

PRESS RELEASE



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**MADIGAN, MEEKS, DILLARD, COLVIN PUSH FOR BILL TO GIVE
CONSUMERS MORE POWER WHEN PURCHASING USED
VEHICLES**

Chicago – Noting that a car is often a consumer’s biggest purchase after a home, Attorney General Lisa Madigan and State Sen. James Meeks (D-Chicago) today called on the Illinois General Assembly to pass legislation that gives consumers more power when deciding whether or not to buy a used vehicle.

Currently, Illinois is one of only two states that do not release information that would allow consumers to check if a used vehicle they may buy has been in an accident. Approximately 1.9 million used vehicles were sold in Illinois last year.

Speaking at a news conference where they were expected to be joined by State Rep. Marlow Colvin (D-Chicago), Madigan and Meeks said buying a car without knowing if it has been damaged is like buying a house without having an inspection performed. The bill is sponsored by Meeks and State Sen. Kirk Dillard (R-Hinsdale) in the Senate. Colvin is the House sponsor.

“Would anyone buy a home without an inspection to find out if there is hidden damage? The answer is ‘no.’ Why should consumers buy cars without knowing the history of a vehicle?” Madigan said. “Consumers should not face hidden histories and potential future financial or safety issues when it comes to buying a used vehicle.”

Madigan said the legislation she and her colleagues have proposed would amend the Illinois Vehicle Code to require that all police-reported accidents be disclosed to used car dealers and consumers.

In 2003, an estimated 830,000 cars were involved in approximately 500,000 police-reported accidents across Illinois. However, much of this accident information is never disclosed when cars are later sold. If passed, Senate Bill 1839 would make information from police-reported accidents in the State of Illinois available to all used car buyers – both consumers and dealers.

Madigan said it was ironic that while consumers can use a commercial service to see whether a prospective purchase has been in a wreck in another state, they cannot know whether the car for sale in Illinois has been in a wreck in Illinois, the most likely scenario facing Illinois consumers.

“Something is wrong when an Illinois consumer can find out if a car has been in a wreck in Idaho or Iowa but not Illinois,” Madigan said.

“Besides a house, a car is often the largest purchase a person will make. Having access to police-reported accident information could help prevent thousands of working families from wasting their hard earned money on previously damaged cars,” Meeks said. “ The Used Car Buyers Right to Know Bill is the right thing to do. It’s the fair thing to do.”

“Even though IDOT has won national awards for the accident data it collects, it doesn’t have the authority to make it available to consumers. This doesn’t make any sense,” Dillard said. “If you’re going to buy a car for yourself, your children or your spouse, you have a right to know if it has been in a major accident.”

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