



WISCONSIN COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT

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**Family & Medical Leave Insurance Act Vital  
for Sexual Assault Survivors**

Madison, WI – The Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA) is pleased to support legislation establishing a Wisconsin Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) Insurance program. This bill would empower workers in Wisconsin to take paid time off from work to take care of an ill family member. Benefits would also be available to new parents who need time to bond with a new child entering their life either by birth, adoption, or foster care placement.

“The Family Medical Leave Insurance Act would actually help save lives and speed recovery from injury or illness. This legislation would certainly be a huge help to sexual assault survivors who frequently need flexibility, time off, and care in their healing process,” said Pennie Meyers, executive director at WCASA.

“We know that the lack of paid family leave in Wisconsin disproportionately falls on women of color, who also experience sexual assault at disproportionately high rates. Supporting the Family Medical Leave Insurance Act is another step legislators can take to support survivors and their families,” added Meyers.

The United States is the only industrialized country in the world that doesn’t provide workers with any type of guaranteed paid leave. Nationally, only 12% of workers have paid family leave through their employers and fewer than 40% have personal medical leave through an employer-provided short-term disability program. As a result, workers who take time off to take care for themselves or their families often face a significant loss of income.

Other states and local governments have already begun to properly address this issue. California, New Jersey, Rhode Island, New York, and Washington, D.C., have enacted public insurance programs that provide workers with paid family leave. Both the federal and Wisconsin FMLA’s currently provide important protections to some workers, but a significant portion of the workforce is not currently eligible for these protections and both FMLAs only provide for unpaid time off, which is not financially possible for many workers.

For more information and statistics regarding how paid family and medical leave insurance would benefit workers, and women workers in particular, see page 9 of the Wisconsin Alliance for Women’s Health [Proactive Policy Prescription to Improve the Health and Well Being of Women and Girls in Wisconsin](#).

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The Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA, [www.wcasa.org](http://www.wcasa.org)) is a membership agency comprised of organizations and individuals working to end sexual violence in Wisconsin. Among these are the 54 sexual assault service provider agencies throughout the state that offer support, advocacy and information to survivors of sexual assault and their families.

WCASA works to ensure that every survivor in Wisconsin gets the support and care they need. WCASA also works to create the social change necessary to ensure a future where no child, woman or man is ever sexually violated again.