Wisconsin Voices Tell Senate Judiciary Committee to Prevent Domestic Violence Killings

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Madison?Today, the United States Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing on protecting women from gun violence. Two of the five speakers, Elvin Daniel and Racine County Sheriff Chris Schmaling, have Wisconsin connections. End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin (End Abuse) praised Mr. Daniel and Sheriff Schmaling for speaking out and telling Congress to take commonsense steps to prevent domestic violence homicides.

?We are grateful Chairman Leahy and the Senate Judiciary Committee have prioritized domestic violence homicide prevention,? said Patti Seger, executive director of End Abuse, ?and we are extremely proud that two of our own testified today, acting as voices for victims in Wisconsin and across the country.?

The two Wisconsin speakers approach the issues of domestic violence and gun violence with different experiences, but they shared a common point of view: that Congress should do more to keep guns out of the hands of domestic abusers.

Elvin Daniel?s sister was murdered by her estranged husband, along with two of her co-workers at the Azana Spa and Salon in Brookfield in 2012. Although he was prohibited from buying a gun because of an active domestic abuse restraining order, Radcliffe Haughton easily obtained a firearm through the private sale loophole in the federal background check system.

Racine County Sheriff Christopher Schmaling spoke about the connection between guns and domestic violence homicides from his perspective as a law enforcement official. In Racine, Sheriff Schmaling has been a leader in improving the enforcement of laws that restrict domestic abusers? access to guns, and he advocated for a state law that verifies firearm surrender in abuse cases.

?Since 2000, End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin has analyzed and reported on every instance of domestic violence homicide in Wisconsin,? said Seger. ?While many individual tragedies, like the Azana Spa shooting, are etched in our minds, we don?t always see the larger patterns. Each year, guns are the most common weapon in domestic violence homicides?they account for more killings than all other weapons combined. Therefore, keeping guns out of abusers? hands is one of the most critical things we can do to prevent domestic violence from claiming more lives.?

A recording of the hearing can be viewed here: http://www.c-span.org/video/?320765-1/hearing-violence-women-act&live

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