

Rep. Sargent: ENDA Report underscores need for domestic violence prevention in Wisconsin

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Contact: Britt Cudaback, britt.cudaback@legis.wi.gov, 308.440.2939

MADISON – Today State Representative Melissa Sargent (D-Madison) joined End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin (ENDA), Unidos, and Domestic Abuse Intervention Services at the Wisconsin State Capitol to announce the results of ENDA's 2016 Wisconsin Domestic Violence Homicide Report.

“The results of this report are extremely troubling,” Sargent explained. “Every five days in Wisconsin a person dies due to domestic violence. This report underscores the fact that domestic violence has become a public health crisis in Wisconsin, and it should serve as a haunting reminder to lawmakers that deaths at the hands of domestic violence are absolutely preventable.”

The report released today highlighted an alarming trend for domestic violence rates in Wisconsin. The report includes the harrowing stories of many of the victims who were killed due to domestic violence which claimed 73 lives in Wisconsin last year—the highest number of deaths Wisconsin has seen since this report's inception 17 years ago. Among the persons killed last year, 7 persons were under the age of 17, not including the many young adults who were also victims.

“It is particularly disconcerting the extent to which inter-personal violence occurs across all age groups and how pervasive it is becoming in teens and young adults,” said Sargent, who is the author of a bill which would incorporate teen dating violence education curricula in schools across Wisconsin (LRB-2213). “We simply cannot continue letting out kids become domestic violence statistics.”

LRB-2213 would prohibit teen dating violence at schools or school-related events and activities, integrate curricula for students in grades 7 through 12 on preventing and responding to teen dating violence, and develop training and procedures for identifying, preventing, and responding to teen dating violence for school district employees.

“We don’t have to keep watching these statistics rise year after year—as lawmakers we can and should take steps to prevent domestic violence in Wisconsin, and it begins by incorporating early intervention and healthy relationship skills that will last a lifetime. I am going to continue working to pass my teen dating violence prevention bill this session in order to address the domestic violence in Wisconsin.”