

## Simon calls on Senate to pass victims Bill of Rights amendment

Written by Kathryn Phillips

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SPRINGFIELD – February 8, 2012. Lt. Governor Sheila Simon commended state representatives today on their 116-2 passage of House Joint Resolution 29 and urged senators to approve the Constitutional amendment. The resolution amends the section of the Illinois Bill of Rights concerning crime victims.

Currently, the Bill of Rights outlines certain protections for crime victims, but fails to offer any sort remedy if a right is violated. The resolution permits crime victims to ask that their rights be enforced and requires the court to act promptly on such a request. For example, if a hearing is held without the victim being notified by the court, the victim could assert the right to timely notification and ask the hearing be held again. Illinois is the only state in the union that does not provide such a remedy for its crime victims.

“The criminal justice system affords many protections for crime victims, but without proper enforcement, the protections are barely of any use,” Simon said. “By adopting this resolution, representatives have brought this critical issue to light and give Illinois residents the opportunity to make these changes to the state Constitution.”

The resolution will now move to the Senate. If passed by a 3/5 majority in that chamber, the amendment will be placed on the November 2012 ballot where it will require a 3/5 vote of Illinois citizens to be accepted.

Simon, a former Jackson County prosecutor, founded the domestic violence legal clinic at

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