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ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN JOINS OFFICIALS AROUND THE COUNTRY IN CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT

"We Are Still In" Coalition Releases Open Letter to International Community Pledging Support for Climate Action

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today joined with 18 attorneys general and governors, mayors, college and university leaders, and businesses across the country in support of a continuing commitment to fight climate change under the Paris Agreement.

In an open letter to the international community, Madigan, the attorneys general and other U.S. officials that form the "[We Are Still In](#)" coalition released the following statement:

"We, the undersigned mayors, governors, attorneys general, college and university leaders and businesses are joining forces for the first time to declare, that we will continue to support climate action to meet the Paris Agreement.

"In December 2015 in Paris, world leaders signed the first global commitment to fight climate change. The landmark agreement succeeded where past attempts failed because it allowed each country to set its own emission reduction targets and adopt its own strategies for reaching them. In addition, nations – inspired by the actions of local and regional governments, along with businesses – came to recognize that fighting climate change brings significant economic and public health benefits.

"The Trump administration's announcement undermines a key pillar in the fight against climate change and damages the world's ability to avoid the most dangerous and costly effects of climate change. Importantly, it is also out of step with what is happening in the United States.

"In the U.S., it is local and state governments, along with businesses, that are primarily responsible for the dramatic decrease in greenhouse gas emissions in recent years. Actions by each group will multiply and accelerate in the years ahead, no matter what policies Washington may adopt.

"In the absence of leadership from Washington, states, cities, colleges and universities and businesses representing a sizeable percentage of the U.S. economy will pursue ambitious climate goals, working together to take forceful action and to ensure that the U.S. remains a global leader in reducing emissions.

"It is imperative that the world know that in the U.S., the actors that will provide the leadership necessary to meet our Paris commitment are found in city halls, state capitals, colleges and universities and businesses. Together, we will remain actively engaged with the international community as part of the global effort to hold warming to well below 2°C and to accelerate the transition to a clean energy economy that will benefit our security, prosperity, and health."

The Paris Climate Agreement requires participating countries to limit global warming to well below 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit from preindustrial levels and encourages them to pursue efforts to keep temperature increases to 2.7 degrees Fahrenheit.

The "We Are Still In" coalition pledges to ensure that despite the country's exit from the agreement the United States will continue to be a leader in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Attorneys general joining Madigan in issuing today's statement were from the following states: California, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Virginia.

Attorney General Madigan is also among a coalition of states, cities and counties across the country that have condemned the federal government's executive order on the environment that paves the way to eliminate the Clean Power Plan. The Clean Power Plan was the culmination of a decade-long effort by partnering states, cities and the federal government to require mandatory cuts in the emissions of climate change pollution from fossil fuel burning power plants under the Clean Air Act. Madigan and the coalition have urged the Trump administration to continue the federal government's defense of the Clean Power Plan.

In November 2015, Madigan joined a coalition of 25 states, cities and counties to intervene in defense of the Clean Power Plan against a legal challenge in the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals that is still pending. Also, in 2003, Madigan joined with several other attorneys general to support the authority of the federal government to regulate greenhouse gas emissions under the Clean Air Act. Madigan and the other attorneys general were successful in the U.S. Supreme Court case of *Massachusetts v. EPA*, where the court held that greenhouse gases are indeed "pollutants" under the Clean Air Act. That historic decision set in motion the actions that the U.S. EPA has taken to incorporate carbon pollution and other greenhouse gas emissions into our regulatory system.

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