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Contact: Brian Reisinger

715-579-9679

[breisinger@hilltopstrategiesllc.com](mailto:breisinger@hilltopstrategiesllc.com)

**What They're Saying: Bipartisan Group of Legislators, Law Enforcement, Victims' Rights Group Rallying Around Marsy's Law for Wisconsin**

*Dane County Sheriff Dave Mahoney, other key supporters join growing statewide coalition to amend state Constitution for victims' rights*

[Madison, Wis.] - Since unveiling its legislation to amend the state Constitution, Marsy's Law for Wisconsin has garnered support from a broad and growing bipartisan coalition in the state Legislature and across Wisconsin. Lawmakers, law enforcement, attorneys, victims' rights groups, and others in communities in every corner of Wisconsin are rallying behind victims to ensure that they have equal rights. Check out the latest on what they're saying:

***Legislators***

**State Rep. Josh Zepnick (D-Milwaukee):** "Although Wisconsin was the first state in the country to pass a Crime Victim's Bill of Rights and was one of the earliest states to adopt a constitutional amendment protecting victims of crimes, we've learned through experience that those efforts all too often fall short. ... Under Marsy's law the victim will have a right to be heard throughout the legal process at any time rights of the victim are implicated – including release, plea, sentencing, parole, expungement or pardon. A victim will have legal standing necessary to assert his or her rights in court."

**State Sen. Dave Hansen (D-Green Bay):** "The brave survivors affected by crime deserve to be treated with respect and have a stronger voice in the process. Strengthening their rights, particularly with respect to victims of domestic violence and abuse, is an important step to making sure all victims get the justice they deserve. I am pleased to join Golden House of Green Bay in supporting this important effort."

**State Sen. Van Wanggaard, Chairman of the State Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety:** “As a former law enforcement officer, I know firsthand the effects of crime on our communities and the impacted victims. Our focus needs to be on caring for and protecting those victims, not coddling criminals, and we’ll work hard in my committee and with the rest of the state Legislature to build on Wisconsin’s history on victims’ rights by making them truly equal.”

**State Rep. Todd Novak, a key member of the State Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety:** “As someone who resides in rural Wisconsin, I know Marsy’s Law can make the difference between a victim feeling safe and seeing their attacker at the gas station. Victims of crime deserve equal rights, and I’m proud that our bipartisan legislation will give them a permanent guarantee of equality under our state Constitution.”

\* A total of 42 Republicans and Democrats in the state Legislature have signed onto Marsy’s Law for Wisconsin, leading the way as the rest of the statewide coalition of groups, public officials, and survivors of crime continues to grow in every corner of the state.

### ***Law Enforcement***

**Dane County Sheriff Dave Mahoney:** “As a career law enforcement officer with over 20 years of investigating Domestic Violence and Sexual Crimes involving children, I know firsthand the impact these crimes have on victims and the fear that continues as they have to revisit these crimes throughout the criminal justice process. Marsy’s Law will protect these victims and serve to strengthen the healing necessary to return to a normal life.”

**Brown County Sheriff John Gossage:** “It’s important that we show support for crime victims. ... I think this is an important step that could become a national pedestal.”

**Racine County Sheriff Chris Schmaling:** “Marsy’s Law for everyone would be an empowering set of victim tools that we can all feel good about, and know that we can and will do more for victims in the state of Wisconsin.”

**Chief Chris Domagalski, 2017 President of the Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association:** “Police chiefs and the officers who work with them know what crime does to our communities – they see it every day. One of law enforcement’s most important duties is to protect victims of crime, and the Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association is proud to support Marsy’s Law for Wisconsin’s fight for equal rights.”

**Marquette County Sheriff Kim Gaffney, President of the Badger State Sheriffs’ Association:** “As Sheriffs, our job is to keep our communities safe, and that means protecting

victims. The Badger State Sheriffs' Association is proud to support Marsy's Law because it will strengthen our efforts to make victims feel safe in their communities."

**Pierce County Sheriff Nancy Hove, President of the Wisconsin Sheriffs and Deputy Sheriffs Association:** "Sheriffs and Deputy Sheriffs know firsthand the damage crime has on victims and Wisconsin communities. The Wisconsin Sheriffs and Deputy Sheriffs Association is proud to protect these victims of crime and support Marsy's Law."

**Jim Palmer, Executive Director of Wisconsin Professional Police Association:** "Enacting Marsy's Law here in Wisconsin will not only represent an important extension of law enforcement's fundamental duty to protect the public, but the state's proud legacy as a national leader in advancing the interests of crime victims as well."

**Ryan Zukowski, Executive Director of The Wisconsin Troopers' Association:** "State Troopers encounter victims on a daily basis, and our members have seen the damage that violence and other crime does to Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Troopers' Association is proud to stand with victims and support Marsy's Law for Wisconsin."

**Mike Crivello, President of the Milwaukee Police Association, Local 21, IUPA:** "Protecting victims of crime is a crucial part of keeping our communities safe; the Milwaukee Police Association proudly joins Marsy's Law for Wisconsin's efforts. Victims of violent crime deserve our full support, which means further securing rights for victims of crime."

**Wisconsin Attorney General Brad Schimel:** "We have a proud tradition of standing up for the rights of crime victims in our state and the most compassionate and dedicated people in the country doing that hard work every day – but in Wisconsin we always move forward, and it's time to do so now."

**Brown County District Attorney David Lasee:** "I can tell you from experience as a prosecutor, our primary role is to be a voice for crime victims, and often times we're their only voice in the courtroom – because unfortunately, they're not given that opportunity to speak and participate in that process."

**Manitowoc County District Attorney Jacalyn LaBre:** "I've seen victims throughout the system who have had their lives turned upside down. ... It's vitally important that they understand the process, that we make the process as easy on them as possible, that they have rights, that they are informed, and that they're treated with respect."

\* In addition to these members of law enforcement, sheriffs from Adams, Buffalo, Burnett, Columbia, Door, Douglas, Florence, Grant, Green Lake, Iowa, Jackson, Juneau, Kenosha, Kewaunee, Lafayette, Langlade, Marinette, Marquette, Menominee, Monroe, Oconto, Oneida, Outagamie, Pepin, Pierce, Rock, Rusk, Shawano, Taylor, Trempealeau, Vernon, Walworth, Washburn,

Waukesha, Waupaca, Waushara, Winnebago, and Wood counties have endorsed Marsy's Law for Wisconsin.

### ***Victims' Rights Groups***

**Colleen Sheehey-Church, MADD National President:** "Wisconsin has a history of being strong on victims' rights, but MADD wants to make sure those rights are truly equal. The Marsy's Law amendment would add the most important of those rights to the Constitution, further strengthening protections currently in state statute."

**Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault:** WCASA stands up for [#CrimeVictimsRightsWI](#) [@MarsysLawforWI](#) Madison Press Conference

**Golden House of Green Bay:** "We're honored to support Marsy's Law, and we really are excited to see what else we can do in the state of Wisconsin with our partners to make sure that victim rights are taken as seriously as other voices."

\* In addition to these groups, Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, Sojourner Family Peace Center in Milwaukee, and other domestic abuse centers and shelters across the state have offered their support.

Marsy's Law for Wisconsin's legislation was recently introduced in the state Legislature. You can find more information on that [here](#), and read the stories of survivors like [Fiona Wakefield](#), [Christina Traub](#), and [Teri Jendusa-Nicolai](#).

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