

Marsy's Law for Wisconsin: Domestic abuse survivor Teri Jendusa-Nicolai- "Victims of crime deserve equal rights"

Posted on Friday, Jun 2, 2017

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[Madison, Wis.] – In case you missed it, domestic abuse survivor Teri Jendusa-Nicolai shared her story and spoke up for equal rights for Wisconsin crime victims in an op-ed in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*.

Marsy's Law for Wisconsin released a poll this week showing [nearly 80 percent of Wisconsinites](#) support updating our Constitution to ensure equal rights, which Teri called "the right thing to do."

You can read Teri's op-ed [here](#), or find excerpts below:

Wisconsin has a long tradition of supporting victims of crime. Our state has been a leader in the development and implementation of legislation that holds perpetrators accountable and provides services that benefit victims.

I am proud of the things we have accomplished and honored to have played a role in the passing of legislation and funding of projects that have helped victims gain a voice and better security. I have worked alongside Attorney General Brad Schimel and state Sen. Van Wanggaard who, along with state Rep. Todd Novak, has

authored Marsy's Law for Wisconsin. ...

As a survivor of a heinous crime committed by my ex-husband in 2004, I am aware of the statutory protections in place for Wisconsin victims. Marsy's Law for Wisconsin will enhance these laws and constitutionalize them.

Why do we need to make these protections constitutional?

Like most people, I was not aware that a defendant's rights are constitutional, which carry more clout than a victim's statutory rights. As an example, my ex-husband was allowed to have discovery quelled — discovery that was meaningful to the case. On the other hand, I had to submit my lifelong medical history to the defense although it was irrelevant to my condition after he beat me in the head with a baseball bat, suffocated me, dumped me in a snow-filled trash can, and left me to die in a frozen storage shed. ...

Marsy's Law for Wisconsin would also expand on our current constitutional right to be heard, making clear victims will have a voice at additional proceedings like bail, plea, and parole — any time the attacker could be released. ...

Marsy's Law for Wisconsin does not affect the rights of the accused in any way. It only enhances the rights of victims so they are not second-class citizens in a process that directly impacts their lives.

Adopting the Marsy's Law for Wisconsin's proposal would continue our great tradition of serving the needs of victims in our state