



**Key Message:** Marsy's Law for North Carolina seeks to amend the state constitution in order to provide an equal level of constitutional protections to victims of crimes that are already afforded to the accused and convicted. Marsy's Law is supported across the political spectrum to ensure that victims have the same "co-equal" rights as the accused and convicted - nothing more, nothing less. Marsy's Law gives the victim a voice in the process; not a veto.

- The U.S. Constitution and many state constitutions give specific rights to individuals accused and convicted of a crime. Crime victims, however, have no enumerated rights in either the U.S. Constitution or in 15 state constitutions - including North Carolina.
- Marsy's Law for All seeks to amend state constitutions like North Carolina that do not currently offer protections to give victims of crimes equal rights that are already afforded to the accused and convicted.
- While North Carolina does have victims' rights protections in its constitution, it is not always consistently applied from county to county and regionally, and there is a need to amend the constitution to better ensure consistent enforcement of those rights statewide.
- In January 2017, Marsy's Law for NC kicked off a campaign to begin the two-step process to amend the state constitution: the first step requires a bill passed by  $\frac{3}{5}$  of both chambers of the state Legislature to then send it to a statewide vote the following year.
- Nearly eight out of ten North Carolinians support a constitutional amendment giving crime victims equal rights already afforded to the accused and convicted including the right to be treated fairly, with dignity and respect, to be informed regarding custody and to have a voice in the judicial process.
- We can all agree it's common sense that no rapist should have more rights than the victim. No murderer should be afforded more rights than the victim's family.
- It is not a partisan issue: giving crime victims important co-equal rights is a rare political issue that both Republicans and Democrats are unified in supporting.
- In recent years, voters in five states have passed Marsy's Law including the groundbreaking 2008 victims' rights law in California, Illinois, North and South Dakota and Montana.
- Marsy's Law for All campaigns are currently active in eight states beyond North Carolina including Nevada, Maine, Idaho, Oklahoma, Ohio, Wisconsin, Kentucky and Georgia.

A constitutional amendment for victims' rights will guarantee equal rights to crime victims by:

Informing victims and their families about their rights and services available to them



Giving them the right to receive notification of proceedings and major developments in a criminal case



Protecting their safety by notifying them in a timely manner regarding changes to the offender's custodial status



Allowing victims and their families to exercise their right to be present - and heard - at court proceedings; and to provide input to the prosecutor before a plea agreement is finalized



Establishing the right to restitution

