



For Immediate Release
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Contact: Sara Finger (608) 516-3960 or
Amanda Harrington (414) 803-9556

COALITION CELEBRATES HISTORICAL DAY FOR COMPASSIONATE CARE
Advocates Join Governor as He Signs Bill to Help Wisconsin Rape Victims

Madison, WI- Since 2001, sexual assault advocates, women's health advocates, health care providers and sexual assault victims have had a goal to see the passage of the Compassionate Care for Rape Victims (CCRV) bill. Seven years later, the goal has been reached and members of the CCRV Coalition gathered to witness Governor Doyle sign Assembly Bill 377 into law that will ensure rape victims are guaranteed to receive comprehensive and compassionate care in Wisconsin emergency rooms. A timeline tracking the history of this legislation is enclosed.

Assembly Bill 377, authored by Senator Judy Robson (D-Beloit) and Representatives Terry Musser (R-Black River Falls) and Mark Pocan (D-Madison), ensure that rape victims learn about the option to prevent a pregnancy with emergency contraception (EC) in every Wisconsin emergency room and receive the medication upon request. Over the past legislative session, both the Assembly and Senate took a bipartisan vote to pass this bill and today it is finally being signed into law by the Governor.

"After seven long years of working on this issue, today marks an incredible victory for all of us who have fought to ensure rape victims receive the standard of care in Wisconsin," said Sara Finger with the Wisconsin Alliance for Women's Health and CCRV Coalition Coordinator. "We now look forward to working with Wisconsin hospitals to help them comply with this new important law."

While American Medical Association guidelines promote increased access to EC for rape victims, a 2006 CCRV Coalition study showed that only one-third of Wisconsin hospitals were unconditionally providing EC to rape victims. In the U.S., more than 25,000 women a year become pregnant as a result of rape. 16,000 of these pregnancies end in abortion.

"For too long, rape victims have had to shop around for comprehensive care and have been re-traumatized by an unintended pregnancy from an attacker," said Barb Wise, a rape survivor from Chippewa Falls. "It means so much to know that compassionate and comprehensive care now be guaranteed to all rape victims seen in Wisconsin emergency rooms."

Today the Coalition expresses its sincere appreciation to everyone who made this victory possible.

"An incredible group of advocates came together to make this victory possible," said Finger. "Every individual and organization that stood up for Wisconsin rape victims should be congratulated on their amazing efforts!"

For more information regarding Compassionate Care for Rape Victims, please visit: www.supportwomenshealth.org.

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American College of Nurse Midwives - WI Chapter • Brown County Coalition for Women's Health • Chippewa Valley Citizens for Women's Health • Citizens for Women's Health, Winnebago County • Community Advocates • Eau Claire County Coordinated Community Response Team • Friends of Abused Families, Inc. of Washington County • League of Women Voters of Wisconsin • Medical Students for Choice • NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin • National Association of Social Workers, WI Chapter • Options Fund, Inc • PAVE: People Against a Violent Environment, Beaver Dam • PAVE: Promoting Awareness, Victim Empowerment, Madison • Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin • Reach Counseling Services, Menasha • Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice WI • Republicans for Choice • Sexual Assault Treatment Center • Task Force on Family Violence • The Healing Center • United Council of UW Students • Wisconsin Alliance for Women's Health • Wisconsin Association for Perinatal Care • Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence • Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault • Wisconsin NOW • Wisconsin Women's Network Reproductive Rights Task Force • Women's Medical Fund

THE MAKING OF A VICTORY!

Timeline of Efforts to Pass Compassionate Care for Rape Victims in Wisconsin

2001 - 2002

January 14, 2002

AB 724 Compassionate Care for Rape Victims Bill Introduced

- Referred to Committee on Health – NO ACTION TAKEN

January 18, 2002

SB 391 Compassionate Care for Rape Victims Bill Introduced

- Referred to Committee on Health
- Public hearing held 2/27/02
- Passed out of committee 3/11/02 on a vote of 5-4
- Passed out of Senate 3/12/02 on a vote of 20-13
- NO ACTION TAKEN in the State Assembly, bill dies

2003 - 2004

March 18, 2003

AB 170 Compassionate Care for Rape Victims Bill Introduced

- Referred to Committee on Health
- Public Hearing held on 2/17/04 – NO ACTION TAKEN

April 9, 2003

SB 99 Compassionate Care for Rape Victims Bill Introduced

- Referred to Committee on Health – NO ACTION TAKEN

2005

April 5, 2005

Compassionate Care for Rape Victims (CCRV) Coalition holds its first meeting.

April 12, 2005

AB 305 Compassionate Care for Rape Victims Bill Introduced

- Referred to Committee on Health
- Hearing scheduled May 24, 2005
- Hearing *cancelled* May 20, 2005

September 28, 2005

Letter from CCRV Coalition sent to Committee Chair Rep. Gregg Underheim (R-Oshkosh)

- Between May 20th - September 28th Health Committee held 2 public hearings in which 7 bills were heard.

- All bills scheduled for the May 24 Committee hearing, other than AB 305, received a public hearing.

April 12, 2005

SB 166 Compassionate Care for Rape Victims Bill Introduced

- Referred to Committee on Health

October 13, 2005

Letter from Sen. Judy Robson (D-Beloit) to Sen. Carol Roessler (R-Oshkosh) requesting that a hearing be held

October 17, 2005

Phone call from CCRV Coalition member to Sen. Roessler.

- When asked if Sen. Roessler would hold a hearing on SB 166, legislative aide told Coalition member, "nowhere in the near future."

October 21, 2005

Phone call from Sen. Robson's office to Sen. Roessler's office.

- When asked if Sen. Roessler would hold a hearing on SB 166, legislative aide told Sen. Robson's office that they were not scheduling a hearing and would not formally respond to the letter

October 24, 2005

CCRV Coalition holds a public hearing in Oshkosh

2006

March 20, 2006

CCRV Coalition holds a public hearing in Milwaukee

April 7, 2006

CCRV Coalition holds a public hearing in Eau Claire

- 50+ people attended each of the public hearings; included survivors, health providers and concerned citizens.
- Print, television and radio media covered the events.
- Bills still not scheduled for official hearing .

May 31, 2006

CCRV Coalition releases highlight results of extensive statewide survey, which examines hospital emergency departments' policies for providing information about and dispensing EC to rape victims.

June 10, 2006

CCRV Hospital Toolkit made available.

2007

March 3, 2007

SB 129 Compassionate Care for Rape Victims Bill Introduced

- Referred to Committee on Health

April 25, 2007

Senate Health Committee holds hearing on SB 129

- 31 individuals speak in favor of CCRV
- 8 individuals speak against CCRV
- 64 individuals register in favor of CCRV
- 18 individuals register in opposition of CCRV

May 8, 2007

Senate Health Committee passes SB 129 out of Committee by vote of 6 to 1

May 16, 2007

Senate votes to pass SB 129 by a vote of 27 to 6

May 31, 2007

AB 377 Compassionate Care for Rape Victims Bill Introduced

- Referred to Assembly Judiciary Committee chaired by Representative Gundrum
- Republican Representative Terry Musser signs on as a lead Assembly sponsor

June 8, 2007

CCRV Coalition sends letter to Assembly Speaker Huebsch asking him to re-refer AB 377 to Committee for fair hearing

July 1, 2007

Wisconsin Pharmacy Examining Board sends letter to Rep. Gundrum urging a hearing be scheduled on CCRV

September 6, 2007

After given 2 days notice, Assembly Judiciary Committee holds hearing on AB 377 and SB 129

- 21 individuals speak in favor of CCRV
- 12 individuals speak against CCRV
- 73 individuals register in favor of CCRV
- 5 individuals register in opposition of CCRV

September 9, 2007

Wisconsin Medical Examining Board sends letter to Rep. Gundrum urging passage of CCRV

September 17, 2007

As of this date, 40 organizations had registered their support of CCRV with the State Ethics Board

September 25, 2007

Assembly Judiciary Committee votes to pass AB 377/SB 129 with harmful amendment by a vote of 6 to 4.

- The amendment would gut the bill and would allow hospitals to refuse to provide rape victims with comprehensive health care.

October 1, 2007

Marks the first day of Compassionate Care for Rape Victims Month in Wisconsin

October 3, 2007

Coalition participates in "Write a Letter to the Editor" Day

October 10, 2007

Coalition participates in "Tell a Friend About CCRV" Day

October 17, 2007

Coalition holds Statewide CCRV Community Day of Action

- Over 500 petition signatures collected
- Almost 400 photo petitions collected

October 22, 2007

"Faces of Compassion" Campaign Launched

October 23, 2007

Assembly leadership commits to schedule bill for vote by end of year

December 6, 2007

AB 377 & SB 129 officially scheduled for Assembly vote

December 10, 2007

Coalition members participate in "Statewide Assembly Call-In Day"

December 11, 2007

Assembly votes to adopt AB 377 by a vote of 56 to 41

January 23, 2008

Assembly votes for final passage on AB 377 by a vote of 61 to 35

February 28, 2008

Senate votes 25 to 6 for concurrence on AB 377

March 13, 2008

Governor Doyle Signs AB 377 into law