

Press Releases

August 23, 2016

ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN: NEW LAW SETS STANDARDS FOR ALL ILLINOIS COLLEGES TO RESPOND TO CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT CRIMES APPROPRIATELY AND CONSISTENTLY***Madigan and Advocates Detail the Preventing Sexual Violence in Higher Education Act as New School Year Starts***

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today joined with the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), state and local officials and advocates to highlight the Preventing Sexual Violence in Higher Education Act. The law took effect this month and requires Illinois colleges and universities to implement procedures to prevent and better respond to sexual violence complaints.

Madigan initiated the effort to pass the Act in 2015 after convening summits on college campuses around the state to discuss the problem of sexual assaults on campus.

Studies show that one in five undergraduate women will become a victim of rape or attempted rape. In fact, the U.S. Department of Education has said women between the ages of 16 and 24 experience the highest rates of sexual assault, and about 6 percent of male undergrads also become victims of sexual assault. According to the Association of American Universities, more than 13 percent of gay or lesbian students and 25 percent of bisexual students experience sexual assault. Yet, a 2014 U.S. Senate survey of 440 four-year higher education institutions found that more than 40 percent of the schools had not conducted a single investigation into allegations of sexual violence.

Joining Madigan today were UIC Chancellor Michael Amiridis, End Rape on Campus Executive Director Annie Clark, Sen. Toi Hutchinson, who was the lead sponsor of the bill, Sen. Bill Cunningham, Ald. Matt O'Shea and Sarah Layden, Director of Advocacy for Rape Victim Advocates.

"As another school year begins, Illinois students should be focused on going to college to learn and not to be derailed by sexual assault," Madigan said. "This new law ensures anyone who experiences a sexual assault is heard, protected and supported."

The Act ensures that Illinois colleges and universities:

- Develop a clear, comprehensive campus sexual violence policy, including detailed incident reporting options and university response guidelines;
- Notify student survivors about their rights, including their right to confidentiality, and the protections the university can provide to ensure the student's health and safety, such as obtaining an order of protection, changing class schedules or campus housing, and the availability of medical and counseling services;
- Provide a confidential advisor to survivors to help them understand their options and rights, including to report the sexual assault and to seek medical and legal assistance;
- Adopt a fair and balanced process for adjudicating allegations of sexual violence; and
- Train students and campus employees to prevent sexual violence and improve awareness and responsiveness to allegations of sexual violence.
- Allow students to report data and information electronically, confidentially or anonymously (in addition to other methods offered by the college or university). A third party or bystander can also report an incident. Colleges and universities must respond to a report submitted electronically within 12 hours.

Attorney General Madigan has worked for more than a decade to protect survivors of sexual violence and strengthen their rights. Most recently, in 2015, Madigan created the Joint Sexual Assault Working Group to improve reporting, investigation and prosecution rates of sexual assault cases throughout Illinois and to work to pass Senate Bill 3096, which was signed into law this month. The

law requires sexual assault response training for police and 911 operators. The law also extends the time for survivors to consent to the testing of their forensic evidence from 14 days to five years.

In addition, Madigan has successfully advocated for enhanced crime victims' rights under the state's Constitution to ensure survivors have a voice in the criminal justice system. Madigan also worked to make Illinois the first state in the country to mandate the testing of sexual assault evidence kits. She additionally led an effort to significantly increase the number of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) in hospitals throughout Illinois. These nurses are trained to collect physical evidence following a sexual assault, respond to the psychological needs of a survivor, and testify in court. Madigan has worked to strengthen Illinois law to protect victims of stalking, a crime that is more likely to occur on college campuses and that can lead to sexual violence and other crimes. Madigan's office also funds dozens of organizations that provide critical services to survivors.

Attorney General Madigan's Crime Victim Services Division manages several programs that provide assistance to crime victims and service providers. For more information about the Crime Victims Services Division or the rights afforded to survivors of crime, please visit Madigan's [website](#) or call her office's toll-free Crime Victims' Assistance Line: 1-800-228-3368 or 1-877-398-1130 (TTY). For more information about the Preventing Sexual Violence in Higher Education Act, visit Madigan's [website](#).

-30-

[Return to August 2016 Press Releases](#)

