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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**AG Schimel Files Lawsuits Against Milwaukee Stores
Selling Synthetic Cannabinoids**

MADISON, WI – Today, Attorney General Brad Schimel and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), sued Atomic Glass and Food Town Mini Mart, in Milwaukee County, for selling designer drug synthetic cannabinoids known by such names as “Spice” and “Kush” in violation of Wisconsin consumer protection law, in particular, the prohibition on fraudulent drug advertising (Wis. Stat. § 100.182).

“I will not tolerate any drug dealer putting our communities at risk with dangerous and unpredictable drugs. At DOJ, we work hard to bring all illicit drug dealers to justice, whether their retail venue is on the street or at a store,” said Attorney General Schimel. “This case would not have been successful without dedicated attorneys, investigators, and law enforcement from DOJ, DATCP, Milwaukee Police Department, City of Milwaukee and the DEA.”

Synthetic cannabinoids, known to be unpredictable and dangerous, are one type of designer drugs. They are similar to THC, the main psychotropic compound in marijuana, but have slightly different chemical compositions. Synthetic cannabinoids are often dangerous, and have been linked to cases of organ failure, acute psychotic episodes, delirium, and death.

"Wisconsin and much of the United States has been awash in hundreds of new and dangerous psychoactive drugs, putting our youth at risk," said DEA Assistant Special Agent in Charge Robert Bell. "This action holds accountable those who have targeted our kids for profit."

Some but not all synthetic cannabinoids are on the list of controlled substances, subject to criminal prohibition. The producers of these drugs keep changing the chemical formula to stay one step ahead of the legislation. When one of these chemicals becomes illegal, they switch to a new one. As a result, users of these drugs don't know what they are getting when they smoke them. These drugs have not been tested for safety and are not approved by the Food and Drug Administration. This case uses the prohibition on fraudulent drug advertising to crack down on a seller of these dangerous products.

Atomic Glass and Food Town Mini Mart have sold large amounts of these dangerous products to the public, from stores in the Milwaukee area.

The defendants broke the law by representing to buyers that they could achieve the effects of a drug that is not approved by the FDA. The defendants' products were mislabeled as "incense" and "potpourri" but were intended for human consumption, despite bogus claims to the contrary on some of the package labels. The product packages do not warn buyers what is really in them, exposing users (and others) to risk of injury.

DATCP is seeking temporary and permanent injunctive relief and substantial civil penalties of up to \$200 for every package of fraudulently-labeled drugs that were sold by Atomic Glass and Food Town Mini Mart.

Wisconsin Assistant Attorney General Laura McFarlane and Wisconsin Department of Justice Consumer Protection and Antitrust Unit Investigator Cam Howe are leading the State's lawsuits against Atomic Glass and Food Town Mini Mart.