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## HOUSE PASSES AMENDMENT TO STRENGTHEN ILLINOIS' DNA DATABASE

Springfield — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today applauded the House for passing a bill (HB 3238) to strengthen the state's DNA database. The bill, which was sponsored by Rep. Susana Mendoza (D-Chicago) who worked closely with Madigan's office, requires all registered sex offenders to provide a DNA specimen and calls for collecting DNA of people arrested for the most serious violent crimes after they are indicted or after a court finding of probable cause.

"This bill will make the state's DNA database an even stronger tool for law enforcement in solving violent crimes while also helping to exonerate those who are wrongfully convicted," Madigan said.

Rep. Mendoza has been a leader on this issue over the course of her career in the statehouse.

"DNA is the fingerprint of the 21st century and has proven to be an instrumental tool in convicting the guilty and exonerating the innocent. This legislation is a huge step forward for Illinois in helping our state protect society from serial rapists, murderers and sex offenders," Rep. Mendoza stated.

Approved in the House by a vote of 99-9-2, the legislation now moves to the Senate, where it will be sponsored by Sen. Kwame Raoul (D-Chicago).

"This legislation will assist law enforcement in their efforts to pursue justice in the most serious of crimes," said Sen. Raoul. "Equally as important, it also provides individuals who have been wrongfully accused a clearer path towards being cleared."

According to the bill, all sex offenders who are required to register with local law enforcement must provide a DNA specimen – regardless of their conviction date or the state in which the offender was convicted. The bill also calls for collecting DNA when someone is indicted or there is a finding of probable cause in the following violent crimes:

- First Degree murder
- Home Invasion
- Predatory criminal sexual assault
- Aggravated criminal sexual assault
- Criminal sexual assault

In addition, the legislation would authorize the Illinois State Police to expunge a DNA profile upon court order.

Attorney General Madigan has long been committed to improving the state's DNA database. In 2008, she created the Illinois DNA Accountability Project (IDAP) to undertake a first-of-its-kind assessment of the state DNA database to identify gaps in the system. Today's legislation is one result of that initiative.

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