

State Budget Includes Needed Support for Victims

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The state budget signed today by Governor Walker includes needed resources to assist and protect victims of domestic violence. Victim advocates expressed gratitude to Governor Walker and legislators for these investments.

"The additional funding for services is a lifeline for victims and children in Wisconsin," said Patti Seger. "More victims will get the help they need to escape abusive situations."

The state budget includes an additional \$1.5 million over the next two years to support the availability of shelters and services across Wisconsin. On a single day, approximately 270 victims are currently unable to get assistance because of funding shortages. The budget also contains capital funding for two domestic violence shelters and service centers in Wisconsin to address a critical shortage of refuge space. The capital projects need final approval from the State Building Commission.

"We thank Governor Walker for prioritizing funding for victim services in his budget and thank the members of the Legislature for extending the reach of the additional investments," said Seger. "In particular, we thank Rep. Nygren and Sen. Olsen, the other members of the Joint Finance Committee, Reps. Loudenbeck and Suder, and the many individual legislators who saw the value in promoting victim safety."

Advocates also Applaud Veto of Bondsmen

Victim advocates were also paying special attention to the budget provision that would have permitted bail bondsmen in Wisconsin. End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin said the change in policy would have increased risks to victims and diverted funds to bondsmen that otherwise go to victim restitution and services.

"We are very grateful and pleased that Governor Walker vetoed bail bondsmen in Wisconsin," said Seger. "Bondsmen would have sent our criminal justice system backwards and created unnecessary risks and problems for victims."

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