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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AG Schimel Urges Congress to Pass Child Pornography Victim Bill

MADISON, Wis. – This month Attorney General Brad Schimel and a bipartisan group of 54 state and territorial attorneys general called on congressional leaders to pass legislation supporting victims of child pornography.

The bipartisan bill, the *Amy, Vicky, and Andy Child Pornography Victim Assistance Act of 2017*, would make it easier for victims of child pornography to obtain restitution.

“We have made great strides in Wisconsin to catch online child predators and help crime victims receive restitution,” said Attorney General Schimel. “Now, I am asking Congress to make the same great strides for our nation’s most vulnerable crime victims.”

A recent United States Supreme Court decision prevents a victim of child pornography from receiving full restitution unless he or she pursues every case in which a defendant was found to possess images of the victim. Unfortunately, due to the ease of sharing pictures and videos online, there may be hundreds or thousands of defendants worldwide, making it nearly impossible for a victim to ever achieve full restitution.

The Amy, Vicky, and Andy Child Pornography Victim Assistance Act will improve the law by:

- Clarifying congressional intent that victims be fully compensated for all harm resulting from every perpetrator who contributed to their trauma;
- Establishing a more meaningful definition of “full amount of a victim’s losses;”
- Clarifying restitution owed to victims;

- Establishing a process for victims to receive compensation from the Child Pornography Victims Reserve within the federal Crime Victims Fund and requiring judicial appointment of a guardian ad litem for victims of child pornography production;
- Allowing victims and their attorneys access to images in which they are depicted, which is crucial for victim identification, expert testimony, forensic review, treatment, and the prevention and prosecution of future crimes; and
- Requiring the U.S. Department of Justice to report on implementation within two years.

The letter, circulated by the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG), was sent this week to House leadership, as the U.S. Senate already passed the bill on Jan. 23, 2018. [NAAG previously supported similar legislation](#) in 2014, which also passed the Senate, but not the House.

Attorney General Schimel, previous recipient of the Wisconsin Victim Witness Professionals' "Professional of the Year" Award, has been fighting on behalf of crime victims for nearly 29 years as a prosecutor. In 2015, Attorney General Schimel advocated for changes to Wisconsin's restitution laws, and in 2016, Governor Walker signed [2015 Wisconsin Act 355](#) into law, requiring crime victims receive restitution owed to them by their offenders before the state can collect costs. The Wisconsin Department of Justice Office of Crime Victim Services administers Wisconsin's crime victim compensation program, helping victims of crime recover financial losses as the result of a crime.