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**NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**AG Kaul Issues Statement on Decision Not to Appeal Bankruptcy Court  
Decision; Clergy and Faith Leader Abuse Initiative Continues**

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul today is informing the public that the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) is not filing an appeal of the decision by the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin denying DOJ access to sealed documents from the bankruptcy case filed by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee in 2011 and closed in 2016. The Clergy and Faith Leader Abuse Initiative continues, and DOJ encourages anyone with information about clergy and faith leader abuse to make a report.

Attorney General Kaul issued the following statement:

“I am deeply disappointed that DOJ has not been authorized to access sealed documents from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee’s bankruptcy case that relate to allegations of abuse. As explained in our motion for access to certain sealed records, access to those records could have furthered goals of the Clergy and Faith Leader Abuse Initiative, including the goal of assessing the accuracy of lists of credibly accused faith leaders.

“If it were likely that an appeal would lead to a different outcome, DOJ would appeal the bankruptcy court’s decision. However, having carefully reviewed the decision, and given the deference that the law would provide to that decision on appeal, there is not a meaningful probability that an appeal would lead to our obtaining the access to sealed documents that we sought in this matter.

“While certain documents have been sealed by the bankruptcy court, the Archdiocese of Milwaukee can provide DOJ with other documents relating to abuse, such as any reports of abuse provided (apart from the bankruptcy claims process) to the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. Such documents can help establish whether an alleged abuser has been credibly accused, and public acknowledgement of such an accusation can provide a degree of accountability and provide survivors with a degree of closure. DOJ urges the Archdiocese of Milwaukee to provide such documents to DOJ—irrespective of whether the alleged abuser is still alive, remains in active ministry, or worked directly for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.”

**Anyone with information about clergy and faith leader abuse in Wisconsin can report current or past abuse by calling 1-877-222-2620 or reporting online at <https://supportsurvivors.widoj.gov/>.**