



For Immediate Release
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COALITION CELEBRATES VICTORY FOR COMPASSIONATE CARE
Commends the Senate and urges Assembly to demonstrate same support

Madison, WI- Members of the Compassionate Care for Rape Victims (CCRV) Coalition commend the State Senate for overwhelming passing Senate Bill 129 by a vote of 27 to 6 today. Those voting against the measure included Republican Senators: Grothman of West Bend, Leibham of Sheboygan, Lazich of New Berlin, Kedzie of Elkhorn, Kapanke of La Crosse and Fitzgerald of Juneau.

Today's passage of the Compassionate Care for Rape Victims Bill helps ensure that rape victims learn about emergency contraception (EC) in every Wisconsin emergency room, and receive the medication upon request.

EC is a high concentration of birth control pills that prevents pregnancy if taken within 120 hours of an assault. EC is at least 89 percent effective when taken within 72 hours. The sooner taken, the more effective EC is in preventing pregnancy. EC has no effect on an existing pregnancy.

While American Medical Association 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 U.S., more than 25,000 women a year become pregnant as a result of rape. 16,000 of these pregnancies end in abortion.

"Providing rape victims with the comprehensive, quality care they deserve is long overdue," said Keeley Crowley, Coordinator of Holy Family Memorial's Sexual Assault Resource Center in Manitowoc. "Today marks an incredible step in the right direction to support rape victims."

Noting the strong bi-partisan support, the Coalition now urges the Assembly to support the legislation currently being sponsored by Republican Representative Terry Musser of Black River Falls.

Members of the CCRV Coalition are grateful to the leadership and support of many Senate leaders including Senators Robson, Erpenbach, Hansen, Taylor, Plale, Lassa, and Miller who spoke out in support of SB 129 on the floor today.

"Passing this legislation is the least we can do to avoid re-victimizing a victim of rape," states Alena Swansen, Sexual Assault Victims Service Coordinator with the Turningpoint for Victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence Inc. in River Falls. "It's now up to the Assembly to guarantee comprehensive and compassionate care for all rape victims in Wisconsin."

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

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