

Marsy's Law for Wisconsin: Celebrates 2nd anniversary of historic statewide vote

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MADISON – Today marks the two-year anniversary of the historic statewide vote on the crime victims' constitutional amendment commonly known as Marsy's Law for Wisconsin.

The historic measure was approved with an overwhelming margin during the 2020 spring election as 75 percent of voters — 1.1 million Wisconsin residents — supporting the crime victims' constitutional amendment.

"I personally have the opportunity to witness the impact this amendment has had on victims across Wisconsin. Put simply, Marsy's Law has changed the game for all of us who work with and advocate for crime victims," said **David Williams**, Polk County Victim Witness Coordinator and President of the Wisconsin Victim/Witness Professionals Association, he continued, "Thanks to Marsy's Law, victims are now brought to the forefront of the legal process. They are no longer caught off-guard by hearing dates or unexpected rulings."

Since taking effect in 2020, countless Wisconsin crime victims have utilized the new rights provided under Marsy's Law. Examples of Marsy's Law at work include:

- The [mother of a young murder victim was able to exercise her right](#) to be heard in a Dane County courtroom to express concern over a plea deal.
- A grandmother of a murdered newborn in Green County was able to [petition the court to keep the confessed killer of her granddaughter in custody](#) for the

safety of her family.

- A police officer who was shot three times including in the face used Marsy's Law to [move a hearing date so she could be present](#) and ask for higher bail.
- A judge in Kewaunee County made sure that victims [were comfortable with a court date of an accused child abuser](#).

On the two-year anniversary of Marsy's Law's ratification vote, crime victims are praising the impact the amendment had on their case.

"I can't stress enough what this amendment means to myself and my family," said **Danielle Stone** from Stevens Point, whose brothers were murdered in 2020. "Victims of crime deserve to have rights during the criminal justice process just like the accused. I am overjoyed and proud to live in a state that two-years ago recognized the need to make an important change to a constitutional amendment. This change has impacted my life in only positive ways and I hope others take advantage of it as I have. I cannot imagine living in a state without these rights."

The amendment was approved in 2019 for placement on the April 2020 ballot after passing the Wisconsin State Senate and Assembly with broad bipartisan support in two consecutive legislative sessions. The overwhelming ratification vote marked the final procedural step for the now approved constitutional amendment.

"Victim Witness kept us informed throughout the process and having that close relationship from early on made all the difference," said **Linda Schmitt** from Eau Claire, whose granddaughter was sexually assaulted. If we didn't have strong crime victims' rights, who was going to protect us? Defendants have all the rights. And now, because of Marsy's Law, we now have stronger, enforceable rights – it says we matter too."