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## MADIGAN: HOUSE UNANIMOUSLY PASSES BILL TO STRENGTHEN SENTENCING FOR CHILD PORNOGRAPHY OFFENDERS

**Springfield** — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today praised the House of Representatives for its unanimous vote in support of legislation that will help strengthen prosecutors' efforts to protect children from pornographers.

House Bill 2647, which was sponsored by Rep. Emily McAsey and drafted in conjunction with Madigan's office, seeks to clarify current Illinois law to allow prosecuting attorneys to charge suspects for each individual item of alleged child pornography in their possession. The bill would be in line with other statutes that allow for multiple convictions for "single and separate" violations involving controlled substances or deadly weapons, for example. Sen. John G. Mulroe will sponsor the measure in the Senate.

"Child pornography is an unspeakable crime that has very real consequences. Every time an image of an infant or toddler being raped is viewed, it perpetuates the initial crime, further scarring these young, innocent victims," Madigan said. "This legislation will ensure that law enforcement has the most effective tools at its disposal to put away these despicable offenders for years to come."

"This clarification in the law will provide prosecutors another tool as they work to crack down on dangerous predators in possession of child pornography," said Rep. McAsey. "I appreciate the opportunity to work with Attorney General Madigan and remain committed to strengthening Illinois law to protect our children from victimization."

Madigan also stressed the importance of HB 2647 in light of the consecutive sentencing model that her office helped draft and was enacted last year that directs courts to impose longer mandatory consecutive, rather than concurrent, sentences for child pornography-related offenses.

In addition to her legislative efforts to combat child pornography, Madigan conducts "Operation Glass House," an ongoing statewide initiative to apprehend the most active child pornography traders in Illinois. In the first year of Operation Glass House, Madigan's investigations revealed a disturbing trend of offenders trading extremely violent videos of young children being raped. As a result, Operation Glass House has focused on apprehending offenders who are seen trading and watching extremely violent videos involving children, including infants and toddlers.

Madigan's office, with a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, also runs the Illinois Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) task force, which investigates child exploitation crimes and trains law enforcement agencies. Since 2006, Madigan's ICAC task force has been involved in 552 arrests of sexual predators. The task force has also provided Internet safety training and education to more than 286,000 parents, teachers and students and 16,258 law enforcement professionals. Currently, 182 agencies are affiliated with the Illinois ICAC.

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