



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

207 STATE HOUSE
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62706

BRUCE RAUNER
GOVERNOR

June 8, 2018

Today I sign House Bill 138. This bill is a victory for the heroic women who have stepped forward to take on the culture of fear, abuse and retaliation that permeates too much of state government. Illinoisans should applaud this improvement and champion the women who stood up to Illinois' political power structure in order to make this change happen. Through their courageous words and actions, they have declared that the culture in Springfield must change.

HB 138 will allow the Office of Legislative Inspector General to conduct independent investigations into sexual harassment allegations. The Legislative Inspector General will no longer need to obtain consent from the Legislative Ethics Commission in order to investigate allegations of sexual harassment. The bill also creates an independent search committee to recommend candidates for Legislative Inspector General, establishes new restrictions on political parties and lobbying firms, brings greater transparency to the management of ethics complaints, and provides a process for filling vacancies in the Office of the Legislative Inspector General. These are necessary steps toward restoring the public's confidence.

Those who have been subject to sexual harassment can now have greater confidence that the investigatory process will not be controlled by those who are being investigated. The era of self-dealing in Springfield must come to an end. Victims should not live in fear that the truth they tell will bring more pain into their lives. That's why I'm signing this bill – because it will help protect Illinois' daughters, mothers, wives and others who dedicate their lives to improving state government.

We should recognize that sexual harassment is a disgraceful product of a political culture consumed with accumulating power and exercising it in a perverted sense of self-interest. The legitimate purpose of political power is to advance policies that ensure good government and improve the standard of living for the People of Illinois.

The fact that the Office of the Legislative Inspector General sat empty for years while sexual harassment claims piled up is unacceptable. The steps that have been taken since then go in the right direction, but Illinoisans deserve more reform and faster.

HB138 has two critical flaws that should be addressed immediately. First, the Legislative Inspector General should not need the legislature's approval to investigate all types of ethics allegations, not only claims of sexual harassment. The same independent investigation that is needed for claims of sexual harassment is also needed for allegations such as bribery, fraud, prohibited political activity, and other crimes and ethics violations. Secondly, the Legislative

Ethics Commission which oversees these investigations should not be comprised of legislators. It should be comprised of outside independent individuals not connected to lawmaking.

Illinois has one of the nation's highest rates of public corruption, and Illinoisans have the lowest confidence in their government compared to citizens of every other state. An independent Legislative Inspector General and independent commission are needed to help restore Illinoisans' confidence in the legislature.

I am putting my signature to House Bill 138 because it is a good bill to address the problem of sexual harassment. However, these two critical changes we have identified are necessary to take the next step and can be done immediately by rule within the legislative process. I urge the General Assembly to take these next steps create an independent investigatory power for *all* legislative ethics violations, as already exists for the executive branch and all constitutional officers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce Rauner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Bruce Rauner

GOVERNOR