alleged long-term investment fraud, or Ponzi Scheme operated by Thompson.

According to the complaint, Thompson approached several people about airplane and motorcycle investments and promised high returns. After many of them wrote checks to Thompson for several thousand dollars, they did not receive any of their initial investment back, or any interest. Those who were later given checks by Thompson, could not cash them, due to insufficient funds in his accounts.

The complaint also states Thompson formed a contract with a church in Mora to replace the church's roof. The church issued several checks to Thompson who deposited small amounts of the money into a business account and cashed the majority of the money. Thompson was also supposed to reimburse the lumber company for supplies they purchased for the job but the business was never paid for the materials supplied.

Each felony is punishable by up to five years in prison, up to a \$10,000 fine, or both.

The Minnesota Department of Revenue has a 24-hour tip line for anyone who suspects an individual or business is violating tax laws, at (651) 297-5195 or 1-800-657-3500. Tipsters may remain anonymous and can also email the department at [tax.fraud@state.mn.us](mailto:tax.fraud@state.mn.us). Last year, citizen tips resulted in 75 percent of the department's criminal case referrals.

The Minnesota Department of Revenue is dedicated to enforcing tax laws, collecting no more and no less than taxpayers owe. It takes progressively stricter measures against taxpayers who demonstrate they will not voluntarily meet their obligations.

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