AG Madigan Seeks a Consent Decree

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Chicago Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights applauds Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan’s decision to file a lawsuit seeking federal court oversight of the Chicago Police Department through a consent decree and an independent monitor. We are further encouraged by Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s statement that he intends to partner with Attorney General Madigan to put an enforcement mechanism in place for the reforms recommended by the Department of Justice and the Mayor’s Police Accountability Task Force.

This has been a great week for democracy and racial equity in Illinois. Today’s announcement by Attorney General Madigan and Mayor Emanuel comes on the heels of yesterday’s passage into law of automatic voter registration and the Illinois TRUST Act by Governor Bruce Rauner. Around the nation, events
from Charlottesville to Phoenix remind us that when people of color are
disenfranchised, violent force is given impunity and institutional racism thrives.

There is much work ahead. Civil rights groups and community organizations
must work closely with city and state officials to monitor the consent decree
process, and ensure that individuals living in communities most impacted by
police violence have a voice and a meaningful role in decision-making.
Together, our city may begin to mend the broken relationship between our
communities and the men and women charged with their safety.

The following statement was issued by Kristen Clarke, president and
executive director of the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
in Washington, DC:

“We applaud Attorney General Lisa Madigan for taking action to address the
need for long, overdue policing reform in Chicago. Attorney General Jeff
Sessions has all but abandoned his role and responsibility for promoting
constitutional policing practices in our country, expressing disdain towards
consent decrees and court supervision to guide reform in this area.
States Attorneys General must help fill the void while the Justice Department
has abdicated its core responsibilities for enforcing the law in this area. African
American, Latino, and other minority communities across Chicago deserve a
police department that can ensure public safety while respecting the
constitutional rights of all of its residents. We hope that Attorney General
Madigan’s bold action results in a meaningful consent decree that will reform
policies concerning use of force, promote accountability, include an
independent monitor and require court supervision to ensure effective
implementation.”
Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights is an organization of civil rights lawyers and advocates working to secure racial equity and economic opportunity for all. We provide legal representation through partnerships with the private bar, and we collaborate with grassroots organizations and other advocacy groups to implement community-based solutions that advance civil rights.