Statement on Untested Rape Kits in Wisconsin

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Madison, Wisconsin – October 3, 2014 – In a press release today, the Joyful Heart Foundation announced data on rape kit backlogs in four cities, including Milwaukee, and the state of Wisconsin. Milwaukee reportedly has 2,655 untested rape kits in police storage facilities, and statewide there are an additional 3,351 untested rape kits. That totals 6,006 untested rape kits in police storage facilities in Wisconsin. “Rape kits” refer to the forensic evidence collected from a survivor after a sexual assault.

“For survivors who choose to engage with the criminal justice system, we should honor that choice and test the evidence,” stated Ian Henderson, director of legal and systems services with the Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA).

“We are glad that the attorney general’s Sexual Assault Response Team will address the issue of untested kits in Wisconsin. In fact, the Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault will serve on that committee, representing survivors and sexual assault service providers across the state.”

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The Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA, www.wcasa.org) is a membership agency comprised of organizations and individuals working to end sexual violence in Wisconsin. Among these are the 50 sexual assault service provider agencies throughout the state that offer support, advocacy and information to survivors of sexual assault and their families. WCASA works to ensure that every survivor in Wisconsin gets the support and care they need. WCASA also works to create the social change necessary to ensure a future where no child, woman or man is ever sexually violated again.