



Rape Crisis Center

July 12, 2019

For Immediate Release

Contact:

Beth Shippert-Myers
Rape Crisis Center
Director of Marketing and Development
608-251-5126 or Beth@theRCC.org

Erin Thornley-Parisi
Rape Crisis Center
Executive Director
608-251-5126 or Erin@theRCC.org

The Rape Crisis Center Statement on Judge William Hanrahan’s decision to force an RCC advocate into a possible violation of client confidentiality

(MADISON,WI) The Rape Crisis Center (RCC) is deeply unsettled by Dane County Judge William Hanrahan’s decision to violate the confidentiality between a sexual assault survivor and their advocate by allowing an advocate to be called to testify. This decision is based on a flawed understanding of advocacy and is an attack against victims of sexual assault. Rape Crisis Center advocates are protected under Wisconsin State Statute 905.045, and this decision sets a chilling precedent for future cases of sexual assault.

Trust between an advocate and a victim is sacred and essential to their healing process, which is why the Wisconsin State Statute exists in the first place. According to RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network), out of every 1000 sexual assaults, 995 perpetrators will walk free and 3 out of every 4 sexual assaults go unreported. Those numbers can only get worse in light of this appalling decision, with repercussions for advocates all across the state in their interviews with clients. Forcing violation of client confidentiality is not acceptable, and this decision should not be allowed to stand.

“Advocacy is not always polite,” says RCC Executive Director Erin Thornley-Parisi. “The point is to protect the rights of the victim, get justice, and help them on the path to healing; all things we believe the advocate in this case was doing.”

At the Rape Crisis Center we work long and hard for victims of sexual assault, and that includes our clients: survivors of all ages, genders, and races. Their trust is of the utmost importance– we believe survivors at the RCC and promise them confidentiality in all things, and we will defend that right.

Serving Dane County and the surrounding area since 1973, the Rape Crisis Center (RCC) provides services to the survivors (and their family and friends) of all forms of sexual violence, including recent sexual assault, past sexual assault, incest (past or present), sexual harassment, and sexual exploitation.

These services are provided free of charge and include crisis intervention and support (24 hour Helpline and on-call Advocate/Counselors), short-term counseling, support groups, medical/legal advocacy and accompaniment, community education, and Chimera Self-Defense. RCC serves women, children, and men.

###