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MADIGAN CALLS ON CONGRESS TO HELP STATES FIGHT CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING*Madigan, Attorneys General Urge Lawmakers to Amend Communications Decency Act*

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan and her counterparts across the country today called on Congress to approve a change to the Communications Decency Act to better fight child sex trafficking.

In a [letter](#) to key members of Congress, Madigan and 48 other attorneys general urged lawmakers to amend the Act to provide criminal jurisdiction to state and local prosecutors. The change would allow state and local authorities to prosecute online classified sites, such as Backpage.com, that promote and profit from human sex trafficking ads, including the trafficking of children.

The Communications Decency Act of 1996 was intended to protect children from accessing indecent material online, but in the years since its implementation, courts have interpreted certain provisions of the Act to provide online classified ad sites immunity from state and local prosecution for profiting from human trafficking ads posted to their sites.

While the Communications Decency Act provides criminal authority to the federal government, Madigan and the attorneys general said criminal jurisdiction must be extended to the states to more effectively combat these crimes.

“Sex trafficking is a frightening reality in Illinois and across the country,” Madigan said. “Unfortunately, the victims are often innocent children. State and local law enforcement agencies must be allowed to target and prosecute websites that profit from these horrific crimes.”

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