



December 30, 2014

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## MADIGAN APPLAUDS GOVERNOR'S ACTION ON BILL TO STOP PENSION BENEFITS FOR FELONS

**Chicago** — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today applauded Gov. Quinn for signing into law a bill drafted by her office to stop taxpayer-funded pension payments to public employees convicted of felonies related to their public service.

Senate Bill 2809 gives the Attorney General's Office the authority to file a civil action to stop payment of pension benefits to public employees who have been convicted of a felony related to their employment. Madigan's office drafted the law, sponsored by Sen. Kwame Raoul and Rep. Elaine Nekritz, in response to an Illinois Supreme Court decision preventing the Attorney General from suing to stop pension payments to Jon Burge, a former Chicago Police commander convicted of lying about his knowledge of and participation in torture and abuse of suspects.

"This legislation will ensure the state can challenge pension decisions that are not in the best interests of taxpayers," Madigan said.

Madigan filed a lawsuit in 2011 following a decision by the Retirement Board of the Policemen's Annuity and Benefit Fund of Chicago to allow Burge to continue receiving his pension benefits despite his felony convictions. Madigan's lawsuit against Burge and the Retirement Board was based on the Illinois Pension Code provision that prohibits the payment of benefits to any person convicted of a felony relating to, arising out of or in connection with his service as a policeman.

Earlier this year, the Illinois Supreme Court ruled that the current statute did not allow Madigan's office to bring the lawsuit. Senate Bill 2809 was drafted in response to that decision to clarify that the Attorney General's Office has the authority to file suit to protect taxpayers when a public employee who has been convicted of a felony related to his or her employment is receiving taxpayer-funded pension benefits. The law will take effect on June 1, 2015.

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