



March 7, 2017

---

**ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN URGES LAWMAKERS TO ELIMINATE STATUTES OF LIMITATIONS ON CHILD ABUSE  
CRIMES**

***Attorney General Joins Calls for Elimination of Criminal Statutes of Limitations for All Felony Child Abuse and Assault  
Crimes***

**Chicago** — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today urged members of the Illinois Senate's Criminal Law Committee to pass legislation to eliminate the statutes of limitations for felony criminal sexual assault and sexual abuse crimes against children.

Madigan testified today before the Senate Criminal Law Committee in support of Senate Bill 189 to eliminate Illinois' statutes of limitations that can allow child predators to go unpunished. Joining Madigan in testifying was Scott Cross, a survivor, Sen. Scott Bennett, the bill's sponsor, and St. Clair County State's Attorney Brendan Kelly.

The bill passed unanimously and heads to the full Senate for consideration.

"Children who suffer sexual assault and abuse often spend a lifetime trying to recover from the violations they have experienced," Madigan said. "There should be no limitation on the pursuit of justice for felony sex crimes committed against children. We must ensure survivors are able to come forward in their own time and receive the support they need and deserve."

"Dennis Hastert inflicted unbelievable pain on the lives of the youth he was entrusted to care for, yet he got a slap on the wrist," Scott Cross said. "As a teacher and coach, Hastert silenced his victims through the power he had over them. As he ascended to political power and seemingly became untouchable, the pain and suffering of survivors got buried. He had the power, prestige and law on his side. As hard as it is to talk about the events of the past, the laws in Illinois - and across the country - have to change."

"As a former prosecutor, I have witnessed firsthand the devastating physical and emotional impacts of child sex crimes. It is because of these experiences that I believe we must have the ability to prosecute the perpetrators of these horrendous crimes whenever the survivors come forward – even if that is years after the crime," Bennett said.

"There is no time limit for the pain and trauma endured by child victims of sex assault, and there should be no time limit for our ability to reach just for them," Brendan Kelly said.

As more child survivors of abuse and sexual assault have come forward to describe the difficult process that they have endured in reporting, states across the country have eliminated statutes of limitations for these crimes. Nationwide, 36 other states and the federal government have removed criminal statutes of limitations for some or all sexual offenses against children.

Currently no statutes of limitations exist in Illinois for murder, involuntary manslaughter, reckless homicide, arson, treason, forgery or the production of child pornography. Under current state law, the most egregious sexual offenses against children must be reported and prosecuted within 20 years of the survivor turning 18 years old. Two exceptions include cases in which the crimes were committed on or after Jan. 1, 2014 and either corroborating physical evidence exists or a mandated reporter failed to report the abuse.

-30-

[Return to March 2017 Press Releases](#)



