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PRESS RELEASE

Wisconsin to Slash Funding of Direct Sexual Assault Services by Over 40 Percent in 2012

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Contact information for local sexual assault service providers is listed below – further local information on the impacts of these cuts is available from the directors of these organizations.

Madison – At a time when events around the country have focused attention on sexual assault, Wisconsin's only grant program devoted to direct services for sexual assault victims is slated to be cut more than 40 percent in 2012.

The Sexual Assault Victim Services program (SAVS) grants are the sole state source of funds and therefore vital to sexual assault service providers' ability to provide direct services to victims and their families including: 24-hour crisis response, victim advocacy, and criminal justice, legal and medical advocacy.

"SAVS, and the local sexual assault service providers it funds are directly responsible for helping victims and are instrumental in efforts to hold perpetrators accountable," stated Pennie Meyers, Interim Executive Director of the Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault. "It's as simple as that. There is no substitute for SAVS in Wisconsin."

SAVS, which is administered by the Department of Justice (DOJ), was cut in the last state budget. This week, WCASA and its member agencies were informed that there are additional cuts due to "lapses" contained in the state budget now being carried out by each state agency.

Unlike comparable programs in other states, SAVS has never received general purpose state revenue; it is only funded through a surcharge paid by perpetrators upon prosecution. A decline in the number of prosecutions has led to lower surcharge revenue.

According to Department of Justice personnel, the SAVS award amounts in 2012 will be reduced by approximately 42.5 percent compared to the previous year.

A number of other state programs which fund critical services have been appropriately protected from these budget cuts and lapses. Meyers contends SAVS needs to be added to that list.

"Our agencies are taking a devastating hit," Meyers said. "They are already cash-strapped and do a lot with very little. This comes at a time when there is increased demand for their services, and now they have to find a way to cover crisis lines and provide services with nearly half of their SAVS funding cut. That will seriously imperil our members' ability to meet the needs of sexual assault survivors. These are disastrous cuts."

Background Information on SAVS

The Sexual Assault Victim Services program is administered by the Department of Justice and is funded with program revenue stemming from the Crime Victim and Witness Assistance Surcharge.

There are 46 approved sexual assault service providers (SASPs) in Wisconsin. SASPs and other organizations compete for SAVS grants. In order to qualify as a SASP, local organizations must provide a number of critical services to victims, including:

- Advocacy and counseling services
- Crisis telephone services 24/7
- Professional intervention and prevention education
- Services for victims with special needs or that are hard to reach (i.e., rural residents, men, children, elderly, disabled, minority groups)

Wisconsin's 46 approved SASPs are listed below.

Advocates of Ozaukee, **Saukville**
Barb Fischer, Executive Director
(262) 284-3577

Association for the Prevention of Family Violence, **Elkhorn**
Gen Krahn-Reed, Executive Director
(262) 723-4653

ASTOP, Inc., **Fond du Lac**
Linda Selk-Yerges, Executive Director
(920) 926-5395

AVAIL, Inc., **Antigo**
Michelle Arrowood, Executive Director
(715) 623-5177

Bolton Refuge House, Inc., **Eau Claire**
Gerald Wilkie, Executive Director
(715) 834-0628

Brighter Tomorrows, **Sparta**
Tom Anderson, Executive Director
(608) 374-6975

CAP Services, Inc., **Stevens Point**
Sarah Halstead, Executive Director
(715) 343-7101

CASDA, **Superior**
Kelly Burger, Executive Director
(715) 392-3136

Community Referral Agency, Inc., **Milltown**
Ann Frey, Executive Director
(715) 825-4414

Family Advocates – Sexual Assault Services, **Platteville**
Robin Weigel, Executive Director
(608) 348-4290

Family Center, Inc., **Wisconsin Rapids**
Arline Hillestad, Executive Director
(715) 421-1511

Family Support Center, **Chippewa Falls**
Geri Segal, Executive Director
(715) 723-1138

Forest County Potawatomi Domestic Violence Shelter, **Crandon**
Alberta Hatmaker, Executive Director
(715) 478-7202

Friends of Abused Families, **West Bend**
Lisa Krenke, Executive Director
(262) 334-5598 ext. 104

Gundersen Lutheran Sexual Assault Services, **Onalaska**
Anne Stekel, Executive Director
(608) 775-3845

HAVEN, Inc., **Merrill**
Judy Woller, Executive Director
(715) 536-1300

Hope House, **Baraboo**
Ellen Allen, Executive Director
(608) 356-9123

LCO Oakwood Haven, **Hayward**
Deb Butler, Executive Director
(715) 634-9360

Manitowoc County Domestic Violence Center, **Manitowoc**
Sue Sippel, Executive Director
(920) 684-4661

Mayo Clinic Health System – Safe Path, **LaCrosse**
Jeanine Scherbring, Executive Director
(608) 392-7804

New Day Shelter, **Ashland**
Kathy Roper, Executive Director
(715) 682-9566

New Horizons Shelter and Outreach, **LaCrosse**
Ann Kappauf, Executive Director
(608) 791-2610

Passages, **Richland Center**
Joanne Rausch, Executive Director
(608) 647-8775

Pathfinders, **Milwaukee**
Cathy Arney, Executive Director
(414) 964-2565

People Against a Violent Environment, **Beaver Dam**
Jamie Kratz-Gullickson, Executive Director
(920) 887-3810

People Against Domestic and Sexual Abuse, **Jefferson**
Amy Venables O'Neil, Executive Director
(920) 674-6748

Project RESPECT, **Madison**
Jan Miyasaki, Executive Director
(608) 251-5126

Rape Crisis Center, **Madison**
Kelly Anderson, Executive Director
(608) 251-5126

Reach Counseling Services, **Neenah**
Lyn Beyer, Executive Director
(920) 722-8150

Safe Harbor of Sheboygan County, **Sheboygan**
Laura Roenitz, Executive Director
(920) 452-8611

Safe Haven, **Shawano**
Stacey Cicero, Executive Director
(715) 524-3421

Sexual Assault Center, **Green Bay**
Susan Lockwood, Executive Director
(920) 436-8890

Sexual Assault Crisis Center – Fox Cities, **Appleton**
Caroline Lasecki, Executive Director
(920) 733-8119

Sexual Assault Recovery Program, **Beloit**
John Pfeiderer, Executive Director
(608) 365-1244

Sexual Assault Services of LLS, **Racine**
Terri DeWalt, Executive Director
(262) 619-1634

Sexual Assault Treatment Center, **Milwaukee**
Debbie Donovan, Executive Director
(414) 219-5850

Stepping Stones, Inc., **Medford**
Kris Porter, Executive Director
(715) 748-3795

The Bridge to Hope, **Menominie**
Naomi Cummings, Executive Director
(715) 235-9074

The Healing Center, **Milwaukee**
Maryann Clesceri, Executive Director
(414)671-4325

The Women's Center, **Waukesha**
Marie Kingsbury, Executive Director
(262) 547-4600

The Women's Community, **Wausau**
Jane Graham-Jennings, Executive Director
(715) 842-5663

Time-Out Family Abuse Shelter, **Ladysmith**
Kay Radlinger, Executive Director
(715) 532-6976

Tri-County Council on Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence, **Rhinelander**
Shellie Holmes, Executive Director
(715) 362-6841

Turningpoint for Victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence, **River Falls**
Kim Wojcik, Executive Director
(715) 425-6751

Violence Intervention Project, **Algoma**
Laura Giddley, Executive Director
(920) 487-2111

Women & Children's Horizons, **Kenosha**
Kathryn Comstock, Executive Director
(262) 656-3500