



For Immediate Release
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ASSEMBLY LEADERS COMMIT TO SCHEDULING VOTE BY END OF YEAR
Coalition Holds Assembly to Promise to Hear Compassionate Care on Floor

Madison, WI- As Compassionate Care for Rape Victims (CCRV) Month draws to a close in Wisconsin, supporters are finally getting the response they were looking for – a commitment by Assembly leadership to schedule the Compassionate Care for Rape Victims Bill (AB 377 / SB 129) for a vote.

This week, bill authors Republican Representative Terry Musser of Black River Falls and Democratic Representative Mark Pocan of Madison received a commitment from Assembly leadership that the bill would be scheduled for a vote by the end of the year. Based on the remaining 2007 Assembly calendar, the vote could occur either during the week of November 6 or December 11.

The passage of the original 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 to prevent a pregnancy following assault. In May, the state Senate passed the bill without amendments on an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 27-6. A 2007 poll showed that 82 percent of Wisconsinites believe that Compassionate Care should be law.

“In Wisconsin, we value fairness and compassion, and we recognize that women deserve nothing less after something as traumatic as sexual assault. With passage in the Assembly, we finally have an opportunity to see that ideal become law in our state,” said Keeley Crowley, Coordinator of Holy Family Memorial's Sexual Assault Resource Center in Manitowoc. “We can't erase the injustice a victim has experienced as a result of an attack, but this law will go a long way in reducing the stress and pain she faces while seeking health care.”

The CCRV Coalition dedicated the month of October in Wisconsin to raising awareness of and support for Compassionate Care for Rape Victims with the goal of passing the legislation without amendment in the Assembly. The bill's overwhelming public support was more evident than ever during CCRV Month, when over 500 petitions signatures and 400 photo petitions were collected in support of the legislation. Copies of the photo petitions can be found online at www.flickr.com/groups/ccrv. You can also watch a poignant video featuring supporters at www.youtube.com/WICCRV.

“Providing rape victims with the comprehensive, quality care they deserve is long overdue,” said Stephanie Erickson, Case Manager at the Bolton Refuge House in Eau Claire. “We hold Assembly leaders to their promise and look forward to the passage of this critical legislation by the end of this year.”

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

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