

Marsy's Law for Wisconsin: Launches effort to put victim's rights amendment on April 2019 ballot

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Statewide radio and digital ad campaign to support push for second consideration of crime victims constitutional amendment in upcoming legislative session

MADISON – The grassroots organization pushing to strengthen the constitutional rights of crime victims has launched a full court press in the hopes that the new rights can be before voters during the April 2, 2019 election.

The proposal, known as Marsy's Law for Wisconsin, passed the Legislature with overwhelming bipartisan support last year. In order to amend the state Constitution a proposed amendment must pass the Legislature in two consecutive sessions and then be put to the voters for ratification. The bill is currently being circulated for cosponsors and must pass both chambers by January 22 in order to be placed on this coming April's ballot. The group's efforts include a robust statewide radio and digital ad campaign.

Launched in April of 2017, Marsy's Law for Wisconsin's bipartisan grassroots coalition has grown to encompass more than [350 key endorsements](#) including over 250 law enforcement leaders and an impressive and growing list of [victim advocacy organizations](#).

"It has been overwhelming to see the huge statewide support that Marsy's Law for Wisconsin has received from law enforcement, victim advocates, the public, and our

state legislators,” said Luke Martz, Marsy’s Law for Wisconsin State Director. “We’ve come so far in the fight to strengthen the rights of crime victims—if we can clear this last legislative hurdle, this bipartisan proposal can be put before Wisconsin’s voters for ratification during the April, 2019 election. This November, six new states voted overwhelmingly to enshrine the rights of crime victims in their state constitutions alongside those of defendants. Let’s make sure that Wisconsin is next.”

The 60-second radio ad features violent crime survivor Christina Traub, who has been an outspoken proponent of Marsy’s Law for Wisconsin since the campaign’s statewide launch. “Every time I went into a courtroom, I just felt like I was pushed to the background,” Christina explains in the ad. “Everybody can name a criminal’s basic rights, but when asked what rights a victim has, I don’t even think anybody would be able to say. The ad will launch in major media markets throughout the state and will urge listeners to contact their legislators and ask them to support Marsy’s Law for Wisconsin. [Listen to the ad.](#)

Variations of digital ads will feature an array of new supporters of Marsy’s Law for Wisconsin ranging from a bipartisan group of legislators and law enforcement members to crime victims and advocates. Supporters featured in banner ads and digital videos will share their personal support of Marsy’s Law and encourage viewers to contact their local representatives and urge them to support the bill. The ads will be targeted to key districts throughout Wisconsin ahead of the start of the upcoming legislative session. [Watch the full length video.](#)

You can read more on Christina’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.

- **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.

· **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.

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.

Marsy's Law for Wisconsin can be found on our website, Twitter, and Facebook at: