FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The LGBT Intimate Partner Violence Committee of the Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WCADV) & the Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA), along with WCASA, would like to respond to statements made by Waupaca County Judge Kirk as he sentenced Delton Gorges on Monday, May 9, 2011.

While sentencing Delton Gorges, Judge Kirk used the opportunity to make some distasteful jokes about being gay. He then went on to explain that Mr. Gorges must be gay and a victim of society’s homophobia which is why he committed violent acts of molestation against children. In the same sentence, Judge Kirk vilified gay men and tried to make Mr. Gorges appear to be just another victim of society.

Adoption expert, Carrie Craft cites the Child Welfare Information Gateway (previously National Adoption Information Clearinghouse) as stating, "A child's risk of being molested by his or her relatives' heterosexual partner is over one hundred times greater than by someone who might be identifiable as being homosexual." The study also found that of 269 cases of child sex abuse, only two offenders were found to be gay or lesbian. The American Psychological Association agrees, "Another myth about homosexuality is the mistaken belief that gay men have more of a tendency than heterosexual men to sexually molest children. There is no evidence to suggest that homosexuals molest children."

This myth continues to spread like wild fire when damaging statements like Judge Kirk’s were made and has potentially harsh consequences for gay men. For example, these lies are used to deny loving gay male couples the right to adopt, become foster parents or to serve as volunteers in some organizations. Often, members of any marginalized group of people are stereotyped in a negative light to continue to perpetuate homophobia, racism or religious intolerance. This intolerance helps the cycle of violence continue in our communities. The gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community has experienced rising incidents of hate crime, suicides and other forms of violence in the past 10 years. This rise in the rate of violence can be directly attributed to society’s attitudes and lack of understanding.

The facts show that gay men are no more likely to molest children than straight men. A person’s sexual orientation has nothing to do with pedophilia. Pedophilia is a violent crime committed against children because a perpetrator seeks power and control over their victims.

As the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee of WCADV/WCAS, we stand with the Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault and urge Judge Kirk to issue an apology to the LGBT community. If Judge Kirk would like to learn more about sexual violence or the LGBT community, we are happy to assist him.