

Legislative Commission on the Economic Status of Women

Newsletter #139

State Office Building, St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

June 1989

(612) 296-8590 or 1-800-652-9747

IN THIS ISSUE

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY: 1989 SESSION, a summary of the Commission's endorsed legislation which did and did not pass, along with additional legislation of pertaining to women.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

During the legislative interim, the Commission will hold a series of public hearings around the state to listen to women's concerns. Information gathered at these hearings will be used to formulate the Commission's legislative proposals for the 1990 session and to advise the legislature and governor on areas of concern regarding women's economic status. Hearings will focus on any aspect of women's economic status, but topics of special concern will include implementation of local government pay equity, the child care system, child support, implementation of the PATHS welfare reform program and rural women.

Hearings are planned for July through November. The Commission welcomes suggestions regarding hearing locations and topics. Please call the Commission office to request that a hearing be held in your area.

Hearing times and dates will be announced in this newsletter or you may call the Commission office for more information.

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY: 1989 SESSION

COMMISSION ENDORSED LEGISLATION WHICH PASSED

WOMEN'S PROGRAMS

COMMISSION ON THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN: Provides continued funding for the Commission on the Economic Status of Women. Increases funding base to provide benefits to all commission staff. Appropriates \$50,000 for the biennium to the Commission on the Economic Status of Women for a study of a coordinated child care system. (HF 372/CHAP 335)

BATTERED WOMEN'S PROGRAMS: Appropriates \$1.2 million as a result of increasing marriage license and divorce filing fees and from the general fund to the Department of Corrections. (HF 1759/CHAP 282)

DISPLACED HOMEMAKER PROGRAMS: Appropriates \$952,000 for the biennium from the marriage license and divorce filing fees to the Department of Jobs and Training. (HF 1759/CHAP 282)

SEXUAL ASSAULT PROGRAMS: Appropriates \$150,000 for the biennium as a grant to a sexual assault coalition and an additional \$450,000 for sexual assault victims programs to fund existing programs and help create three new victim programs. (HF 1759/CHAP 282)

ELIMINATE DEDICATED REVENUE FUNDING: Eliminates the dedicated use of marriage and divorce filing fees collected by the courts to fund displaced homemaker and battered women's programs. These fees continue to be collected but the programs will be funded from the general fund. (HF 372/CHAP 335)

FAMILY SUPPORT

FAMILY INVESTMENT PLAN (WELFARE REFORM): Authorizes the Department of Human Services, in consultation with other state departments, to plan and design an overhaul of the public assistance programs supporting families with children. Authorizes seeking federal approval for the changes. "Field trials" will be conducted to test policies, methods and costs. Goals of the program are to support a family's transition to financial independence; consolidate and simplify public assistance programs; prevent long-term dependence; and allow families to keep a greater portion of their earnings when they become employed. (HF 1759/CHAP 282)

FAMILY PLANNING: Appropriates \$11 million to the Health Department's Maternal Child Health program. This appropriation affects five programs, including family planning and preventive medical care for teenagers at risk of early pregnancy. Grants are made to community health agencies. (HF 1759/CHAP 282)

CHILD SUPPORT: Discontinues the five-county automatic income withholding pilot projects for non-AFDC cases, but eventually expands automatic income withholding to all counties in the state for cases collected by the child support enforcement office by November 1, 1990. Begins the process of computerizing the state's child support collection system. (HF 1759/CHAP 282)

RESPIRE CARE: Appropriates \$90,000 for a resource center on caregiver support and respite care services. (HF 1759/CHAP 282)

CHILD CARE

CHILD CARE FUND: Appropriates an additional \$10 million to the state's Child Care Fund, which subsidizes child care costs for AFDC families and low-income working families. (HF 1759/CHAP 282)

RESOURCE AND REFERRAL, SERVICE DEVELOPMENT GRANTS: Appropriates an additional \$900,000 for the Child Care Resource and Referral programs. Appropriates an additional \$600,000 for Child Care Service Development Grants, which go to family day care homes and child care centers for start-up and improvement costs. (HF 1759/CHAP 282)

POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS: Creates a new \$4 million fund for low-income post-secondary students who need assistance with child care costs. The fund is administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB). Students will receive subsidies for their expenses while in class and may receive help for up to 20 employment hours. (HF 1747/CHAP 293)

CHILD CARE STUDY: Appropriates \$50,000 for the biennium to the Commission on the Economic Status of Women for a study of a coordinated child care system. (HF 372/CHAP 335)

WORKPLACE ISSUES

PAY EQUITY: Allows the results of pay equity job evaluations and pay equity reports to be used as evidence in any proceeding or action alleging discrimination. (HF 456/CHAP 223)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES: Appropriates \$400,000 to the Women's Economic Development Corporation, a non-profit organization which helps women develop new businesses. (HF 372/335)

EDUCATION

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE POLICIES: Requires each local school board to adopt a written sexual harassment and sexual violence policy which applies to pupils, teachers, administrators and other school personnel. Policies must include reporting procedures and disciplinary actions for violators. The policy must be conspicuously posted in each building and printed in each school's student handbook. Requires the commissioner of education to maintain and make a model policy available to schools boards. Each school board must submit a copy of the sexual harassment and sexual violence policy to the state board of education. (HF 654/CHAP 329)

Requires the governing board of the Minnesota State High School League to adopt a sexual harassment and sexual violence policy for participants in league activities. (HF 654/CHAP 329)

HIGHER EDUCATION

PART-TIME STUDENTS: Appropriates \$151.7 million in state scholarships and grants, of which approximately \$2 million will be used for part-time student grants. (HF 1747/CHAP 293)

WOMEN'S ATHLETICS: Appropriates money to improve the programs and resources available to women and to ensure that University of Minnesota campuses are in compliance with Title IX. Includes at least \$1.5 million to the Duluth, Morris, Crookston and Waseca campuses for women's athletic programs. (HF 1747/CHAP 293)

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE: Requires the governing board of each public post-secondary system and each public post-secondary institution to adopt written policies regarding sexual harassment and sexual violence. The policy must apply to students and employees and must provide information about their rights and duties. It must include reporting procedures and disciplinary actions against violators. Private schools which enroll students who receive financial aid must also adopt such policies. The HECB coordinates the policy development. (HF 1747/CHAP 293)

COMMISSION ENDORSED LEGISLATION WHICH DID NOT PASS

AFDC: Increase AFDC grants. (HF 650)

AFDC: Require the county to notify a former AFDC recipient when Revenue Recapture is being used to intercept a tax refund to collect child support arrearages and to pay the recipient first for child support owed before collecting on the county debt. (SF 664)

PAY EQUITY: Define pay equity implementation. Outlines procedures for determining local government compliance with the Pay Equity Act. Provides mechanism for resolving differences between local governments and the state regarding pay equity implementation. (HF 1198)

CHILD CARE: Appropriates \$5 million to provide grants to child care programs to increase compensation for child care workers. (HF 474)

CHILD CARE: Continue funding for school-based pre-kindergarten programs and fund extended day child care programs. (HF 616)

CHILD CARE TAX CREDITS: Provides tax credits and/or other incentives to employers who pay for or subsidize licensed child care services for their employee. (HF 117)

GENDER BALANCE IN STATE AGENCIES: Requires gender balance on multi-member state agency boards. (HF 741)

FAMILY/MEDICAL LEAVE: Require employers to offer family and medical leave which allows leaves of absences for the employee's sickness or children's sickness. Allows use of an employee's sick leave for caring for a sick child. (HF 367)

TAX ISSUES

Note: The following provisions of the Omnibus Tax Bill were passed by the legislature and sent to the governor. The governor has vetoed the bill and will call a special session of the legislature to write a new tax bill. Although these provisions are not in question, it is possible they could be changed or deleted in the new tax bill.

TAX CREDIT: Expands the dependent care tax credit to allow families with incomes of \$13,350 or less to take the maximum credit and increases the credit available for families earning more than \$13,350. Raises the maximum family income eligible for the credit to \$27,000. Requires that the income levels considered eligible for the credit be indexed for inflation. (HF 1734)

TAX LIABILITY AFTER DIVORCE: Stipulates that married couples filing joint or combined tax returns who later divorce have proportionate shares of the tax liability based on their income, as if they had filed separate returns. (HF 1734)

OTHER LEGISLATION AFFECTING THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN

PAY EQUITY: Allows Ramsey County to exceed its normal local levy limit base by \$1.7 million for implementing its pay equity plan and adds \$862,000 in 1990 and 1991 to the levy limit base. (HF 1734)

GOLF CLUB MEMBERSHIPS: Expands the "open space" tax law which disallows tax deferments if private clubs discriminate by sex among their members. Clubs cannot restrict privileges of one spouse who is covered by a spouse's membership, unless that restriction is to have no access at all. (HF 162)

GENDER BIAS IN CHARITABLE GAMBLING: Requires the Revenue Department, while auditing charitable gambling activities, to include in their reports potential gender bias in activities funded from the proceeds of charitable gambling. The findings must be reported to the legislature in January of 1991. (HF 1631)

NATIONAL GUARD: Requires the Department of Military Affairs to make a special effort to recruit and retain women and minorities in the guard through the use of a tuition reimbursement and reenlistment bonus program. (HF 372/CHAP 335)

NURSING OUTREACH: Appropriates \$170,000 for a nursing education outreach program and appoints a task force to study the need for and supply of nurses and the adequacy of access to nursing programs. (HF 1747)

HEALTHSPAN: Creates a commission to develop a system of estimating the number of Minnesotans without health insurance, to prepare for a new state-run insurance program which would provide basic and affordable health care coverage. Once implemented, persons not covered by any type of insurance must be enrolled. Premiums will be based on family income and will range from zero to 100 percent of the costs. (HF 150)

SMALL BUSINESSES: Creates a Small Business Procurement Commission to study the small business procurement procedures in Minnesota to assure that minority and women's businesses and organizations know of the commission's existence and purpose, and to determine the existence and extent of discrimination in Minnesota business, trade, and industry. The commission must report by Jan. 31, 1990. (HF 1443)

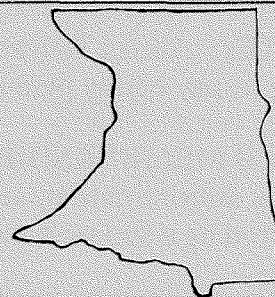
LOTTERY WINNERS: Lottery winners who owe child support to a child support collection agency will have that amount deducted from their winnings. (HF 66)

FAMILY LAW: Requires the court to modify visitation when a non-custodial parent chronically and unreasonably fails to comply with court-ordered visitation, makes changes in how custody decisions will be made and requires the court in determining custody to consider whether domestic abuse has occurred. Also allows parties to agree to limit or modify maintenance if the court reviews the stipulation and finds that it is fair and equitable. (CHAP 729)

HUMAN RIGHTS: Extends protections regarding discrimination based on familial status to pregnant women and persons in the process of securing legal custody of a minor child. (HF 950/CHAP 280)

"CRACK MOMS": Defines a pregnant woman who has engaged in habitual or excessive use of certain controlled substances as a chemically dependent person for purposes of civil commitment. Appropriates \$90,000 for treatment. (HF 59/CHAP 290)

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85 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

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**LEGISLATIVE
SUMMARY:
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