

Marsy's Law for Wisconsin: Earns more than 175 key endorsements in 150 days

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Wisconsin Victim Witness Professionals join growing statewide coalition of survivors, victims' rights advocates, law enforcement, legal experts, and others supporting equal rights for crime victims

[Madison, Wis.] – Marsy's Law for Wisconsin today announced that it had earned 175 key endorsements in just 150 days – including the Wisconsin Victim Witness Professionals – demonstrating a broad and bipartisan coalition of support that continues to grow across the state. Click [here](#) for the full list of prominent endorsements, which includes victims' rights advocates, law enforcement, legal experts, and others joining survivors of crime and their families. 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).

“It touches my heart to see so many Wisconsinites – from survivors and families in local communities to prominent leaders – supporting Marsy's Law for Wisconsin,” said Teri Jendusa-Nicolai, a survivor of a brutal attack by her ex-husband and one of the state's most prominent victims' rights advocates. “I know firsthand why giving crime victims equal rights is so important, and the fact that such a broad coalition of supporters agrees gives me hope that we can win the fight to keep our families

and communities safe.”

Added Laura Moffit, President of the Wisconsin Victim Witness Professionals, “Our criminal justice system is far from a perfect system – victim’s rights and defendant’s rights are imbalanced. We believe that Marsy’s law is another step in bringing Wisconsin closer to narrowing that gap.”

The Marsy’s Law for Wisconsin team gathered the 175 endorsements from prominent leaders and organizations – which are in addition to the thousands of supporters who have reached out from every corner of Wisconsin – while traveling across the state after first unveiling legislation to update our state Constitution in April. The legislation has bipartisan support from 42 Republicans and Democrats who have co-sponsored the bill in the Legislature, as well as Attorney General Brad Schimel, the Wisconsin District Attorneys Association, and every single other major statewide law enforcement organization.

You can read Teri’s story of survival [here](#), and 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 – not introducing new rights as has been done in other states across the country.

- **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. An example of a right that is the law under state statute but needs to be elevated to the Constitution is the right to put victim restitution payments ahead of any dollars owed to the government. An example of a current constitutional right that needs clarification is the right to be heard throughout the legal process, including release, plea, sentencing, disposition, parole, revocation, expungement, or pardon – as opposed to just disposition.

· **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.