

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Proposal to amend Iowa's Constitution could hinder resources to assist survivors of domestic violence**

DES MOINES, Iowa – January 31, 2018 – As a statewide leader responding to the needs and elevating the voices of all survivors impacted by intimate partner violence, the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ICADV) has serious concerns and strongly disagrees with a bill in the Iowa Senate and companion bill in the Iowa House, Iowa's Marsy's Law (SSB 3040/HJR 2003).

Iowa's Marsy's Law proposes to amend Iowa's Constitution to include a Victim's Rights Amendment (VRA) seeking to grant constitutional rights to crime victims equal to the accused. Iowa law already includes comprehensive victim rights and protections under Chapter 915, and the Coalition believes any flaws within the current legal system can be changed to protect survivors of intimate partner violence. However, once an amendment like Iowa's Marsy's Law is made to the state's constitution, it is inflexible, as well as any current flaws.

"Our experience as a victim service agency has taught us that there are more efficient ways to help and heal survivors of domestic violence," says Laurie Schipper, executive director of the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence. "Establishing rights without legitimate remedy gives false hope to survivors and diverts resources away from systems and services that can meet the comprehensive needs of survivors across Iowa. Furthermore, we believe this bill negatively impacts a vast majority of survivors who do not, will not or cannot find safety or justice in our legal system."

To view ICADV's complete statement opposing Iowa's Marsy's Law, visit [www.icadv.org](http://www.icadv.org).

#### **About the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence**

The Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ICADV) is a state level nonprofit organization representing 21 local programs that provide direct services to survivors of domestic violence. In 2017, ICADV's network of member programs served more than 35,000 survivors—an 18% increase over 2016. The Coalition provides education, legal services, counseling, training and emergency housing resources to member programs, community groups, and public/private organizations. For more information, visit [www.icadv.org](http://www.icadv.org) or find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/IowaCADV](https://www.facebook.com/IowaCADV).