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Sunland Park Smoke Shop Owner Charged with Tax Evasion

LAS CRUCES, N.M. – The owner of a Sunland Park smoke shop has been indicted for failing to pay over \$100,000 in taxes.

Juan C. Chavez, 38, was charged with 30 counts of Attempting to Evade or Defeat Tax, all felonies. Chavez faces a maximum sentence of 45 years in prison and a \$150,000 fine.

Chavez was indicted by a Grand Jury in the Third Judicial District of New Mexico.

“With tax season upon us, this case should serve as a reminder to those who would try to cheat the system,” said Demesia Padilla, Cabinet Secretary for the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department. “This Department is committed to catching those who attempt to defraud the State of New Mexico.”

Chaves is accused of failing to pay \$109,000 in Gross Receipts Tax between 2013 and 2015.

“This is an example of multiple agencies working together to aggressively prosecute white-collar crimes,” said 3rd Judicial District Attorney Mark D’Antonio. “By raising awareness through prosecution and the media, we force potential white-collar criminals to have second thoughts before defrauding the hardworking people of New Mexico.”

This case was investigated by the Tax Fraud Investigations Division of the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department and is being prosecuted by the Office of the Third Judicial District Attorney. To report tax fraud against the State of New Mexico, call the Tax Fraud Hotline at 1-866-457-6789 or e-mail tax.fraud@state.nm.us.
