



September 28, 2010

**ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN: ILLINOIS DNA RAPE KIT LAW IS
MODEL FOR U.S.*****"Law & Order: SVU" Episode Coincides with New Illinois Law / Focuses on
Need for National Reform of DNA Rape Kit Testing***

Illinois Attorney General Madigan announced that Wednesday night, NBC's "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit" episode will focus on the importance of testing DNA rape kits. The powerful episode will show the painstaking process rape victims go through to provide DNA evidence after a sexual assault, and the consequences for the victim when that evidence goes untested.

"Sexual assault is a devastating crime, but across the country vital evidence from DNA rape kits sits on shelves, ignored, or even worse, is thrown away," said Attorney General Madigan. "I fought for DNA rape kit legislation in Illinois so that sexual assault survivors know this evidence will be tested and the criminal justice system will take the crime seriously."

On September 1, Illinois became the first state in the nation with a law mandating the submission and testing of sexual assault evidence. The Illinois Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Act creates a statewide protocol to test DNA rape kits. Under the Act, local law enforcement must submit DNA rape kits to Illinois State Police (ISP) crime labs for testing within 10 business days of receiving the kit from a hospital, and ISP must analyze the kit within six months of receipt. Crime victim advocates are pushing for national reforms similar to those already enacted in Illinois

"Each untested kit represents lost justice for a survivor of sexual assault," said Attorney General Madigan. "Illinois' new mandatory DNA rape kit testing statute is a model for the rest of the country. By drawing attention to this critical issue, we hope that this television episode will help spur a larger dialogue about untested rape kits and encourage law makers at the state and federal level to follow Illinois' lead."

In connection with the airing of the "Law & Order: SVU" episode, simultaneous Watch Parties will occur in New York City, Chicago and Los Angeles, after which participants will discuss the episode and steps they can take to address the need for national reform on mandatory testing of DNA rape kits.

-30-

[Return to September 2010 Press Releases](#)