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## ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN URGES GOVERNOR TO RESTORE STATE HATE CRIMES COMMISSION

### *Attorney General Says Rauner Must Fill Empty Commission Positions to Fight Hate, Bias & Discrimination*

**Chicago** — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today sent a letter to Governor Rauner calling on him to restore the state's Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes to combat a troubling increase in hate crimes.

In her letter, Madigan urged the governor to immediately appoint a diverse group of individuals to fill the 20 vacant positions on the Commission due to the pressing need to have a fully functioning commission to combat increasing reports of hate crimes, that include recent bomb threats, against people in Illinois.

"Appointing members to this commission is a critical responsibility that the governor has ignored for too long," Madigan said. "We must bring Illinois' vibrant and diverse community of leaders and advocates together to help combat growing hate and discrimination in our communities."

Madigan sent her letter after convening a recent summit with Illinois civil rights leaders for communities of color, women, people with disabilities, immigrants, LGBTQ individuals, Muslims, Jews and Christians on hate crimes. Leaders at the summit detailed increasing experiences of hate and discrimination and voiced their need to have an active and engaged Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes fulfill its mandate to coordinate statewide efforts to combat these unlawful acts.

Data from the Chicago Police Department shows that hate crimes reached a five-year high in 2016 and are outpacing that level in 2017, according to reports. In addition, the Southern Poverty Law Center reported nearly 1,100 hate incidents nationally in the month after last fall's election. Just this week, a new wave of bomb threats was made against Jewish Community Centers in Illinois and across the county.

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 hate crimes and instances of discrimination or harassment by calling her Civil Rights Hotline at 1-877-581-3692.

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