OFFICE OF GOVERNOR PAT QUINN **NEWS**

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Governor Quinn Signs Legislation to Help Prevent Youth Violence

New Law Helps Officials Prepare, Prevent Violence at School

CHICAGO – July 31, 2010. Governor Pat Quinn today signed a bill into law that will help prevent youth violence by allowing school officials to obtain the identity of minors who are victims of certain crimes.

"Our school and law enforcement officials must have the information they need to prevent violence in our schools," said Governor Quinn. "We must all work together to protect our children from senseless violence."

Senate Bill 3540, sponsored by Sen. Emil Jones III (D-Chicago) and Rep. Frank Mautino (D-Spring Valley), will help school officials prevent violent offenses against minors. Under the new law, the identity of a minor who is the victim of a violent offense may be disclosed to certain school officials.

The new law is the result of the tragedy that occurred at Fenger High School in Chicago when a gang fight involving a student took place over a weekend. Since school officials weren't aware of the incident, they were not fully prepared to respond when a gang retaliation attack took place near the school in the following week and took the life of a student. This important new law will help officials prevent a similar incident from happening again.

Governor Quinn, joined by members of the newly-formed Illinois Anti-Violence Commission, signed the legislation after participating in the "Taking Back Our Community March" to honor a Chicago teen killed by youth violence. The new law takes effect Jan. 1, 2011.

Last week Governor Quinn created the Illinois Anti-Violence Commission to bring a grassroots, community-based approach to confront the deadly violence facing many Illinois communities. The commission will hold hearings to gather testimony from community members and neighborhood groups as well as experts in violence prevention and law enforcement. It will submit a report on its findings in mid-November when the Illinois General Assembly reconvenes.

All of the members of the Illinois Anti-Violence commission have lost a loved one to violence. Their personal experiences with deadly violence and its aftermath will inform their findings as they seek information about the growing impact of violence in Illinois communities and develop new, grassroots ideas for violence prevention.

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