

October 18, 2022

**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL HOSTS NATIONAL MEETING TO DISCUSS ENFORCEMENT OF THE
FREEDOM OF ACCESS TO CLINIC ENTRANCES ACT**

***Raoul Invites U.S. Department of Justice to Teach State Attorneys General About the Law and
Promote Communication Between State and Federal Law Enforcement***

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul convened a meeting with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and state attorneys general to discuss the importance and enforcement of the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act to safeguard access to reproductive health care facilities.

This federal act was signed into law in 1994 in response to years of escalating violence at reproductive health facilities, which included bombings, arson, death threats, assault, battery, kidnappings, attempted murder and murder. The FACE Act prohibits certain activities that interfere with a person obtaining or providing reproductive health services, as well as intentional property damage at facilities where reproductive health services are provided. In addition to containing criminal penalties, the law permits civil actions by the U.S. Attorney General, state attorneys general and those harmed by the prohibited conduct.

“Security concerns by reproductive health care providers and clinics have increased significantly since the Supreme Court’s decision overturning *Roe v. Wade*. It is important that, as our states’ chief legal officers, attorneys general proactively take steps to ensure the safety of those who are employed or seek services at reproductive health facilities,” Raoul said. “We must send a strong, collective message that criminal and obstructive behavior at reproductive health centers will not be tolerated, and I appreciate the Department of Justice sharing expertise on tools such as the FACE Act.”

The U.S. Supreme Court’s decision overturning *Roe v. Wade* has led to concerns of increased violence and other possible safety problems at reproductive health centers across the nation. The court’s decision led to changes in access to reproductive health services in many states, which along with increased threats of political violence nationally, have brought renewed attention to the prospect of violence targeting those providing and obtaining reproductive health care.

States around Illinois have attacked abortion rights and shut down abortion clinics, which has led to an increase in the number of patients seeking reproductive health care in Illinois. Other states like Illinois that remain unequivocally committed to protecting access to abortion want to be prepared to prosecute any related increase in extremist threats. For those reasons, Raoul’s office invited the DOJ to speak to state attorneys general about important investigative and enforcement information regarding the FACE Act. The convening also promoted communication between federal and state law enforcement to protect the safety of those providing and accessing reproductive health services.