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**ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN: DATA COLLECTION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST LGBTQ YOUTH IS CRITICAL FOR THEIR SAFETY & WELFARE**

**Chicago** — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today joined with nine other attorneys general in submitting a comment letter to the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) opposing a proposal that would end data collection related to violence against LGBTQ youth.

The letter from Madigan and the other attorneys general is in response to DOJ's announcement that it plans to revise the National Crime Victimization Survey to eliminate the information collection about sexual orientation and gender identity from youth under age 18. The confidential and voluntary survey is an important source of national data on violence against LGBTQ youth and a critical tool to learn whether crimes are being reported and how the criminal justice system is responding to young LGBTQ victims.

The Justice Department, along with the U.S. Department of Education, published a report in March finding that LGBTQ youth were almost twice as likely to be bullied and threatened or injured by a weapon at school, almost twice as likely to be in a physical fight, and more likely to be offered, sold, or given illegal drugs at school.

"LGBTQ youth have historically faced much higher rates of harassment and violence," Madigan said. "These students deserve to have their voices heard and know that we are doing all we can to protect them from hatred and violence."

Joining Madigan in filing today's lawsuit were the attorneys general of California, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Virginia and Washington.

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