

COUNCIL for the ECONOMIC

STATUS of WOMEN

Room 400 SW, State Office Building, St. Paul 55155

(612) 296-8590

NEWSLETTER #15

MARCH 1978

IN THIS ISSUE

Personnel Department conducts study of work schedules

Date set for Governor's Conference on Families

Legislation '78

Report released on MINNESOTA WOMEN: INCOME & POVERTY

Council notes:

Evaluation of vocational education

Task Force on Families

Inventory of women's services

public hearing

A public hearing on women and housing will be held Thursday, April 27 at 1:00 PM in Room 57 of the State Office Building, St. Paul.

The hearing will focus particularly on the needs of low-income women, welfare recipients, and single-parent families.

All hearings are open to the public as observers or participants. For more information, or if you wish to testify, please call Nina Rothchild at 296-8590.

* WOMEN'S INFORMATION LINE - CALL TOLL-FREE 1-800-652-9744

WORK SCHEDULES SURVEY REPORT

A high degree of interest in more flexible work arrangements was demonstrated by a recent survey of state employees. The Minnesota Department of Personnel sent out a questionnaire in January to assess interest in either part-time employment or more flexible work hours.

The survey was sent to approximately 3,000 state employees, of whom 1,500 responded. Respondents who indicated an interest in working either 20 hours a week or 30 hours a week were:

	<u>20 Hours</u>	<u>30 Hours</u>
Male	5.6%	6.5%
Female	7.4%	12.5%
TOTAL	13.0%	19.0%

If the sample is representative, and assuming those not responding do not want part-time employment, then there are currently almost 3,000 full-time employees who would be interested in working 30 hours per week or less.

Other data from the questionnaire showed:

- Very few employees were interested in part-time employment without state-contributed fringe benefits, but
- The majority were willing to work part-time with pro-rated benefits.
- Those desiring part-time work tended to be younger (under age 30) although there was no relationship between interest in part-time work and length of service with the state.
- There seemed to be little interest in part-time work during the pre-retirement period (age 51-65).
- About half the respondents were willing to change jobs or location in order to have a part-time job.
- A healthy majority of the respondents (58%) were interested in flexible work hours in full-time employment.
- Those interested in flexible work schedules were evenly divided between males and females.

o o o o o

CONFERENCE DATE SET

Dates for the Governor's Conference on Families, co-sponsored by the Council on the Economic Status of Women and the State Planning Agency, have been set for May 22 and 23. The conference is scheduled for the Sheraton Inn Northwest in Brooklyn Park.

Registration begins April 20 and is open to the public. Inquiries may be sent to Vickie DeSanto, Continuing Education in Social Work, 338 Nolte Center, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455.

legislation '78

STATUS OF COUNCIL-ENDORSED LEGISLATION AT THE END OF THE SESSION:

Inheritance Tax: HF 588/SF 983 (Vanasek/Sieloff) Died in Tax Committee in both houses. Provided for the exclusion from estate tax of one half the value of property held in joint tenancy by a decedent and the decedent's spouse.

* Open Appointments: HF 85/SF 37 (Wenstrom/Luther) Passed. Provides for an open appointment process for state agencies, including boards, commissions, etc. Requires collection, publication and reporting of data on a number of bases, including sex.

* Marriage and Divorce Reform: HF 2027/SF 1826 (Berglin/Davies) Patterned after the Uniform Marriage and Divorce Act, this bill makes irretrievable breakdown the only grounds for a marriage dissolution and removes fault from the economic provisions of a dissolution. It provides standards for property division and for granting maintenance (alimony) and child support. Guidelines for maintenance include the applicant's financial resources, time required for necessary education, the parties' marital living standard, the length of the marriage, the applicant's age and physical and emotional condition, and the other party's ability to support himself and the applicant. Guidelines for property division include recognition of the spouse's contribution as homemaker. Guidelines for child support are based primarily on the best interest of the child. (Present law does not provide any guidelines for economic provisions.) The bill also makes some changes in residency requirements for divorce, separates child support obligations from visitation rights, allows a couple to get a marriage license in any county, and strengthens child support collection procedures. Passed.

Insurance: HR 2194/SF 2254 (Wynia/Spear) Passed out of committee in the House and died in Commerce Committee in the Senate. Prohibited unfair discriminatory practices in the sale, underwriting, and rating of insurance policies. Prohibited certain discrimination on the basis of sex, marital status, or occupation as a homemaker.

* Family Planning: HF 2098/SF 2143 (Berglin/Staples) Passed. Provides for special grants to provide family planning services. Appropriates \$ 1.3 million.

* Battered Women: HF 1904/SF 1689 (Kahn/Lewis) Passed. Amends the 77 law to provide for more than 4 pilot programs for battered women. Appropriates an additional \$ 100,000.

Sliding Fee for Child Care: HF 1951/SF 1880 (Hanson/Spear) Passed the House and referred to the Finance Committee in the Senate. Provides for a sliding fee payment plan for child care. Appropriated \$ 750,000 to the Department of Public Welfare.

* Passed

- * Affirmative Action: HF 1402/SF 1364 (Nelson/Lewis) Passed. Requires a statewide affirmative action program and for agency plans. Provides for expanding eligible lists so as to include protected group members (which includes sex).
- * State Investment Policies: HA 67 (Enebo) Proposal to study whether state investment policies should be altered to prevent state monies from being deposited in financial institutions which violate human rights.
- * Spouse Abuse: HF 883/SF 318 (Cohen/McCutcheon) Passed. Permits peace officers to make arrests upon probable cause in cases of domestic assault. The officer must observe physical abuse which occurred within the preceding 4 hours. Allows for a 24 hour detention period of the arrested person.
- Minimum Wage: SF 1588 (Vega) Died in the Employment Committee in the Senate. No House File. Provided that the Minnesota minimum wage increase over the next 3 years to conform with the federal minimum wage.
- * Tax Credit for Home Child Care: HF 2386/SF 2100 (Abeln/Hughes) Included in the Comprehensive Tax Bill (HF 2250/SF 2051 Kelly/McCutcheon). Provides for a Minnesota income tax credit of \$50 for a full-time homemaker who cares for his/her child or children who are under age 12 in their home. Family income may not exceed \$ 25,000.
- * Refunding of the Council: The Council was renewed and refunded in the Supplemental Appropriations Bill. The Council was refunded through June, 1979 for \$70,000. The expiration date was extended to June, 1981. The bill also expands the Council to include 4 more public members.

The following bills were introduced during the biennium and supported by the Council, but no action was taken:

Certified Professional Secretary: HF 142/SF 47 (Scheid/Knoll)

Evening Child Care: HF 268/SF 196 (Forsythe/Keefe, S.)

Capitol Area Day Care: HF 412/SF 375 (Enebo/Staples)

o o o o o o

COUNCIL REPORT PUBLISHED

The Council's fourth report, MINNESOTA WOMEN: INCOME & POVERTY, has now been released. The report documents the changing demographic and family patterns which have resulted in increasing numbers of women and children living below the poverty line.

Sections of the report include: The Poverty Population, Single-Parent Families, Welfare, Older Women, Conclusions and Recommendations. Copies of the report in limited amounts are available from the Council office.

The lowest yearly median income of any age or sex group is women over age 65 -- about \$1,900 annually. That figure is half what men in the same age group receive.

COUNCIL NOTES:

VOC-ED EVALUATION

A grant of \$16,000 in federal funds has been received by the Council in order to monitor and evaluate sex discrimination and sex stereotyping in vocational education in Minnesota. Goals of the project are to: 1) assess the extent of sex bias, sex discrimination, and sex-role stereotyping in vocational education; 2) evaluate programs to reduce or eliminate sex bias; and 3) monitor laws related to sex discrimination in vocational education.

Joining the Council staff to implement this program is Dr. Lois McGovern who recently completed a pilot project at the Red Wing AVTI concerning women in non-traditional occupational training.

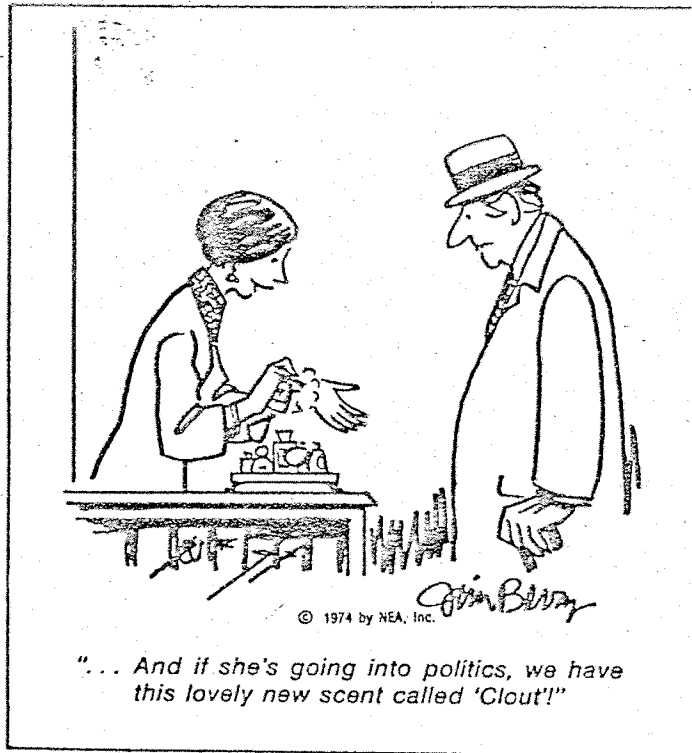
o o o o o

TASK FORCE ON
FAMILIES

A Governor's Task Force on Families is soon to be named, and a grant of \$15,000 has been awarded to the Council to provide staff and services for the Task Force.

The purpose of the Task Force is to study how public laws and policies affect families in Minnesota. It will provide follow-up from the Conference on Families to be held in May, and issue reports and recommendations for legislative and administrative action.

o o o o o



o o o o o

INVENTORY OF
WOMEN'S SERVICES

A Council contract with the Minnesota Council on Foundations will result in an inventory of women's services throughout the state of Minnesota. The purpose of the inventory is to provide private sector funders with information on current programs for women so that they can make informed decisions on grant requests. Free-lance writer Elin Skinner is compiling the information for the inventory.