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MADIGAN & ATTORNEYS GENERAL URGE CONGRESS TO AMEND SEX TRAFFICKING LAW

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today joined a bi-partisan coalition of attorneys general to urge Congress to affirm that all law-enforcement agencies retain their authority to fight sex trafficking and help ensure that citizens, especially children, are effectively protected across the country.

In a letter to Congress, Madigan and the other attorneys general ask representatives to amend the Communications Decency Act (CDA) to specifically state that states, localities and territories retain authority to investigate and prosecute facilitators of child sex trafficking wherever they operate, including online.

"Federal enforcement alone has proved insufficient to stem the growth in online promotion of child sex trafficking. Those on the front lines of the battle against the sexual exploitation of children – state and local law enforcement – must have clear authority to investigate and prosecute facilitators of these and other horrible crimes," the letter from the attorneys general states.

The intention of the CDA is to protect children from indecent material online. It was never intended to place facilitators of child sex trafficking outside the reach of state and local law enforcement. However, according to the attorneys general, the CDA is being used as a shield by those who profit from prostitution and crimes against children. In some cases, courts have interpreted certain provisions of the CDA to prohibit state prosecutors from changing online classified ad sites, such as Backpage.com, that promote and profit from human trafficking.

"It is both ironic and tragic that the CDA, which was intended to protect children from indecent material on the Internet, is now used as a shield by those who profit from prostitution and crimes against children," the attorneys general wrote.

To view the letter, click [here](#).

Joining Madigan in sending the letter were attorneys general from: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

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