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Clerk of the Circuit Court, Iris Y. Martinez, and Former Mayor Lori Lightfoot Announce Initiative to Protect Women's Privacy in Court Records

Chicago, IL, March 12, 2024 – Iris Y. Martinez, the esteemed Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County, along with former Mayor of the City of Chicago, Lori Lightfoot, are proud to announce a groundbreaking initiative designed to safeguard the privacy of women in Cook County. The press conference to unveil the "Women's Right to Privacy" initiative will take place **today Tuesday, March 12, 2024**, at the Daley Center on the 10th Floor at 10:00 a.m.

This pioneering initiative aims to protect the privacy of women whose reproductive health information appears in court records, which are currently available to the public. These records have been found in various legal contexts, including cases where women were victims of crime or involved in the criminal justice system and in civil law areas such as orders of protection and divorce cases.

Clerk Martinez emphasized the importance of this initiative, stating, "***We cannot expect women to trust the court system to protect them if we continue to allow private reproductive health and fertility treatment information to remain accessible to the public. I am thrilled to announce this initiative, which we have worked tirelessly to implement. In these uncertain times, it's crucial that reproductive health remains a private matter. Together, we can protect women and create a model that can be replicated nationwide.***"

This initiative continues Clerk Martinez's pioneering efforts to modernize the court system, transitioning it from a paper-based entity to a fully automated digital system. Over the past three years, her office has digitized nearly 100 million files and introduced new technologies into Cook County courtrooms, paving the way for innovative reforms and enhanced protections of court records.

Clerk Martinez is expected to announce a partnership to plan and implement this initiative. This collaboration will introduce new technology to review, redact, and seal more than 100 million cases in Cook County. The main objective of this initiative is to ensure the privacy and protection of women's reproductive health information.