



August 23, 2013

## **ICASA applauds trio of bill signings**

The Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault is pleased to announce the recent signings of three bills into law that will benefit victims of sexual assault and abuse. The bills SB 1399, HB 1063 and HB 3128 were signed by Illinois Governor Pat Quinn and become effective Jan. 1, 2014.

“These three bills provide the opportunity for victims of sexual assault to receive the justice they deserve,” ICASA Executive Director Polly Poskin said. “We applaud the Illinois legislature and Governor Quinn for passing this legislation benefiting victims.”

Senate Bill 1399, Public Act 98-276, removes the civil statute of limitations for sexual abuse against children, which is currently when the survivor reaches age 38 (or 20 years after the survivor discovers or should have discovered the abuse and injury). The extension does not apply to claims that have already expired.

“So often, victims of childhood sexual abuse want to come forward as adults and hold perpetrators accountable because they know young children, often family members, are still at risk. Going forward, adult survivors will not have to hear that their time to pursue a civil lawsuit has already passed,” said Poskin.

House Bill 1063, Public Act 98-379, eliminates the criminal statute of limitations for felony sex crimes against children when corroborating physical evidence exists or a mandated reporter failed to report the sexual abuse.

“Most survivors of childhood sexual abuse are victimized by family members or family friends. Eliminating the criminal statute of limitations will give victims the time they need to heal and report the crime to law enforcement,” said Poskin.

HB 3128, Public Act 98-476, provides that when a child is conceived as a result of rape, the father’s/rapist’s custody rights may be restricted by Illinois courts based on clear and convincing evidence of the rape. Current law requires a criminal rape conviction. This initiative was brought to ICASA by Shauna Prewitt, a Chicago attorney and sexual assault survivor, who became a mother through rape.

“No woman who chooses to raise a child conceived through rape should be forced to endure a custody battle with her rapist,” said Poskin. “This law will ensure that women

have the weight of the law on their side when a rapist tries to pursue custody or visitation of a child he conceived through sexual violence.”

If you would like to read the full text of these public acts please visit the legal issues section of [www.icasa.org](http://www.icasa.org).

If you have any questions about these bills,

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The Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault (ICASA) is a not-for-profit corporation of 30 community-based rape crisis centers and 27 satellite offices working together to end sexual violence. Each center provides 24-hour crisis intervention services, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual assault and their significant others. Each center presents prevention education programs in Illinois schools and communities.

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