



For Immediate Release

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Gov. Evers Decimates Domestic Abuse Advisory Council

Sen. Jacque Deeply Disturbed Over Governor's Axing of Majority of Members

(De Pere, WI) Today, State Senator and longtime member of the Governor's Council on Domestic Abuse André Jacque (R – De Pere) decried Gov. Tony Evers' removal of nearly two-thirds of the Council's membership late Friday. The Council on Domestic Abuse advises the Department of Children and Families and the legislature on domestic abuse funding and policy issues.

"It has been a great honor to serve with these dedicated individuals-survivors and leaders in the fight to end domestic abuse- and to advocate for the vitally important domestic violence legislation we have accomplished together. They have been true, non-partisan public servants I have come to know as friends. They, like the other appointments so quickly and callously kicked to the curb by the Governor, deserve far better than to be pawns in his petty partisan political games," said Sen. Jacque, a previous recipient of the Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence's Legislative Champion Award and author of several laws strengthening domestic abuse victims' rights, enhancing restraining orders, and aiding prosecution of perpetrators.

Evers removed 8 of the Council's 13 members, including two survivors of domestic violence who had previously received the council's Courage Award, both Council co-chairs, the leaders of several domestic violence shelters across the state, and a nationally recognized Medical College of Wisconsin psychologist who developed the very first batterer intervention program in Southeast Wisconsin.

The dismissals mark a blatant flip flop, as Gov. Evers had expressed just the day before that he would proceed "not with speed, but with thoughtfulness." Now his spokeswoman states that he will "move quickly" to name replacements for the 82 appointments he is vacating, despite the very strong likelihood that the Dane County circuit court ruling that allowed Evers to create this chaos will be overturned on appeal.

The Council on Domestic Abuse has played a critical role in developing long-range strategic plans and advisory materials for training within the court system, including the Guardian ad Litem Guidebook finalized in 2017, as well as successfully advocating for the major statewide funding increase for domestic violence shelter grants in the 2015-'17 biennial budget. The Council annually honors advocates and remembers victims of domestic abuse.

Sen. Jacque added, ***"Governor Evers also deliberately eliminated 74 other appointments for well-qualified individuals without a second thought, including half of the Fox River Navigational System Authority and a third of the Marriage & Family Therapy, Professional Counseling, and Social Work Examining Board. Rather than take the time to give the merits and service of these citizens the consideration they deserve, Gov. Evers decided to discourage citizen involvement and give those who have stepped up to serve a slap in the face instead."***

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