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PRESS RELEASE

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IL Dept on Aging calls for action in observance of *World Elder Abuse Awareness Day* on June 15

*The day serves as a preview of the State's upcoming awareness campaign;
To report suspected elder abuse, call 24-hour Elder Abuse Hotline at 866-800-1409*

SPRINGFIELD – June 14, 2013. In recognition of tomorrow's *World Elder Abuse Awareness Day*, Illinois Department on Aging Director John K. Holton, Ph.D., encourages people to report suspected cases. Research shows that elder abuse is one of the biggest issues facing older adults. The national observance attempts to shine a light on the problem of physical, emotional, and financial abuse of elders.

"Here in Illinois there are more than two million older adults ages 60 and older. Statistics show as age increases the occurrence of abuse increases, though a large number of cases go unreported. But we can break this trend and end the abuse. In honor of *World Elder Abuse Awareness Day*, let us respect our elders and protect the most vulnerable by reporting suspected abuse," said Director Holton.

The Department has an Elder Abuse and Neglect Program that responds to reports of mistreatment against older adults. The program is coordinated through community providers trained to assist and/or intervene. In FY12 (July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012) there were 11,840 reported cases.

In addition to Saturday's call for world awareness, the day also serves as preview of the State's annual campaign in July. Each year, the Department hosts the *Break the Silence* campaign to raise awareness and educate about elder abuse and prevention. The number of reported elder abuse cases has increased in Illinois which shows the campaign message is spreading. If you or someone you know is a victim, call the Department's 24-hour Elder Abuse Hotline at 866-800-1409.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day was launched on June 15, 2006, by the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA). Find out more at the website: <http://www.inpea.net/weaad.html>.

For more information about program services to assist older adults in Illinois and their caregivers, including elder abuse prevention, call the Illinois Department on Aging Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966 or for TTY (hearing impaired use only) call 1-888-206-1327 or log on to the website at www.state.il.us/aging/.

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