

# LOUISIANA JUSTICE FOR SURVIVORS ACT

## SB91

The Justice for Survivors Act (JSA) allows judges to consider the consequences of abuse and violence (including domestic abuse, sexual assault, and human trafficking) when sentencing someone or re-evaluating an old sentence. This bipartisan bill follows similar laws in states like Georgia and Oklahoma.

### INCARCERATION OF SURVIVORS

Many survivors of abuse—especially women—face long prison sentences for actions directly stemming from abuse. Many are coerced by abusers into illegal activity. Some use force to protect themselves or loved ones, or to escape violent situations. Many are never granted the opportunity to present evidence of abuse in court.



*is how long a survivor serving life without parole for second-degree murder of their abusive partner must wait before even applying for clemency.*

### WHAT DOES THE LOUISIANA JSA DO?

The Louisiana Justice for Survivors Act does not provide leniency. It simply entrusts judges to balance accountability with an understanding of abuse and trafficking at the time of the offense. Currently, our mandatory minimum sentencing laws prevent judges from meaningfully considering whether a survivor's actions are directly connected to experiencing abuse. This law would fix that for survivors who meet the law's criteria. With the Justice for Survivors Act, Louisiana can bring safety and justice to survivors and our criminal justice system at large.

### The bill has 4 key components:

- 1. Proof requirement:** Survivors must show, by clear and convincing evidence, that the abuse significantly contributed to the offense they committed.
- 2. Trauma-informed sentencing:** Judges are empowered to impose shorter, more proportional sentences that reflect the impact of abuse while maintaining accountability.
- 3. Review of sentences:** Judges may also review past sentences under this new standard for survivors of domestic abuse, human trafficking, or sexual assault.
- 4. Evidentiary standards:** Courts may consider all relevant evidence, including expert testimony and police records, to corroborate a survivor's history of trauma.

**Most Louisiana Republicans and Democrats support allowing domestic violence victims to raise abuse in sentencing and re-sentencing**



Source: Poll by Preston Robinson, Actionable Intel, 12/16/2025–1/15/2026, n=1,020 registered Louisiana voters.