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**MADIGAN OBSERVES SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH;
RELEASES QUIZ TO INCREASE PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE OF
SEXUALLY VIOLENT CRIMES**

Chicago – Attorney General Lisa Madigan today released a public awareness quiz, titled “Sexual Assault Myths: A Quiz to Separate Fact from Fiction,” to help increase public understanding of sexual assault and to remind Illinoisans that sexual assault is a crime that can be prevented.

Madigan released the quiz today to mark the beginning of Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Every year, the month of April is designated nationwide as Sexual Assault Awareness Month and dedicated to honoring the strength and courage of survivors and recognizing sexual assault as a major public health problem that affects all citizens. The month also serves as a time to acknowledge the compassion and dedication of those who work selflessly to provide services to survivors, Madigan said. With someone in America being sexually assaulted every 2.5 minutes, this year’s national theme is “It’s About Time to Prevent Sexual Violence.”

“Sexual assault is a crime that does not discriminate. It knows no racial, economic, social or age barriers. Sexual assaults happen in all neighborhoods, in every corner of the state,” Madigan said. “This quiz will help teach us all something about sexual assault, increasing understanding so that we can increase our prevention efforts.”

Madigan said that although sexual assault is one of the most underreported crimes in the United States, the statistics on reported assaults are startling. Studies have shown that one in four girls and one in six boys will be sexually assaulted by the age of 18.

As Attorney General, Madigan has drafted laws and developed programs that will help reduce sex offenses. Madigan has helped to draft and pass tough laws enabling families and communities to keep track of sex offenders and has worked with law enforcement across the state to strengthen and enforce Illinois’ sex offender laws . For example, with the passage of a law providing for lifetime supervision for the most dangerous sex offenders, the previous one-size-fits-all period of parole was changed so that sex offenders will be supervised for as long as they remain a danger, Madigan said.

Madigan also has drafted, introduced and worked to pass new laws that improve elements of the state’s sex offender registry, require evaluation and

treatment of sex offenders released from prison and, for the first time, create specific parole conditions for sex offenders.

Madigan's office worked with law enforcement partners to create the Illinois Sex Offender Registry Team (ISORT). The team focuses on improving the state's online sex offender registry to make it a valuable tool to protect our families and communities. Among several improvements, the registry now contains information on the criminal history of registered offenders and denotes whether the offenders are compliant with the registry laws. Additionally, key portions of the Web site have been translated into Spanish.

Madigan's office also works to keep dangerous sex offenders off the streets through the Sexually Violent Persons (SVP) program. Under this program, if an offender who is being released from the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) is still considered a risk, the Attorney General's Office can file a court action seeking to have the offender committed to a non-penal facility where he will be closely monitored.

Additionally, in October 2005, Madigan created the position of Statewide Coordinator for Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) within her office to organize training programs across the state, encourage certification of Illinois nurses and increase the number of Sexual Assault Response Teams in Illinois. SANEs are specially trained in collecting and handling evidence for use by law enforcement and admission in court. SANEs are trained to ask specific questions that will help gather information about the crime and to provide initial counseling services for victims, and often serve as expert witnesses during sexual assault trials.