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ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN CONDEMNS ROLLBACK OF FEDERAL GUIDANCE REGARDING TRANSGENDER STUDENT PROTECTIONS***Madigan Commits to Protect All Illinois Students under the Illinois Human Rights Act***

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today condemned the actions by the U.S. Departments of Justice and Education rescinding federal guidance that set out protections for transgender students across the country from discrimination and harassment.

The federal government rescinded guidance which provided that Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and its regulations prohibit discrimination on the basis of a student's gender identity, including discrimination based on a student's transgender status.

"Schools have an obligation to provide a safe and inclusive environment for all students, including transgender students. These actions by the federal government harm our students by creating unnecessary fear and confusion about the protections provided by Title IX," Madigan said. "I am committed to the strong enforcement of anti-discrimination statutes that guarantee all Illinois residents the right to be free from discrimination, harassment and violence on the basis of their gender identity. Any actions to deny transgender students equal access to educational opportunities in our state will not be tolerated."

The Illinois Human Rights Act explicitly prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. These protections for transgender youth are vitally important. According to the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network, over 75 percent of transgender youth report feeling unsafe in their schools. As adults, 50 percent of transgender individuals who experienced anti-transgender harassment or bullying in elementary or secondary school reported attempting suicide, according to a study by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law.

Studies have shown that creating a safe, supportive and welcoming learning environment improves educational outcomes for all students, not just those who identify as LGBTQ. For transgender students in particular, an inclusive school climate can make a significant difference.

Attorney General Madigan's Civil Rights Bureau protects the civil rights of all Illinois residents. The Bureau enforces civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination, works to strengthen the civil rights laws, and participates in community outreach programs. The Bureau also investigates complaints of pattern and practice discrimination in housing, public accommodations, employment, and financial matters. Attorney General Madigan encourages individuals to contact her office to report instances of discrimination or harassment by calling her Civil Rights Hotline at 1-877-581-3692.

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