

September 30, 2019

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL & STATE'S ATTORNEY BERLIN ISSUE STATEMENT ON STERIGENICS CLOSURE

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul and DuPage County State's Attorney Robert Berlin today issued the following statement in reaction to Sterigenics U.S., LLC announcing plans to permanently close its Willowbrook facility.

"Our offices partnered in 2018 to file a lawsuit against Sterigenics in order to protect the residents of Willowbrook from the thousands of pounds of ethylene oxide Sterigenics legally emitted each year. Since February of this year, we successfully fought to keep the facility closed while lawmakers worked to strengthen Illinois laws regulating sterilization facilities that emit ethylene oxide.

"This spring, the Legislature, with nearly unanimous bipartisan support, passed the nation's strictest limits on ethylene oxide emissions from sterilization facilities. Additionally, our offices obtained a court-enforced order that prevented Sterigenics from reopening unless and until it could meet these stringent new standards. As we have said, Sterigenics' path to reopening was always going to be a long one. Sterigenics' decision today that the path is too long will no doubt provide welcome relief to the residents of Willowbrook and the surrounding communities.

"The discussion about ethylene oxide emissions should not end with Sterigenics. Illinois has acted to significantly reduce ethylene oxide emissions, but there is an urgent need to implement restrictions throughout the country. All families deserve to have confidence that their air is safe to breathe. We urge federal regulators to look to Illinois as a model for protecting communities across this nation from the harmful effects of ethylene oxide emissions. To that end, we are calling on the U.S. EPA and Food and Drug Administration to seek sterilization alternatives that balance patient safety with protecting communities from hazardous chemical emissions."