Action Needed on Two Bills

Senate Bill 237 was introduced this week. The bill repeals the Healthy Youth Act, which passed last session and set minimum standards for human growth and development curriculum in Wisconsin. Senate Bill 237 will eliminate the requirement that human growth and development programs include age-appropriate information about:

- Healthy relationships
- Counseling, medical, and legal resources for survivors of sexual abuse and violent relationships
- Body image, and gender stereotypes
- Refraining from making inappropriate verbal, physical, and sexual advances and how to recognize, rebuff, and report any unwanted or inappropriate verbal, physical, and sexual behaviors

Please call your state legislators and tell them to oppose SB 237.

Talking Points

- Teen dating and sexual violence is a huge problem that is often hidden.
- Women and girls age 16 to 24 experience the highest per capita rate of intimate violence in the U.S.[1]
- Young people age 12 to 19 experience the highest rates of rape and sexual assault.[2]
- Forty-percent of teenage girls report knowing someone their age who has been hit or beaten by a boyfriend.
- One in three teenagers reports experiencing physical or emotional abuse in their relationships.[3]
- SB 237 reduces the standards for preventing teen dating and sexual violence in Wisconsin.
- Most states are beefing up their efforts to address dating violence. Only Wisconsin is going backwards.

Bill to Protect the Confidentiality of Victims' Name Change Records for

A bill is currently circulating to protect victims of domestic violence and stalking who believe they need to change their names to escape their perpetrators. Wisconsin's current name change statute does not allow victims to keep their new names confidential. In fact, the statute requires that any petition for a name change be published in the local newspaper three times. This requirement means that just as victims are hoping to find safety in anonymity, they are forced to broadcast their name and location far and wide.

Please call your state legislators and ask them to co-sponsor LRB 2736 being circulated by Representative Ripp.

Talking Points

- Under current law, petitions for name changes must be published in the local newspaper three times.
- This poses a serious risk for victims of domestic violence or stalking who believe they need to change their names to escape their abusers.
- LRB 2736 allows a victim of domestic violence or stalking to change her or his name in a confidential manner if the publication would endanger the victim.
- Please co-sponsor LRB 2736.

Good News! Three Bills Pass the Assembly Votes

Three bills to protect domestic violence victims passed the State Assembly Thursday. The bills are Assembly Bills 232, 247 and 269. The advancement of these bills is due to your efforts and advocacy. Make sure your voice keeps being heard by contacting your legislators on SB 237 and LRB 2736.

Assembly Bill 232 strengthens crime victims rights in Wisconsin.

Assembly Bill 247 ensures Wisconsin courts will have jurisdiction to issue restraining orders against abusers who threaten or harass Wisconsinites from other states or who cause victims to flee to Wisconsin because of abuse that happened elsewhere.

Assembly Bill 269 criminalizes violations of the 72-hour no-contact condition that applies after a doemstic abuse arrest. Currently, to the frustration of victims and law enforcement officers, even flagrant violations of the no-contact condition can only be punished with forfeitures, not as crimes.

[1] U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. 2001

[2] Truman and Rand, Michael. 2010. Criminal Victimization, 2009. U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics. Available at: http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/cv09.pdf .

[3] Halpern, et. al. American Journal of Public Health. 2001.

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