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*****CONSUMER ALERT*****CONSUMER ALERT*****

MADIGAN WARNS OF FRAUDULENT IMMIGRATION SERVICES PROVIDERS

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today warned Illinois residents to beware of potential immigration fraud after President Obama’s announcement of his immigration plan this week.

Madigan issued an alert to warn potential immigration services applicants that they may be targets of scam artists and unscrupulous immigration services providers who illegally pose as lawyers or demand excessive upfront fees for assistance. Following President Obama’s announcement, Madigan also warned Illinois residents to be especially wary of immigration service providers who claim they now may qualify for citizenship.

“The immigration process is often intimidating and confusing, which is why many people seek assistance,” Attorney General Madigan said. “But unfortunately, much of the help offered is expensive and illegitimate. That’s why it’s so important to know the warning signs of an immigration scam and where to find honest assistance. People should contact my office if they encounter anyone making these types of claims and believe they have been defrauded in an illegal scheme.”

In Illinois, immigration services providers must register with the Illinois Attorney General’s Office, unless they are licensed attorneys or are a nonprofit organization recognized by the Board of Immigration Appeals. In addition to these regulatory requirements, immigration services providers must:

- Provide consumers with a written contract in English and their native language;
- Provide consumers with a three-day right to cancel the contract; and
- Return all documents to the consumer upon the demand.

It is important for immigrants to know that in the United States notaries or “notarios” are not licensed attorneys, and they cannot provide legal advice on immigration matters.

Madigan has filed 10 lawsuits against fraudulent immigration service providers for a range of illegal practices, including demanding excessive upfront fees and falsely claiming they are licensed attorneys, that put immigrant residents at greater risk of deportation. Individuals who have questions regarding the President’s immigration plan can find more information through the [U.S. Department of Citizenship and Immigration Services](#). Consumers can also consult the [Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights](#) to find a Board of Immigration Appeals-accredited organization to provide legitimate immigration services.

To file a complaint against an immigration services provider, consumers can call Attorney General Madigan’s office at 1-800-386-5438 for a complaint form. Consumers can also download a complaint form from the [Attorney General’s website](#) and [file it online](#).

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