

**Governor's Council on Domestic Abuse  
April 12, 2017**

**Present:** Shirley Armstrong, Senator Tim Carpenter, Representative Andre Jacque, Mariana Rodriguez, Susan Perry, Susan Sippel, Mark Thomas, Gerald Urbik

**Excused:** Kevin Hamberger, Jill Karofsky, Patricia Ninmann, Renee Schulz, Representative Lisa Subek

**Guests:** Kathy Flores (Diverse and Resilient), Chase Tarrier (End Domestic Abuse WI); Veronica Lazo (Unidos Against Domestic Violence)

**Staff:** Sharon Lewandowski

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***Call to Order and Approval of Minutes***

Co-Chair Sue Sippel called the meeting to order with a quorum present at 9:00 a.m.

***Presentation on Domestic Violence in the Immigrant Community***

Mariana Rodriguez, Council Member and Executive Director of the Latina Resource Center, and Veronica Lazo, Executive Director of Unidos Against Domestic Violence, provided a presentation and discussion on serving immigrant victims of domestic abuse. Some observations that they offered include:

- Culturally-specific domestic abuse programs that serve the immigrant community have seen an increase in survivors calling for support, often expressing anxiety about how to get assistance without endangering themselves.
- Survivors who need to drive longer distances (especially from another county) to receive services are reluctant to do so because they may not have a driver's license and fear being stopped, risking deportation.
- More survivors are reluctant to call or report to the police, again fearing deportation for themselves or family members.
- Survivors report being worried about going to court and some might be dropping cases. Many survivors report being frightened after hearing about the case of an undocumented transgender woman who was arrested in a Texas courthouse while seeking a domestic violence protective order against her ex-boyfriend.
- Different law enforcement jurisdictions within the same county may have different policies about cooperation with immigration enforcement, leading to further confusion and fear.
- Safety planning with immigrant survivors needs to be enhanced, with information that takes into account recent changes in immigration policy and enforcement.
- The Mexican Consulate in Milwaukee provides resources and assistance to Mexican nationals to ensure that their rights are honored. The Council and/or End Domestic Abuse WI may want to offer a webinar for advocates and communities to highlight the services provided by the Consulate.
- End Domestic Abuse WI has created a form for Power of Attorney Delegating Parental Power. This form may be useful for clients who are worried about what will happen to their children if the parent is detained by immigration enforcement.

***Presentation by Kathy Flores***

Kathy Flores of Diverse and Resilient (a public health agency that focuses on the health of LGBT people in WI) offered a presentation on intimate partner violence in the LGBTQ community. Diverse and Resilient runs the *Room To Be Safe* Program, a statewide initiative designed to help connect LGBTQ survivors of all violence to services, advocacy, and safety planning. This includes a "warm line", operated

during business hours, with calls returned within 24 hours on weekdays and varying hours on weekends. The project is partially supported through a grant from the Department of Children and Families. Kathy's Powerpoint presentation is attached.

### ***Legislative Update/ Preview***

Chase Tarrier reported that Legislative Advocacy Day on March 21 was a success, with 80 advocates speaking to their state lawmakers about ending sexual and domestic violence. Chase also provided an update on legislative issues that End Abuse is focusing on.

### **Bills supported by End Abuse:**

- ***Teen Dating Violence Bill:*** A former version of this bill directs schools to integrate teen dating violence prevention education into classroom instruction for middle-school and high-school students, and set guidelines for schools' response to teen dating violence to create an atmosphere in which victims can get help and abuse is not tolerated. New lead authors are being sought for a similar bill for the current session.
- ***Child Sex Trafficking Prevention Bill, AB 186 (formerly Safe Harbor Act):*** This bill would change state law such that a minor could no longer be charged with prostitution. The bill currently has a strong bi-partisan group of co-sponsors.

### **Bills opposed by End Abuse:**

- ***Anti-Sanctuary City Bill, AB 190:*** The bill prohibits a city, village, town, or county from enacting or enforcing a policy that prohibits local law enforcement from ascertaining whether an individual has satisfactory immigration status. Although technically separate from a 287g agreement, this bill could dramatically affect immigrant survivors by discouraging their cooperation with law enforcement due to fear of deportation and other consequences.
- ***Child Support Compliance for Foodshare, AB 57:*** This bill would prohibit certain individuals and parents who refuse to cooperate in determining the paternity of a child or establishing or enforcing a child support order from being eligible for FoodShare benefits. This bill would make it more difficult for victims to access essential services that make it possible for them and their children to live independently of abusers. It would also complicate victims' attempts to remain safely separated from perpetrators by requiring them, in some cases, to go back to court with their abusers and re-litigate child custody cases.
- ***Mandated Equal Placement Bill*** would create a presumption in disputed custody cases that the best interest of the child is defined as spending equal time with each parent. Academic researchers have shown in numerous studies that 40–80 percent of contested custody cases involve intimate partner violence. Mandating that all parents, including abusive parents, be presumed fit for 50 percent placement would be dangerous. Additionally, equalized placement gives abusers the opportunity and means to continue to harass, threaten, monitor, stalk and emotionally and physically abuse their victims.

### **Marsy's Law**

Legislation known as "Marsy's Law", which proposes an amendment to the WI constitution to strengthen victim's rights, was recently introduced.. While committed to protecting the rights of crime victims, End Abuse is taking a neutral position on the bill. Wisconsin already has strong protections and a victim rights amendment. Some of the definitions in the language in the bill are very broad and could result in unintended consequences. Other states that have passed Marsy's Law reported large increases in administrative processes, often resulting in much longer court proceedings.

State Budget priorities supported End Domestic Abuse WI include:

- 2 million increase in funding for child sex trafficking prevention.
- Increase in funding for the Sexual Assault Victim Services (SAVS) Program. The Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA) is requesting that the state triple the current funding for this program from \$2.1 million to \$6.2 million in general purpose revenue (GPR).
- TANF funding for Civil Legal Aid. Continuation of this funding (removing a “sunset” provision), with an additional \$500,000 in funding.-

***Access Committee***

Mariana Rodriguez reported that the Committee is updating the Anti-Oppression Manual. Committee members reviewed two new articles on being an ally and developed guiding questions for discussion at domestic abuse programs.

***Legislative and Policy Committee***

The Committee conducted a planning and prioritization process to identify future projects. Two different projects were identified. One subgroup is interested in promoting the use of the Guardian ad Litem Handbook and providing training on the issues identified in the Handbook. Another subgroup is interested in looking at issues (and potential legislation) related to revocation of probation/parole/extended supervision of offenders who commit another offense. Proposed legislation would allow prosecutors to initiate revocation of an offender’s supervision and require an Administrative Law Judge to revoke all supervision cases if a serious violation is proven.

***Topics for Future Meetings***

Council members suggested presentations on current topics in elder abuse/domestic abuse in later life and on Child Protective Services practice and policy in Wisconsin counties.

***Adjournment***

The meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.