



For Immediate Release
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OCTOBER MARKS COMPASSIONATE CARE MONTH IN WISCONSIN

Madison, WI- The Compassionate Care for Rape Victims (CCRV) Coalition is dedicating the month of October in Wisconsin to ensuring the Assembly schedules a vote and passes the original Compassionate Care for Rape Victims Bill (Assembly Bill 377 & Senate Bill 129) without amendments so it can become law. The unamended version of the Compassionate Care for Rape Victims Bill would ensure that rape victims learn about emergency contraception (EC) in every Wisconsin emergency room, and receive the medication upon request.

The CCRV Coalition held a virtual news conference to launch the events, which can be downloaded at www.supportwomenhealth.org. This month's activities include:

Wednesday, October 3: Write a Letter to the Editor Day

Wednesday, October 10: Tell a Friend about CCRV Day

Wednesday, October 17: A CCRV Day of Action on Wisconsin College Campuses

"82 percent of Wisconsinites believe that Compassionate Care should be law. These events will give them the tools they need to ensure their voices are heard, as they let our elected officials know that in Wisconsin, we believe that passing Compassionate Care is the least we can do for victims of rape," said CCRV Coalition Member Sara Finger.

Representative Terry Musser (R-Black River Falls) is also calling on legislators to respond to the bill's bipartisan support. Musser sent a letter to Assembly leadership encouraging them to schedule a vote on the Compassionate Care legislation. The Assembly could have a floor vote as early as October 23.

The Senate overwhelmingly passed the original bill in a vote to 27 to 6 in May. But the anti-birth control chair of the Assembly Judiciary and Ethics Committee gutted the legislation by passing an amendment which exempts hospitals and all hospital employees from providing comprehensive health care to rape victims and complying with basic standard of care principles as set forth by the American Medical Association (AMA). The amendment also takes away any legal recourse a rape victim has who has been denied information and access to EC.

Passage of the original Compassionate Care for Rape Victims Bill is the only way to ensure that rape victims learn about EC and receive the medication upon request, regardless if they seek care. While AMA guidelines promote increased access to EC for rape victims, a recent CCRV Coalition study showed that only one-third of Wisconsin hospitals unconditionally provide EC to rape victims. In the United States, more than 25,000 women a year become pregnant as a result of rape. 16,000 of these pregnancies end in abortion.

For more information regarding CCRV Month, 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