



Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Inc.

600 Williamson St., Suite N2 • Madison, Wisconsin • 53703
Voice/TTY (608) 257-1516 • Fax (608) 257-2150 • www.wcasa.org



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Linda Morrison, Executive Director
Jill Groblewski, Media Relations
(608) 257-1516

Alcohol to be Defined as an Intoxicant

Madison - Advocates at the Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Inc. (WCASA) are celebrating the news that the State Legislature voted to include alcohol as an intoxicant in the state's sexual assault statutes.

With the Governor's signature, this bill will make it a crime in the state of Wisconsin to use alcohol to facilitate a sexual assault.

"This legislation closes a loophole that's been around too long," stated Linda Morrison, WCASA's Executive Director. "Alcohol is the number one date rape drug and it's time our laws reflected that reality."

Since 1997, Wisconsin has been the only state in the nation to specifically exclude alcohol from the legal definition of intoxicant in sexual assault statutes. This legislative change brings the state in line with the rest of the country and makes the definition of "intoxicant" consistent throughout Wisconsin's statutes.

Advocates anticipate that the new law will improve sexual assault investigations and increase prosecutions on college campuses. According to Harvard University, 1 in every 20 female college students is sexually assaulted each school year and 72% of those women are raped while they are too intoxicated to give consent.

"We consider this change a huge victory for public protection and achieving justice for victims," added Morrison. "WCASA extends its sincerest thanks to Senator Stepp and Representative Strachota who sponsored the bill."

The legislation awaits the Governor's signature.

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