

Marsy's Law for Wisconsin: Marsy's Law for Wisconsin announces support of every major statewide police & sheriffs organization

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Contact: Brian Reisinger
[715-579-9679](tel:715-579-9679)
breisinger@hilltopstrategiesllc.com

Madison, Wisconsin – Marsy's Law for Wisconsin today announced the support of every major statewide police and sheriffs association in Wisconsin, adding to the broad coalition that is supporting bipartisan legislation to update our state's Constitution to ensure equal rights for victims of crime. The following law enforcement groups released statements in support of Marsy's Law for Wisconsin's legislation, which was authored by State Sen. Van Wanggaard and State Rep. Todd Novak:

Chief Chris Domagalski, 2017 President of the Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association, said: "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, said: "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, said: “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, said: “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, said: “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, said: “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.”

In addition to these groups, Marsy’s Law for Wisconsin has earned the support of Wisconsin Attorney General Brad Schimel and prominent district attorneys like Manitowoc County District Attorney Jacalyn LaBre and Brown County District Attorney David Lasee of Brown County. Since first unveiling its legislation April 4, Marsy’s Law for Wisconsin has been co-sponsored by 40 Republicans and Democrats in the Legislature, in addition to Wanggaard and Novak. Marsy’s Law for Wisconsin’s growing statewide coalition also includes victims’ rights groups like Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin, Sojourner Family Peace Center in Milwaukee, and Golden House in Green Bay.

You can find facts on the bipartisan legislation below:

- **Marsy's Law for Wisconsin follows a proud tradition in our state, 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 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.
- **Marsy's Law for Wisconsin is building a statewide legislative and campaign effort.** In order to amend the state Constitution, the proposal must pass two consecutive state Legislatures, then be put to the voters on the ballot. It is currently possible for Marsy's Law for Wisconsin's proposal to be on the ballot in 2019. A [statewide digital ad](#) and billboard advertising campaign has accompanied Marsy's Law for Wisconsin's efforts building support in the state Legislature and with allies across the state.

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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.