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ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN APPLAUDS SENATE PASSAGE OF BILL TO ELIMINATE STATUTES OF LIMITATIONS ON CHILD SEX ABUSE CRIMES

Attorney General Calls for Elimination of Criminal Statutes of Limitations for Felony Child Sexual Abuse and Assault Crimes

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today applauded members of the Illinois Senate for passing legislation to eliminate the statutes of limitations for felony criminal sexual assault and sexual abuse crimes against children.

Senate Bill 189, sponsored by Sen. Scott Bennett, passed out of the Senate today by a vote of 54-0 and will now be considered by House lawmakers. The bill will eliminate Illinois' statutes of limitations on child sex crimes that can allow child predators to go unpunished.

"For a child survivor of sexual assault, reporting their crime can be unimaginable because these crimes are usually committed by an adult they know well," Madigan said. "We must ensure that we can seek justice whenever a survivor comes forward to report the crime."

"For survivors of child sex crimes, the decision to come forward can be extremely difficult and painful, and survivors should be free to make that decision in their own time," Sen. Bennett said. "I am pleased to see my Senate colleagues agree that survivors – not arbitrary deadlines – should determine when justice is sought."

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.

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