



WISCONSIN COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT

Highlighted Bills of the 2025-26 Legislative Session

This document provides an overview of key bills from the most recent legislative session.

Legislature Passed & Governor Signed

State Budget:

- State Funding for Victim Services: **WCASA supported** – The state budget signed by Governor Evers included a new appropriation for victim services in Wisconsin. This program was funded at \$20 million over the 2025-27 budget biennium. However, this is only one-time funding and lapses on June 30, 2027. WCASA supported this new appropriation as it helps address the shortfall in federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding.

Sexual Violence:

- Requiring Informed Consent Prior to Performing a Pelvic Exam on an Unconscious Patient ([Act 22](#)): **WCASA supported** – Requires a hospital to have and enforce a policy requiring written and verbal informed consent before a medical student may perform a pelvic exam on a patient who is under general anesthesia or otherwise unconscious. WCASA supported this legislation as it promotes concepts such as consent and body autonomy, which are cornerstones of sexual violence prevention programming.
- Representations Depicting Nudity/"Deepfakes" ([Act 34](#)): **WCASA supported** – Creates a new crime related to posting, publishing, or distributing a synthetic intimate representation (i.e., "deepfake"). A synthetic representation uses an identifiable person's face, likeness etc., to depict an intimate representation of the person and which is so realistic that a reasonable person would believe that the image depicts the identifiable person. WCASA supported this legislation as it addresses a new form of technology-facilitated sexual violence.
- Sextortion ([Act 48](#)): **WCASA supported** – Creates a new crime of sextortion and expands eligibility for Crime Victim Compensation to allow victims and their family members to apply for financial awards under this program. WCASA supported this legislation as it addresses a form of technology-facilitated sexual violence that did not previously fall under Wisconsin's criminal laws.
- Parental Notification of Sexual Misconduct by a School Staff Member ([Act 57](#)): **WCASA supported** – Requires a school board/governing body of a private school to notify the parent/guardian of a student who is alleged to be the victim of sexual misconduct by a school staff member. WCASA supported this legislation as it promotes transparency regarding educator sexual misconduct and conforms with requirements under Title IX.

- Creating a Crime of Grooming (Act 88): **WCASA supported** – Creates a crime of grooming a child for sexual activity. WCASA supported this legislation as it addresses gaps in Wisconsin law regarding individuals who engage in grooming behaviors for the purpose of engaging in sexual activity with children.
- School Board Policies on Appropriate Communication with Pupils (Act 89): **WCASA supported** – Requires a school board/governing body of a private school to adopt a policy on appropriate communication between school employees/volunteers and students. This bill also requires training for school employees/volunteers on identifying/preventing/reporting grooming and professional boundary violations. WCASA supported this legislation as it helps respond to and prevent educator sexual misconduct.
- Immunity Protections for Survivors/Lease Termination/Statute of Limitations (SOL) Extension (Act 90): **WCASA supported** – This legislation makes a number of changes to laws related to sexual assault, including the following: expanding existing immunity from prosecution protections for survivors reporting a sexual assault to include certain controlled substance offenses, eliminating the requirement that a survivor must face an imminent threat of serious harm to terminate their lease, and extending the Statute of Limitation (SOL) for 2nd degree Sexual Assault from 10 to 20 years. WCASA supported this legislation as it reduces barriers for survivors engaging with the criminal legal system and enhances their ability to access safe housing.
- Penalty Enhancer for Sexual Assault of an Adult at Risk (Act 149): **WCASA took no position** – Creates a new ground for first-degree sexual assault that applies when a defendant commits an act that would constitute second-degree sexual assault against an Adult at Risk (as defined by current law). WCASA took no position on this as we are concerned about the potential for penalty enhancers to exacerbate racial disparities in the criminal legal system.
- Department of Public Instruction (DPI) Online Licensing Portal (Act 185): **WCASA supported** – Requires DPI to maintain an online licensing portal that allows the public to search and access license information by name and license number. WCASA supported this legislation as it increases transparency regarding educator sexual misconduct.
- Prohibiting School Boards From Entering Into Confidentiality Agreements Related to Educator Sexual Misconduct (Act 186): **WCASA supported** – Prohibits a school board/governing body of a private school from entering into certain agreements related to investigations of alleged sexual misconduct by school employees, including agreements that suppress or destroy information of alleged sexual misconduct or that affect the ability of the school board to report suspected sexual misconduct. WCASA supported this legislation as it increases transparency regarding educator sexual misconduct.
- Civil Cause of Action for Sextortion (Act 215): **WCASA Supported** – Creates a civil cause of action for victims of sextortion. WCASA supported this legislation as it provides sexual violence survivors another path to seeking justice through the civil legal system.

- Sexual Assault Forensic Examination (SAFE) Fund/HIV Prophylaxis ([Act 243](#)): **WCASA supported** – Expands the definition of “examination costs” in the SAFE fund to include the cost of HIV prophylaxis that is provided or prescribed during a medical forensic exam. WCASA supported this legislation as it helps reduce barriers to accessing HIV prophylaxis for survivors who need this critical medication.
- Admitting an Audiovisual (A/V) Recording of a Child Victim’s Statement as Evidence ([Act 246](#)): **WCASA supported** – Eliminates the requirement that the admissibility of an A/V recording of an oral statement of a child sexual assault victim depends on the age of the child at the time of trial. Instead, the court must use the child’s age at the time they made the statement to determine admissibility. This bill also expands the age upon which the court may admit an A/V recording of a child victim’s statement to include a child who is under the age of 18 when the recording was made. WCASA supported this legislation as it helps remove barriers for child sexual assault victims who are engaging with the criminal legal system.

Human Trafficking

- Penalty Enhancer for Human Trafficking and Trafficking of a Child ([Act 56](#)): **WCASA took no position** – Increases the penalty for a conviction of the crime of Human Trafficking from a Class D felony to a Class C felony and requires courts to impose a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years confinement. The legislation also increases the penalty for a conviction of the crime of Trafficking of a Child from a Class C felony to a Class B felony and requires courts to impose a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years confinement. Finally, the bill also extends the statute of limitations for the crime of Human Trafficking from six years to ten years. While we supported the extension of the statute of limitations, we took no position on the bill as we are concerned about the potential for penalty enhancers to exacerbate racial disparities in the criminal legal system.
- Penalty Enhancer for Child Sex Trafficking Involving Three or More Victims ([Act 187](#)): **WCASA took no position** – Requires courts to impose a life sentence without the possibility of extended supervision if a person is convicted of the crime of Trafficking of a Child involving three or more victims. The legislation also expands the crime of Trafficking of a Child to apply if a person sells, purchases, receives etc., a child for the purposes of a commercial sex act. While we supported the expansion of the definition of child sex trafficking, we took no position on the bill as we are concerned about the potential for penalty enhancers to exacerbate racial disparities in the criminal legal system.

Racial Justice/Anti-Oppression

- Medicaid Eligibility Extension for Postpartum Women ([Act 102](#)): **WCASA supported** – Extends access to postpartum Medicaid benefits from 60 days to one year after childbirth. WCASA supported this legislation as expanding access to postpartum health care is a critical component towards addressing racial disparities for maternal and infant health outcomes in Wisconsin, where Black women are nearly three to five times more likely to suffer pregnancy-related deaths than white women.

Legislature Passed & Governor Vetoed

Sexual Violence

- Requiring Judicial Approval Before Dismissing Sexual Assault Cases (AB 129 | SB 133): **WCASA opposed** – Requires a prosecutor to seek judicial approval to dismiss or amend a charge for various crimes, including 1st – 3rd degree Sexual Assault and any crime against a child, including child sexual abuse. The bill also prohibits a prosecutor from entering into a deferred prosecution agreement with a person accused of committing any of the above crimes. WCASA opposed this legislation as it limits not only prosecutorial discretion but also restricts the range of options for survivors who are engaging with the criminal legal system. Additionally, this bill also makes presumptions about what survivors perceive as justice with respect to the criminal legal system (i.e., all survivors would be opposed to a deferred prosecution agreement).

Racial Justice/Anti-Oppression

- Requiring County Sheriffs to Comply with Federal Immigration Detainers (AB 24 | SB 57): **WCASA opposed** – Requires sheriffs to request proof of legal presence status from individuals held in county jails for felony offenses and to comply with detainers and administrative warrants from the Department of Homeland Security. WCASA opposed this legislation as it invites local law enforcement to rely on stereotypes when determining who is in the country lawfully and thus could increase racial profiling. We are also concerned that the legislation intertwines local law enforcement with federal immigration enforcement actions.
- Prohibiting Funding for Health Services for Unlawfully Present Individuals (AB 308 | SB 311): **WCASA opposed** – Prohibits the use of any funding for any health care services for an individual that is not lawfully present in the United States. WCASA opposed this legislation as under Wisconsin law, citizenship is already a requirement to enroll in BadgerCare/Medicaid. Therefore, this legislation is not only unnecessary, but also reflective of broader anti-immigrant policies that unfairly target immigrants and create additional barriers to seeking important services like healthcare.

LGBTQI+ Rights & Protections

- Requiring School Districts to Designate Sports Based on the Sex of the Participating Students (AB 100 | SB 117): **WCASA opposed** – Requires school boards to designate athletic teams or sports based on the sex of the participating students. The legislation defines “sex” as the sex of the student determined at birth and as reflected on the student’s birth certificate. WCASA opposed this bill as it compounds the discrimination transgender people already face in their daily lives and sends a dangerous message that they are not welcome on sports teams.
- Requiring UW System Schools/Technical Colleges to Designate Sports Based on the Sex of the Participating Students (AB 102 | SB 116): **WCASA opposed** – Requires UW System Schools/Technical Colleges to designate athletic teams or sports based on the sex of the participating students. The legislation defines “sex” as the sex of the student determined at birth and as reflected on the student’s birth certificate. WCASA opposed this bill as it compounds the discrimination transgender people already face in their daily lives and sends a dangerous message that they are not welcome on sports teams.

- School Board Policies Related to Changing a Student's Name/Pronouns ([AB 103](#) | [SB 120](#)): **WCASA opposed** – Requires school boards to adopt policies that provide a minor student's parent/guardian the right to determine the names and pronouns for their child while at school. The legislation also prohibits school staff from referring to a student by a name or pronoun that does not align with their biological sex without the written permission from the parent/guardian. WCASA opposed this legislation as it would deny children the autonomy to use pronouns consistent with their gender identity.
- Gender Transition Medical Intervention ([AB 104](#) | [SB 157](#)): **WCASA opposed** – Prohibits health care providers from providing any gender transition medical intervention for individuals under the age of 18. WCASA opposed as this legislation as it would prohibit best practice medical care for transgender youth and because it runs counter to the concept of bodily autonomy, which is a critical tenet of sexual violence prevention.
- Civil Cause of Action for a Minor Injured by a Gender Transition Procedure ([AB 400](#) | [SB 405](#)): **WCASA opposed** – Establishes a civil cause of action against a health care provider who performs a gender transition procedure on an individual who is under 18 years of age and who is injured by the procedure or related treatment. WCASA opposed this legislation as it runs counter to a critical tenet of prevention of sexual violence, namely bodily autonomy. Empowering people to make decisions related to their bodies is a strengths-based approach to decreasing vulnerability and enhancing the ability of people to maintain healthy boundaries. This bill sends the opposite message as it will limit access to lifesaving medical care for transgender youth.

Children's Rights

- Parental Access to Minor Health Care Records ([AB 806](#) | [SB 799](#)): **WCASA opposed** – Eliminates existing exceptions in Wisconsin law that limits a parent's/guardian's ability to access health care records of a developmentally disabled minor age 14 years or older. The bill also eliminates the exception stating a parent/guardian may not access HIV test results of a minor aged 14 years or older without their informed consent. WCASA opposed this bill as it undermines existing privacy protections for minors in Wisconsin and could deter vulnerable youth from accessing HIV testing, which puts their health and safety at risk.

Legislature Did Not Pass

Sexual Violence

- Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Education/ "Erin's Law" ([AB 156](#) | [SB 171](#)): **WCASA supported** – Requires school boards to provide a child sexual abuse prevention instructional program to students in grades 4K-12. WCASA supported this legislation as it incorporates elements of the [10 Core Concepts of Child Sexual Abuse Prevention](#).
- Crime Victim Rights for Survivors ([AB 236](#) | [SB 224](#)): **WCASA supported** – Expands Wisconsin's crime victim rights protections to ensure a survivor who submits a sexual assault kit for testing has the right to have the kit tested in accordance with statutory timelines and, upon request, to be provided with information regarding the location and status of the kit, including the estimated date of destruction of the kit. WCASA supported this legislation as it provides a specific enforcement mechanism for survivors to have their kit tested and to receive information about their kit.

- Use of Certain Statements as Evidence in Prosecution for Prostitution (AB 510 | SB 538): **WCASA supported** – Provides that if a person contacts law enforcement/emergency medical services to report a crime other than prostitution or to seek medical care, any statements or other evidence relating to the crime of prostitution may not be used to prosecute that person for prostitution. WCASA supported this legislation as it reduces barriers to reporting to the criminal legal system or seeking medical care for individuals who engage in sex work.
- Subpoena Power for DPI in License Revocation Investigations (AB 829 | SB 820): **WCASA supported** – Authorizes DPI to subpoena witnesses and documents to aid in an investigation relating to the revocation of a license for immoral conduct. WCASA supported this legislation as it enhances DPI's ability to investigate cases of educator sexual misconduct.
- Healthy Youth Act (AB 1234 | SB 1172): **WCASA supported** – Reinstates the Healthy Youth Act, which was repealed in 2011. The Healthy Youth Act encourages school boards to offer instruction in human growth and development in grades K-12. WCASA supported this legislation as it requires school boards to include medically accurate information on a wide array of topics, including information about contraception, gender stereotypes, and the skills needed to make responsible decisions about sexuality/sexual behavior if the school offers human growth and development instruction.

Sex Trafficking

- Ending Prosecution of Sex-Trafficked Children/ "Safe Harbor" (AB 79 | SB 73): **WCASA supported** – Prohibits prosecuting a person for the crime of prostitution if the person was a minor when the act was committed. WCASA supported this legislation as it is a key component to dismantling racial disparities in the juvenile justice system and will bring Wisconsin in line with the federal Trafficking Victims Protections Act (TVPA).
- Human Trafficking Surcharge and Services (AB 84 | SB 138): **WCASA took no position** – Creates a \$5,000 surcharge on "johns" to prevent/deter demand for commercial sex, and to fund victim services and police activities concerning internet crimes against children. WCASA expressed concerns about the disproportionate impact of the high surcharge on historically marginalized communities, as well as the stability of a surcharge for funding victim services.
- Required Instruction in Human Trafficking and Sextortion prevention in Grades 6 - 12 (AB 832 | SB 839): **WCASA supported** – Requires DPI, in consultation with the Department of Children and Families (DCF), to develop a list of recommended training courses related to recognizing and preventing human trafficking and sextortion for students in grades 6 – 12. WCASA supported this bill as it expands sexual violence and human trafficking prevention programming in schools.

- Courtroom Supports for Child Victims of Human Trafficking Crimes (AB 834 | SB 864): **WCASA supported** – Requires that child victims of human trafficking crimes are provided any courtroom supports the courts finds necessary to promote the health and safety of the child and which the court determines are in the interest of justice. WCASA supported this legislation as it seeks to remove barriers to engaging with the criminal legal system for child sex trafficking victims.
- Modifying the Affirmative Defense for Human Trafficking Victims (AB 849 | SB 830): **WCASA opposed** – Adds further conditions to the affirmative defense for human trafficking victims. The affirmative defense provides a defense to criminal liability for offenses committed by trafficking victims that are a “direct result” of human trafficking. WCASA opposed this legislation as the additional conditions could limit the ability of human trafficking victims to rely on the affirmative defense and avoid further victimization.
- Civil Statute of Limitations for Victims of Child Sex Trafficking (AB 861 | SB 849): **WCASA supported** – Extends the civil statute of limitations for victims of child sex trafficking to permit filing a claim against the offender before the victims reaches the age of 35. WCASA supported this legislation as it provides additional time for child sex trafficking victims to hold the offender accountable through the civil justice system.

Reproductive Health

- Permitting Pharmacists to Prescribe Certain Contraceptives (AB 43 | SB 42): **WCASA supported** – Permits a pharmacist to prescribe and dispense hormonal contraceptive patches and self-administered oral hormonal contraceptives. WCASA supported this bill as it would expand access to contraception.
- Right to Bodily Autonomy/Elimination of Certain Abortion-Related Regulations (AB 355 | SB 271): **WCASA supported** – Specifies that every individual has the fundamental right to bodily autonomy, including the right to access an abortion. WCASA supported this legislation as we believe all people are entitled to bodily autonomy and decision-making power over their reproductive health, including the right to seek an abortion. This legislation also removes existing barriers to abortion services in Wisconsin.
- Statutory Right to Contraception (AB 588 | SB 589): **WCASA supported** – Establishes that a person has a statutory right to obtain contraceptives and that a health care provider has a corresponding right to provide contraceptives. WCASA supported this legislation as it would help guard against attempts to limit access to contraceptives in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court’s *Dobbs* decision.
- Repeal of Certain Abortion-related Regulations (AB 589 | SB 547): **WCASA supported** – Repeals various abortion-related laws, including requiring admitting privileges for physicians performing abortions and other laws that restrict access to abortion. WCASA supported this legislation as it removes existing barriers to abortion services in Wisconsin.

- Free Menstrual Products for Inmates of State Correctional Facilities/County Jails ([AB 736](#) | [SB 728](#)): **WCASA supported** – Requires the Department of Corrections (DOC) and county sheriffs to ensure that menstrual products are provided free of charge to inmates of correctional facilities/county jails. WCASA supported this legislation as it protects inmate health and reduces medical costs while also ensuring that human dignity does not disappear when someone is incarcerated.
- Shackling of Pregnant People Incarcerated in Correctional Facilities ([AB 773](#) | [SB 755](#)): **WCASA supported** – Limits the use of physical restraints on pregnant or postpartum people who are in the custody of a correctional facility. WCASA supported this legislation as it restricts the practice of shackling pregnant people in correctional facilities while also ensuring they have access to comprehensive medical care during pregnancy and the postpartum period.

LGBTQI+ Rights & Protections

- Gender Identity/Gender Expression Nondiscrimination Bill ([AB 220](#) | [SB 223](#)): **WCASA supported** – Prohibits discrimination based on a person's gender identity or gender expression in the following areas: education, employment, housing, and public accommodations. WCASA supported this legislation as it expands protections against discrimination based on a person's gender identity/expression.
- Changing an Individual's Sex on a Birth Certificate ([AB 311](#) | [SB 312](#)): **WCASA opposed** – Prohibits any person from changing an individual's sex on a birth record to a sex other than the individual's biological sex. WCASA opposed this legislation as it compounds the discrimination transgender people already face in their daily lives and denies them the autonomy to change their birth record to correspond to their gender identity.
- Marriage and Family Equality Bill ([AB 314](#) | [SB 321](#)): **WCASA supported** – Recognizes same-sex marriage by making gender-neutral any references in Wisconsin statutes to spouses, intending to harmonize state law with the Supreme Court holding in *Obergefell vs. Hodges*. It also specifies the ways in which same-sex couples may be the legal parents of a child. WCASA supported this legislation as it formally recognizes same-sex marriage in the Wisconsin statutes.
- Conversion Therapy Ban ([AB 359](#) | [SB 324](#)): **WCASA supported** – Prohibits certain mental health providers from trying to change a minor's gender expression, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Violation of the prohibition is grounds for professional discipline by the appropriate credentialing board. WCASA supported this legislation as it would prohibit the practice of conversion therapy, which has been widely documented to cause harm to LGBTQI+ youth while also reinforcing discrimination against people for not conforming to traditional gender norms.

- Eliminating the “Panic” Defense ([AB 361](#) | [SB 380](#)): **WCASA supported** – Prohibits a defendant from asserting self-defense if the criminal charge resulted from the discovery of the victim’s gender identity/expression or sexual orientation. WCASA supported this legislation because “panic” defenses are rooted in irrational fears and prejudices towards LGBTQI+ people and imply violence towards them is acceptable under certain circumstances.
- Expansion of Pupil Non-Discrimination Laws to Include Gender Identity or Gender Expression: ([AB 1157](#) | [SB 565](#)): **WCASA supported** – Expands the pupil non-discrimination law to prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender identity and gender expression and extends this law to apply to certain private/charter schools in Wisconsin. WCASA supports this bill as it expands protections to students based on gender identity/gender expression.

Racial Justice/Anti-Oppression

- Prohibiting Law Enforcement from Assisting in Detaining a Person Based on Immigration Status ([AB 57](#) | [SB 54](#)): **WCASA supported** – Prohibits state/local law enforcement from aiding in the detention of an individual if that person is being detained solely on the basis that the person is or is alleged to be not lawfully present in the United States. WCASA supported this legislation as it promotes disentangling local law enforcement from federal immigration enforcement actions, which reduces barriers to seeking help for immigrant survivors of sexual violence.
- Civil Cause of Action for Civil Rights Violations ([AB 331](#) | [SB 355](#)): **WCASA supported** – Creates a civil cause of action for a person who has been denied any rights guaranteed under the constitution/laws of the U.S or Wisconsin by a person acting under governmental authority (i.e. law enforcement, correctional officers etc.). WCASA supported this legislation as it creates a specific legal pathway for people whose rights have been violated by government officials.
- Missing and Murdered African American Women Task Force ([AB 392](#) | [SB 404](#)): **WCASA supported** – Creates a task force on missing and murdered African American Women. WCASA supported this bill as the task force would make policy recommendations to improve the safety of African American women in the state. This is particularly critical given recent studies showing Wisconsin has the highest disparity in homicide rates between African American women white women in the nation.
- Identity Requirements for Officers Who Arrest or Detain Individuals ([AB 441](#) | [SB 444](#)): **WCASA supported** – Requires law enforcement officers to identify themselves when arresting/detaining an individual and prohibits the use of disguises or face coverings by officers (with limited exceptions). WCASA supported this legislation as it increases transparency with respect to law enforcement and helps address the climate of fear created by masked and armed law enforcement agents in our communities.

- Using State or Local Facilities to Detain Individuals on the Basis of Immigration Status (AB 444 | SB 484): **WCASA supported** – Prohibits the federal government from using a state/local facility to detain/hold an individual solely based on their immigration status. WCASA supported this legislation as it promotes disentangling local law enforcement from federal immigration enforcement actions, which reduces barriers to seeking help for immigrant survivors of sexual violence.
- Prohibiting “Warrior-Style” Law Enforcement Training (AB 558 | SB 784): **WCASA supported** – Prohibits law enforcement agencies from providing/arranging “warrior-style” training for officers. WCASA supported this bill as it would prohibit law enforcement agencies from participating in training that dehumanizes people or encourages aggressive conduct by officers that de-emphasizes human life and increases the likelihood of the use of deadly force.
- Use of Force by Law Enforcement Officers (AB 738 | SB 730): **WCASA supported** – Requires law enforcement officers to use skills and tactics, including de-escalation strategies, that minimize the likelihood that force will become necessary. Also requires that a law enforcement officer must use the least amount of force necessary to address the threat. The bill also requires the Law Enforcement Standards Board to decertify officers who violate the law regarding the use of force. WCASA supported this legislation as it seeks to reform law enforcement training and reduce the use of excessive force.
- Required Instruction in African American History in Grades K-12 (AB 1041 | SB 1026): **WCASA supported** – Requires DPI to develop a model curriculum on African American History for grades K-12. WCASA supported this legislation as it would create a developmentally appropriate curriculum focused specifically on African American History. This curriculum would be developed in conjunction with certain community-based organizations such as the Wisconsin Black Historical Society and America’s Black Holocaust Museum. This legislation also applies to private and independent charter schools in Wisconsin.

Economic Justice

- Enactment of Paid Family Leave Ordinances (AB 482 | SB 539): **WCASA supported** – Eliminates the prohibition on local communities enacting ordinances requiring employers to provide paid family or medical leave to employees. WCASA supported this bill as it removes barriers to expanding access to paid family and medical leave in Wisconsin.
- Paid Family Leave (AB 1012 | SB 1001): **WCASA supported** – Creates a family and medical leave insurance program to empower workers to take paid time off for family or medical leave. WCASA supports this legislation because it will benefit survivors who may need to take time off in their healing process. This will also benefit Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) who are disproportionately impacted by sexual violence.