

BIENNIAL REPORT: 1997-98

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Legislative Commission on the Economic Status of Women

December 1998

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Commission on the Economic Status of Women

Biennial Report December 1998

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COMMISSION ON THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN

The Commission gathers and disseminates information and advises the legislature through the following activities:

- Public hearings are conducted at the State Capitol and throughout the state. Hearings may be focused on one topic or they may be open as to topic.
- Task forces are established from time to time when more intensive study is needed on a particular topic.
- Research includes data gathered and analyzed by the staff from a variety of sources, including surveys, state agencies, the U.S. Bureau of the Census and the U.S. Department of Labor.
- Reports are provided to the legislature and the governor, including recommendations for legislative and administrative actions to improve the economic status of women.
- The Commission provides information and assistance to the legislature as it considers proposals affecting women.
- Public information is provided through the Commission's publications and by responding to requests for information from a variety of individuals and organizations. Commission staff provide basic information about women's legal and economic rights as well as statistical data about women in Minnesota. The Commission has also developed a website which includes electronic versions of all Commission brochures, data on women in the Minnesota legislature, Census data on Minnesota Counties and the *Guide to Child Support and Spousal Maintenance Cost of Living Adjustments*.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION 1997-98

Representatives

Karen Clark
Betty Folliard
Loren Jennings
Bud Nornes
Barb Sykora, *vice chair*

Senators

Linda Berglin
Janet Johnson
Becky Lourey, *chair*
Pat Piper
Claire Robling

Staff

Aviva Breen, Executive Director
Cheryl Hoium, Assistant Director
Roberta Gibbons, Communications and Policy Specialist

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Assistance to legislators and legislative staff. The Commission provides statistical information about women, background information on legislative issues and information about women's resources and organizations on request from legislators and legislative staff.

Interaction with executive branch agencies. The Commission provides information to state agencies and works with agencies in identifying data and other information to assess the impact on women of agency actions and programs and in monitoring and providing assistance with the implementation of legislation and programs that serve women's needs.

Public hearings. Public hearings, in conjunction with statistical research, form the basis for Commission reports and recommendations. Hearings may be on a particular topic or open to any concern participants wish to express about the economic status of women. Each year the Commission holds hearings in various locations throughout the state.

Public information. The commission receives many requests for information from the press, private corporations and foundations, women's organizations and the general public. Information is provided through:

- Monthly newsletters, brochures and other publications and reports;
- Press releases about legislation, reports and hearings;
- Participation in seminars, panels, workshops and advisory committees;
- Review of grant proposals related to the economic status of women;
- Maintenance of the Commission's website at www.commissions.leg.state.mn.us/lcesw
- Resource and referral information on a variety of subjects relating to the economic status of women. A toll-free number is available for callers outside the metro-area. Requests break down into the following categories:
 - ◆ Data, including poverty and labor force statistics, demographics and requests for other statistical information;
 - ◆ Marriage dissolution, child support, spousal maintenance, domestic violence;
 - ◆ Welfare, housing, education;
 - ◆ Credit, insurance, starting a business and other financial matters; and,
 - ◆ Employment discrimination, parental leave and rights of pregnant employees, labor laws and other employment related questions.

MEETINGS AND HEARINGS

March 10, 1997 St. Paul, MN	Business Meeting State Capitol
June 25, 1997 St. Paul, MN	Review of Legislation State Office Building
July 29, 1997 Fergus Falls, MN	Open Hearing Otter Tail Power Company Community Room
November 20, 1997 St. Paul, MN	Teen Pregnancy Arlington High School, St. Paul
December 3, 1997 Minneapolis, MN	Child Care Issues Brian Coyle Center, Tour of Child Care Centers Commission Business Meeting
May 20, 1998 St. Paul, MN	Commission Business Meeting State Office Building
July 1, 1998 Minnetonka, MN	Community Supports for Women Minnetonka City Hall
September 1, 1998 St. Paul, MN	Non Traditional Work for Women St. Paul Technical College
October 22, 1998 Cloquet, MN	Welfare Reform and the Economic Status of Women Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College
December 10, 1998 St. Paul, MN	Legislative Issues State Office Building
December 18, 1998 St. Paul, MN	Welfare Reform (with Senate Health and Family Security Subcommittee on Welfare Oversight) State Capitol

LEGISLATIVE PRINCIPLES

Each session the Commission works on legislative issues which improve the economic status of women in the state. The Commission's legislative principles are listed below. Summaries of related legislation that passed during the 1997 and 1998 legislative sessions are included in the appendices of this report.

COMMISSION ON THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN

- Support adequate funding to enable the Commission to fulfill its statutory mandate.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

- Support public assistance programs that provide for the basic needs of women and their children.
- Support education and training programs that allow women to achieve self-sufficiency.

CHILD SUPPORT

- Support child support levels that are adequate and appropriate.
- Support strong, fair enforcement of child support orders.

HOUSING

- Support programs that promote the availability of safe, affordable housing.

CHILD CARE

- Support programs which help families with child care costs while parents are working or in training or educational programs.
- Support the development of quality child care programs throughout the state
- Support the development of other early childhood care and education programs that nurture children and help parents with parenting.

EDUCATION

- Support sex equity efforts at all levels of education and in all educational programs.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Support the development of women-owned businesses in the state.

DISPLACED HOMEMAKER PROGRAMS

- Support continued funding for programs that enable displaced homemakers to re-enter the workforce with adequate job training and to obtain employment that can be self-supporting.

WOMEN'S HEALTH

- Support programs promoting the prevention and cure of health conditions specific to women.
- Support access to health insurance for all women and families, regardless of income.
- Support health and wellness programs such as sex education, adolescent health care, family planning, teenage pregnancy prevention, caregiver support services and nutrition counseling.

VIOLENCE

- Support funding for shelters, community services, transitional housing or other support services that can help victims of domestic violence or sexual assault.
- Support continued efforts to strengthen the enforcement of laws regarding domestic abuse, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking and other crimes that disproportionately affect women.
- Support programs that focus on prevention of violence against women.
- Support effective, appropriate programming for female offenders.

CHILDREN'S ISSUES

- Promote creation of programs that improve the health, safety and wellness of Minnesota's children and their families.

PUBLICATIONS

The Commission published the following materials in 1997 and 1998:

Brochures:

Updated and reprinted

Parental Leave, Family Leave and Pregnancy Discrimination

Commission on the Economic Status of Women

Employment Rights for Women

The Legal Right to Child Support

Marriage Dissolution and the Law

Women and Finances

Women's Rights in Marriage

Data:

New

Women on Minnesota Soil and Water Conservation Boards

Children in Minnesota: Household, Poverty and County Tables

Women in the Minnesota Legislature, 1922-1998

Women in Public Office, 1998

Updated and reprinted

Minnesota Women in the Twentieth Century

Overview of the Economic Status of Women

Other:

Updated and reprinted

A Guide to Child Support and Spousal Maintenance Cost-of Living-Adjustments

Are You Entitled to Family Leave? (poster)

PUBLICATIONS, *continued*

Internet

The following publications have been published on the Commission's website
(at www.commissions.leg.state.mn.us/lcesw.)

Legal Fact Sheets (These documents are electronic versions of Commission brochures)

- Finances
- Parental Leave
- Rights in Marriage
- Marriage Dissolution
- Employment Rights
- Child Support

The Guide to Child Support and Cost-of-Living Adjustments

1990 Census Data for Minnesota

Detailed tables by on population topics by sex, race and geography

Women in Public Office

- Number of Women in the Minnesota Legislature
- Women in Elected Office -1998 Election Results
- Women in the Minnesota Legislature by Session
- Women in the Minnesota Legislature by Name
- Women in the Minnesota Legislature by Geography
(in cooperation with Legislative Geographic Information Services (GIS) office)

Newsletter

The newsletter provides announcements of Commission meetings and publications as well as summaries of legislative proposals, report summaries, statistical information and other information on the economic status of women. The newsletter, which is published about 10 times per year, is mailed to a list of approximately 1,300 readers. Every member of the legislature receives the newsletter. Newsletter topics for the last two years are listed below.

1997

218	2/97-3/97	Poverty in the U.S., 1995
219	4/97-5/97	MN Vital Statistics, 1995 and Historical Data
220	6/97-7/97	Legislative Summary 1997
221	8/97-9/97	MN/US Data, Soil & Water Boards, Women's Programs Map, County Poverty and Household Income
222	10/97-11/97	Cost of Raising Children, U.S. 1995
223	12/97-1/98	Facts about U.S. Women, 1995 & 1996

1998

224	2/98-3/98	Income of Married Couple Families, U.S. 1996
225	4/98	Wage Gap, U.S. 1996
226	5/98	Legislative Summary 1998
227	6/98	Marital Status and Living Arrangements, U.S. 1996
228	7/98	Women in the Labor Force, U.S. 1960-1997
229	8/98	Households and Families, U.S. 1997
230	9/98	Women's Educational Attainment, U.S. and Minnesota, 1997 & Historical Data
231	10/98	Age in Minnesota and the U.S., 1990 & 1997
232	12/98	Women in Elected Office, 1998

BIENNIAL BUDGET

	FY 1998	FY 1999	TOTAL
PAYROLL	147.8	151.5	299.3
FRINGE	29.1	29.8	58.9
REPAIR & MAINTENANCE	1.5	1.5	3.0
PRINTING	4.0	4.0	8.0
PURCHASED SERVICES	8.0	8.0	16.0
COMMUNICATIONS			
POSTAGE	3.3	3.3	6.6
TELEPHONE	1.6	1.6	3.2
MEMBER TRAVEL	1.2	1.2	2.4
PER DIEM	2.5	2.5	5.0
STAFF TRAVEL			
IN STATE	1.0	1.0	2.0
OUT OF STATE	0.0	2.0	2.0
SUPPLIES	1.2	1.2	2.4
PUBLICATIONS	.8	.8	1.6
EQUIPMENT	.7	.7	1.4
TOTAL	202.7	209.1	411.8

Appendices

Appendix I:	Legislative Summary 1997
Appendix II:	Legislative summary 1998
Appendix III:	Statutory Mandate



Commission on the Economic Status of Women

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Enclosed is the biennial report of the Legislative Commission on the Economic Status of Women as required by Minnesota Statutes 3.9222

HOUSE

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Betty Folliard
Loren Jennings
Bud Nornes
Barb Sykora, *vice chair*

SENATE

Janet Johnson
Pat Piper
Becky Lourey, *chair*
Linda Berglin
Claire Robling

STAFF

Aviva Breen, *director*
Cheryl Hoium, *assistant director*
Roberta Gibbons, *communications and policy specialist*