

Marsy's Law for Wisconsin: Announces Wisconsin Association of Women Police endorsement

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Madison, Wisconsin – Today, Marsy's Law for Wisconsin announced that the Wisconsin Association of Women Police (WAWP) has joined their effort to update Wisconsin's constitution to secure the rights of victims of crime. The group joins the bipartisan statewide coalition which now boasts over [200 key endorsements](#) including survivors, victims' rights advocates, law enforcement, legal experts, and others supporting equal rights for crime victims.

"The Wisconsin Association of Women Police is proud to support Marsy's Law for Wisconsin, which serves to protect some of the most vulnerable individuals in our society – the victims of crimes," said the WAWP Board of Directors in a statement. "As professionals in the law enforcement field, the protection of victim's rights and protections must be first and foremost. We stand amongst the other notable organizations and peers in support of this legislation."

Earlier this year, Marsy's Law for Wisconsin [announced](#) the support of a number of other prominent law enforcement organizations, including the Fraternal Order of Police, Wisconsin District Attorneys Association, the Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association, the Badger State Sheriffs' Association, the Wisconsin Troopers' Association, and many more.

Madison Chief of Police Mike Koval—another recent addition to Marsy's Law for

Wisconsin's growing list of endorsements—added, “Historically, the American criminal justice system is characterized as ‘adversarial;’ the prominent players are ‘The State’ vs. ‘The Defendant.’ Both principals are governed by strict rules of what is or is not allowed, the limitations placed upon police powers, as well as the rights accorded to suspects, are all scrupulously adhered to. Sadly, victims and their ability to be full-fledged stakeholders of interest to the proceedings have not been uniformly recognized, heard or empowered. Marsy's Law for Wisconsin is an affirmative step to acknowledging victims and their needs.”

Marsy's Law for Wisconsin, introduced as Assembly Joint Resolution 47/Senate Joint Resolution 53, is authored by Senator Van Wanggaard (R-Racine) and Representative Todd Novak (R-Dodgeville). With a broad and growing bipartisan statewide coalition supporting it, the legislation has passed key committees in both the State Senate and State Assembly and is now awaiting votes by both full chambers of the Legislature.

You can find facts on Marsy's Law for Wisconsin's bipartisan legislation below:

- **Marsy's Law for Wisconsin follows a proud tradition in our state of protecting victims' rights, unlike many other states.** Wisconsin already has a constitutional amendment on victims' rights that passed in 1993, and was the first state in the nation to pass a Crime Victims' Bill of Rights. The state also is recognized as having some of the strongest statutory rights for victims in the country. This means the changes we are proposing are about making sure victims' rights are truly equal alongside the constitutional rights of the accused – nothing more, nothing less.
- **Marsy's Law for Wisconsin strengthens rights that already exist in Wisconsin.** The proposed amendment would do two things: Elevate certain rights currently under state statute to be fully constitutional rights, and strengthen other rights that are already part of the Constitution.
- **Nearly 80 percent of Wisconsinites support updating our state Constitution to ensure equal rights for crime victims.** A poll of Wisconsinites found that nearly 80 percent support updating our state Constitution to ensure equal rights for crime victims. More than 80 percent support a victim's right to speak up at more points in the criminal justice process, and 68 percent said they were “more likely” to support a state legislative candidate who supported Marsy's

Law for Wisconsin. The bipartisan legislation must be passed in the state Legislature twice, then by voters at the ballot box.

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About Marsy's Law for Wisconsin

Marsy's Law for Wisconsin is a grassroots coalition that has developed a unique proposal to give victims of crime equal rights in our state, building on Wisconsin's laws and history of leading on this issue. Marsy's Law is named after Marsalee "Marsy" Nicholas of California who was stalked and killed by her ex-boyfriend in 1983. Only one week after her death, Marsy's mother and brother, Henry T. Nicholas, walked into a grocery store where they were confronted by the accused murderer. The family, who had just come from a visit to Marsy's grave, was unaware that the accused had been released on bail. In an effort to honor his sister, Dr. Nicholas has made it his life's mission to give victims and their families constitutional protections and equal rights.

Victims and supporters interested in sharing their stories can email Wisconsin@marsyslaw.us.

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