

January 14, 2019

**ATTORNEY GENERAL KWAME RAOUL SWORN IN AS ILLINOIS' 42ND ATTORNEY GENERAL
AG Pledges to Protect Rights of Illinois' Diverse Population, Announces Top Administration
Appointments**

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today was sworn in as Illinois' 42nd Attorney General. Born in Chicago, the son of Haitian immigrants, Raoul brings a lifetime of legal and policy experience, advocacy and public service to the Office of the Attorney General.

Attorney General Raoul took the oath of office, which was administered by U.S. District Judge Sharon Johnson Coleman, who is also a retired Illinois Appellate Court justice, at the 2019 Inauguration in Springfield. Joining Attorney General Raoul onstage were his children Che and Mizan Raoul, as well as his fiancée Dr. Lisa Moore, and his sisters Dr. Edwidge Raoul and Ninaj Raoul. After being sworn in, Raoul paid tribute to Lisa Madigan's 16 years of service as Illinois' Attorney General and pledged to continue working to advocate for all Illinois residents.

"Today we make new commitments to raising our voices constructively to protect and promote our greatest assets – our workers, our young people, our natural resources, our seniors, our veterans and our diverse communities," Raoul said.

Raoul [highlighted Illinois' diverse population](#) and the work of the Attorney General's Office to block misguided federal policies that violate the rights of Illinoisans. Raoul also announced plans to work with the legislature to pass legislation to create a bureau, set in state statute, within the Attorney General's Office to protect working people from wage theft, misclassification, workplace discrimination and other violations.

Attorney General Raoul also emphasized the need for a comprehensive, statewide approach to addressing the opioid and gun violence crises that plague communities throughout Illinois. Raoul called for a statewide approach that emphasizes prevention, addresses gun trafficking and responds to victims of violent crime in a trauma-informed manner.

"The level of violence we experience within our state is unconscionable. There should be no public official anywhere in Illinois who does not take responsibility for doing his or her part to address it," Raoul said.

Attorney General Raoul earned his undergraduate degree from DePaul University and his juris doctorate from Chicago-Kent College of Law. He began his legal career as a prosecutor in the Cook County State's Attorney's Office and subsequently served as a senior staff attorney for the City Colleges of Chicago. In 2004, Raoul was appointed to serve as the state senator representing the 13th legislative district where he chaired various committees and led negotiations and sponsored some of the most significant pieces of legislation that have become law over the past decade, including eliminating the death penalty. Raoul has also been a partner at two national law firms, serving in the health care and labor and employment practice groups.

Also today, Attorney General Raoul announced the following top staff appointments:

- **Chief of Staff Kim Janas** has worked in a variety of positions in state government, including as Secretary of the Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission. Formerly, she was an Associate Counsel at the Office of Illinois Senate President John J. Cullerton, where she advised the Senate Judiciary and Insurance Committees. Janas was also an Assistant Attorney General in the General

Law Bureau under Attorney General Lisa Madigan and a Staff Attorney at the Legislative Reference Bureau. Most recently, Janas was the General Counsel for the Illinois State Medical Society and ISMIE Mutual Insurance Company. She is a graduate of the University of Illinois College of Law and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

- **Executive Deputy Attorney General Adam Braun** was previously Of Counsel at Greenberg Traurig LLP, where he was a member of the Government Law & Policy group since 2012. At Greenberg Traurig he has represented clients before state agencies and the General Assembly. Previously, he served as Deputy Legislative Director and Legislative Counsel to Governor Pat Quinn. Earlier in his career, he worked as Staff Attorney in the Office of the Illinois State Treasurer. Braun chaired the Illinois Holocaust and Genocide Commission from 2011-2014 and was appointed to chair the State Workers Compensation Advisory Board in 2011. He earned a juris doctorate from Loyola University Chicago School of Law and undergraduate degrees from Columbia University and Jewish Theological Seminary.
- **Chief Deputy Attorney General Brent Stratton** joined the Attorney General's Office in 2005 and has served as the Chief Deputy Attorney General since 2011, overseeing more than 400 attorneys and providing counsel to the Attorney General and Chief of Staff. He previously served as Assistant Chief Deputy and Deputy Chief of the Public Interest Division. Stratton was in private practice for more than 20 years, including as a partner at Tuite, Stratton & Menaker; Jenner & Block; and McGuireWoods. His private practice included criminal defense, appellate work, and civil and commercial litigation. Stratton has also been a faculty member of trial practice programs for the Chicago Bar Association and the National Association of Attorneys General, and a lecturer for the Short Course for Prosecuting Attorneys and Defense Lawyers in Criminal Cases at Northwestern University School of Law. Stratton obtained a bachelor's degree in political science and sociology from Whitman College and a juris doctorate from Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law.

For more information about Attorney General Kwame Raoul or to read the Attorney General's inauguration address, please visit the [Attorney General's website](#).

ATTORNEY GENERAL KWAME RAOUL INAUGURATION ADDRESS

Good afternoon. I want to first give thanks and honor to God for his mercy and generosity. I am thankful to him for sending Dr. Lisa Moore into my life at exactly the right time. God is right on time!

Thank you for providing me with two older sisters, Edwidge and Ninaj, and a wonderful son and daughter Che and Mizan, all who are unafraid to call me out when I am wrongheaded yet love me unconditionally. To my mother who could not be here for health reasons and to my dad who is here in spirit, I love you!

Thank you to all the Raouls and Bances who have travelled here to witness the son of Haitian immigrants, a birthright citizen, be sworn in as the 42nd Attorney General of Illinois.

Thank you to Judge Sharon Johnson Coleman and Reverend Tyrone McGowan, both members of Trinity United Church of Christ. To Governor Pritzker and all the constitutional officers, congratulations. And to my other brothers and sisters from the Illinois General Assembly – thank you for your willingness to step up and serve the people of the State of Illinois.

I pay tribute to the legendary service of Lisa Madigan. For 16 years she has always operated with the professionalism and integrity that we ought to expect of all our public officials.

Lisa Madigan jokes that I've been aspiring to this job for a very long time. There's a grain of truth to that, but the Attorney General's Office I thought about running for years ago is different from the one I have assumed today.

The role of state attorneys general – here and throughout the country – has evolved dramatically in recent years, as this nation and the world have looked to these previously obscure state officials to block misguided federal policies that violate our citizens' rights.

And at the same time, there remain within our boundaries problems for which we cannot blame President Trump. We must continue to ensure that Illinoisans are not unduly burdened by utility rates, that their privacy is guarded in an evolving world of smart technology, and that their health is safe from environmental threats.

We must exercise vigilance in protecting our children – whether at school, in places of worship or online.

We are morally bound not only to protect them in those places where we expect them to be safe, but to get rid of the notion that places exist in our state where they do not deserve an expectation of safety.

During the transition period, I have come to appreciate that Lisa's most praise-worthy accomplishment is her success in recruiting and retaining legal and support staff of the highest caliber.

They are attracted not by the compensation, which is insufficient for their talents, but by the work, because this work is one of protecting the most vulnerable in our state.

All of us who are in public service must ask ourselves this question: How will we use our voices? To disparage our state, or to uplift it?

Some criticisms of our state are legitimate, but we cannot move forward to correct our problems if we don't appreciate our assets and commit to protecting them.

We can be proud of our large and diverse population, which mirrors America and calls on us to take on a greater leadership role amongst other states that are stepping up together to oppose federal attacks on our values.

And we can be proud of the diversity and quality of our workforce who simply want to work for a fair wage.

The General Assembly has enacted laws that protect our greatest asset — working people — and they are there to be enforced, not to merely sit on the books.

That is why I will work in a bipartisan manner with Sen. John Curran and Rep. Jay Hoffman on legislation to create a bureau within my office to protect working people from wage theft, misclassification, workplace discrimination and other violations.

To raise our voices effectively for those we represent, we must restore public trust at all levels of government. Some elected officials have undermined this effort by way of unethical and sometimes illegal behavior.

I firmly believe, as Justice Brandeis did, that, "sunlight is... the best of disinfectants."

I will do my part to let in sunshine by adequately resourcing the Public Access Counselor and make the office work proactively to create transparency in government.

I learned through a lengthy campaign that different people have different opinions of the function of this office — prosecuting crime and political corruption, defending the State in court, providing for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, protecting healthcare (including reproductive healthcare), consumer advocacy or holding the line against leaders who ignore the law and Constitution.

They're all right. I appreciate the magnitude of the many tasks I am assuming.

But there is one function that hasn't historically been an expectation of the office, but to which I am compelled to raise my voice in advocacy as Attorney General.

The level of violence we experience within our state is unconscionable.

There should be no public official anywhere in Illinois who does not take responsibility for doing his or her part to address it.

There was a time when the opioid and heroin epidemic was perceived as being quarantined to certain areas.

In part because we accepted the abusive practices of an industry that manufactured or sought to profit from painkillers, but also in part because we ignored a street heroin problem we wrongly perceived to be isolated, the epidemic has now spread to every community in our state.

We are taking a similarly short-sighted attitude toward gun violence if we ignore those who seek to profit from the sale of illegal guns and view gun violence as quarantined within certain neighborhoods in particular cities.

And let us be clear – we cannot prosecute and incarcerate our way out of this problem. We must take a comprehensive, statewide approach that emphasizes prevention, takes on gun trafficking and responds to victims of violent crime in a trauma-informed and culturally competent manner.

This will mean expanding who we accept to be a victim.

If we ignore a class of those affected by violence because of where they live, what they look like or what mistakes they have made, we only enable victims of violence to evolve into perpetrators of the same.

Today we make new commitments to raising our voices constructively to protect and promote our greatest assets: our workers, our young people, our natural resources, our seniors, our veterans and our diverse communities.

I am honored by the trust put in me to engage in this work of advocacy as attorney general. This is truly an opportunity of a lifetime. It is the work of my life, and I am just getting started.

God Bless the State of Illinois. God Bless the United States of America, and God Bless all of his children, no matter on what side of the border they may reside.