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## MADIGAN ANNOUNCES FUNDING TO IMPROVE RESPONSE TO SEXUAL ASSAULT CRIMES IN WESTERN ILLINOIS

### ***Grant Funding from Madigan's Joint Sexual Assault Working Group Will Increase Availability of Specially Trained Authorities & Nurses to Increase Successful Prosecution of Sexual Assault Crimes in Western Illinois***

**Macomb** — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today announced grant funding to improve and increase services for sexual assault survivors in Western Illinois. Madigan met with officials in Macomb today to detail nearly \$500,000 in federal grant funding that will increase the number of specially trained nurses and enhance the training of nurses, victim advocates, law enforcement officers and prosecutors to better meet the needs of sexual assault survivors and encourage more survivors to report their crimes and pursue justice.

Madigan's announcement in Macomb stems from her creation of Illinois' Joint Sexual Assault Working Group to improve the reporting of sexual assault crimes to authorities. Studies show that only 5 to 20 percent of rapes are reported to law enforcement and only a small number of those reported are prosecuted.

Last year, Madigan and the Sexual Assault Working Group, which is co-chaired by the Cook and St. Clair County State's Attorneys' Offices and the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault, passed a landmark law that for the first time requires first responders, police officers and investigators to receive specialized sexual assault training to improve outcomes of sexual assault investigations and prosecutions in the state.

In addition, Madigan is addressing the lack of resources in rural Illinois communities by obtaining a \$498,355 grant to develop a five-county Regional Rural Sexual Assault Response Team over a three-year period in Adams, Brown, Hancock, McDonough and Schuyler counties. The team will include: fully practicing Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners, who are specially trained to conduct forensic examinations of sexual assault survivors; trained sexual assault victim advocates; and trained law enforcement officers and prosecutors. Madigan's office received the Regional Rural Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence and Stalking grant from the U.S. Department of Justice.

"We obtained grant funding specifically for communities in Western Illinois to help improve and increase services available for survivors of sexual assault so that people who come forward will be treated appropriately," Madigan said. "The grant will help ensure the criminal justice system responds, investigates and supports survivors so that they can seek justice and begin the healing process."

Attorney General Madigan has worked for more than a decade to protect survivors of sexual violence and strengthen their rights. In addition to creating the Sexual Assault Working Group, Madigan drafted and successfully worked to pass the Preventing Sexual Violence on Campus Act to set standards for all Illinois colleges and universities to prevent and respond to sexual violence. She also successfully advocated for enhanced crime victims' rights under the state's Constitution to ensure victims have a voice in the criminal justice system.

In addition, Madigan worked to make Illinois the first state in the country to mandate the testing of sexual assault evidence kits. She also leads a continuing effort to increase the number of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners in hospitals throughout Illinois. These nurses are trained to collect physical evidence following a sexual assault, respond to the psychological needs of a survivor, and testify in court. Madigan's office also funds dozens of Illinois organizations that provide critical victim services to sexual assault survivors.

Attorney General Madigan's Crime Victim Services Division manages programs that provide assistance to crime victims and service providers. For more information about the Crime Victims Services Division or the rights afforded to survivors of crime in Illinois,

please visit Madigan's [website](#) or call her office's toll-free Crime Victims' Assistance Line: 1-800-228-3368 or 1-877-398-1130 (TTY).

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