



For Immediate Release

WCASA Condemns Senate Confirmation of Judge Kavanaugh

Madison – October 6, 2018 – WCASA condemns the Senate's vote to confirm Judge Kavanaugh for a lifetime appointment to the US Supreme Court. Unfortunately, it appears that the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) investigation into the sexual assault reports against Judge Kavanaugh was unnecessarily curtailed in scope. The artificial one-week time limit ensured that this could never be a truly full and impartial investigation. Additionally, the FBI did not interview all the people with potentially relevant information, including Dr. Ford and Judge Kavanaugh. Finally, the results of the FBI investigation were kept under extremely tight security, and this lack of transparency raises serious doubts about whether this was truly an impartial investigation.

The confirmation process of Judge Kavanaugh has been extremely difficult for survivors. From the beginning, Dr. Ford's credibility has been attacked, often by relying on inaccurate, stereotypical beliefs that are contradicted by research and science. Suggesting that a survivor who does not report to law enforcement is not credible flies in the face of well-established research indicating two-thirds of survivor never report to law enforcement. Equating gaps in memory with a lack of credibility belies what neuroscience tells us about how our brains process traumatic memories. Namely that incomplete and fragmentary memories are a by-product of how our brains encode, store, and retrieve information associated with a traumatic experience. Finally, we witnessed a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee releasing a statement about comments of a sexual nature allegedly made by Julie Swetnick. This type of smear tactic like has long been inadmissible in our legal system.

The confirmation of Judge Kavanaugh is only the most recent example of system failure when it comes to responding to sexual assault. The consequence of which may be for survivors to not come forward and seek offender accountability from systems – including criminal justice, employment, and educational systems. These concerns are particularly heightened for survivors from historically marginalized communities such as women of color, who disproportionately experience system failure.

And yet we have also seen record numbers of survivors reaching out to the National Sexual Assault Hotline after the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing. The #WhyIDidntReport movement led to many survivors utilizing social media to disclose their assault for the first time. We must not let the confirmation of Judge Kavanaugh take us back in time. We must continue to challenge the cultural beliefs and attitudes that allow sexual violence to be perpetrated without consequence.

To survivors in Wisconsin we send this message: We hear you. We believe you. We stand with you.

Media Contact: Ian Henderson, 608-257-1516; ianh@wcasa.org

The [Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault \(WCASA\)](#) is a membership agency comprised of organizations and individuals working to end sexual violence in Wisconsin. Among these are the 56 sexual assault service provider agencies throughout the state that offer support, advocacy and information to survivors of sexual assault and their families. WCASA works to ensure that every survivor in Wisconsin gets the support and care they need.