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Posted on Saturday, Oct 6, 2018

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Madison – Following the United States Senate’s vote today to confirm Judge Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court, advocates for victims of domestic violence are speaking out to emphasize both their outrage over the proceedings, but also their lack of surprise at the behavior of President Trump and his nominee throughout the process.

“As victim advocates know, the actions of abusers typically fall into very predictable patterns of behavior meant to manipulate, overwhelm, and control victims,” said Patti Seger, Executive Director of End Domestic Abuse WI. “Considering that President Trump has been accused of sexual misconduct or abuse from 16 different women and that three survivors have now come forward with detailed allegations of a similar nature against Judge Kavanaugh, the behavior of these two men over the last few weeks does not come as a shock to anyone working in the movement to end violence against women.”

Research shows that common traits of abusive personalities include a failure to take responsibility for one’s actions, emotional instability and lashing out, immaturity, manipulative tendencies, hypersensitivity, and a propensity for seeing oneself as a permanent victim. According to the National Domestic Violence Hotline, emotional

abuse often entails behavior such as calling names, insulting or continually criticizing a victim, humiliating a victim in any way, blaming victims for the abuse they experienced, gaslighting, and more.

“Over the last few weeks, advocates for victims of domestic and sexual violence were forced to watch as two men with multiple credible accusations of assault against them used some of the most common tactics of abusers to discredit, demean, and disempower Dr. Blasey Ford on the national stage,” continued Seger. “This behavior is appalling, but unfortunately it fits the profile of what we see from abusers every day in Wisconsin. In the past we may have expected more from those holding the highest positions in our government but considering that President Trump openly bragged about sexually assaulting women on tape, I cannot honestly say we are surprised at the behavior of these men. Our message to all survivors of domestic and sexual violence is very simple: your President, your new Supreme Court Justice, and leadership in the Republican party may not believe you, but we do, and we always will.”