

# IoWoman

## IOWA COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

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### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RESIGNS

Alice McKee, executive director of the Commission on the Status of Women for the past two years, resigned her position in October. Her resignation, effective November 20, was accepted with regret by the Commission members who expressed their appreciation for the dedication and expertise she brought to her role as the first executive director of the Commission.

Ms. McKee explained that she was resigning in order to further explore other options for her own future, and said that she plans to continue advocating the advancement of equal opportunities for women as a consultant and speaker.

As executive director Ms. McKee conducted the Commission's Study of Insurance Practices That Affect Women, developed the Humanities conference series on the family unit, developed and implemented Commission office procedures, expanded the Roster of Qualified Women, supervised the planning, development and staffing of the initial phase of the Employment Study Project, supervised the publication of the IoWoman and other Commission publications, spoke to numerous groups and organizations around the state on behalf of the Commission, and currently serves on the Governor's Task Force on Early Childhood Development and the Iowa Manpower Services Council in addition to other community boards.

### COMMISSION MEETING ACTION

A legislative priorities program that will focus on correcting insurance inequities and employment discrimination during the upcoming year was adopted by the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women at its regular meeting Nov. 1, in Des Moines. The legislative program for 1976 is as follows:

#### *Insurance*

1. Elimination of present inequities based on sex or marital status in availability, coverage and benefits.
2. Legislation to recognize the economic loss of the homemaker in no-fault insurance.
3. Legislation to correct the inequities of only a three-year age setback for females in determining life insurance premiums, when mortality tables by sex indicate that female life expectancy exceeds male life expectancy by considerably more than three years.
4. Adequate enforcement authority to eliminate unfair discrimination based on sex in insurance.
5. Comprehensive health insurance for women including maternity coverage as a standard feature on all health expense insurance policies with the result that the costs of that coverage are spread over the entire insured population.
6. Disability income insurance for part-time workers and homemakers.

### *Employment*

1. Legislation to eliminate discrimination in retirement plans and benefits.
2. Legislation to correct inequities as found by the Legislative Study Committee on Discriminatory Employment Practices in the public sector.
3. Legislation to provide for flexible hours employment in state government.

### *Education*

1. Legislation to enable the enforcement of the anti-discriminatory provisions of the School Standards Act as passed in 1974.
2. Legislation to allow the Higher Education Facilities Commission to provide grants to part-time students under the Iowa Tuition Grants Program.
3. Legislation to provide for the education and training of dependent spouse in dissolution of marriage laws.

### *Children's Rights*

1. Establishment of a statutory child care agency.
2. Legislation to provide for child support payments from the estate of the supporting parent.
3. Encourage practice of the Department of Social Services line item budgeting to specify child care funds.
4. Legislation to provide funds for developmental child care to replace cuts made by the State Department of Social Services Title XX plan and allow continuance of tax support through sliding fee schedules for families with children in day care.
5. Legislation to provide 100% of need to AFDC recipients.
6. Legislation to increase appropriations for employment training of AFDC recipients.
7. Legislation to correct inequities as found by the Legislative Study Committee on Juvenile Justice.

### *Correctional Institutions for Female Offenders*

1. Legislation to appropriate funds for community-based corrections facilities throughout the state for female offenders, to equalize rehabilitation and educational opportunities between female and male offenders.

### *Rape*

1. Legislation to revise and consolidate laws relating to sex abuse and providing for more realistic penalties.
2. Legislation to recognize forceable rape by one spouse against the other as a crime.
3. Legislation to provide for the elimination of the resistance requirement.

### **UPCOMING APPOINTMENTS**

Governor Ray will be appointing people to the following boards and commissions soon. Consult the Iowa Code or the Iowa Official Register for more specific information on the functions of and qualifications for each board or commission.

Judicial Qualifications Commission	Public Instruction Board
Developmental Disabilities Council	Economic Advisory Council
Judicial Nominating Commission	Manpower Planning Council
United Nations Day Committee	Manpower Services Council

Please express your interest in being appointed to a board or commission to the Office of the Governor, State Capitol Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319, and send a copy to the Commission Office.

## APPOINTMENTS

Governor Ray has recently appointed the following women to serve on state boards and commissions: Pending Senate Confirmation -- *Marian Haß*, Waterloo, to the State Board of Watchmaking Examiners; *Constance C. Foster*, Des Moines, and *Fredine Branson*, Iowa City, to the Iowa Housing Finance Authority; *Sister Bernadine Pieper*, Ottumwa, *Grace Rasmussen*, Manilla, *Helen Reichart*, Monticello, and *Nancy G. Thompson*, Des Moines, to the State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners; *Katherine Stroud*, Des Moines, *Bertha J. Kirkwood*, Ankeny, and *Martha Peck*, Fort Madison, to the State Board of Optometry Examiners; *Marie Holtz*, Grand Junction, to the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners; *Lois Sherman*, Cedar Falls, *Phyllis J. Peters*, Sioux City, and *Dorcas Speer*, Ames, to the State Board of Nursing Home Examiners; *Evelyne Villines*, Des Moines, to the Iowa Civil Rights Commission; *Beverly B. Everett*, New Sharon, to the D.E.Q. Board of Certification for Water Works; and *Janet Johnson*, Des Moines, to the Board of Parole.

Non-Senate Confirmation -- *Susan Morgan*, Lamoni, and *Bernice Sanache*, Tama, to the Task Force on Early Childhood Development; *Dorothy Buckingham*, Carson, and *Mary Berdell*, Waterloo, to the Iowa Crime Commission; *Mary Kennedy*, Cedar Falls, to the State Board of Health; *Mary Jones*, Burlington, *Joyce Montag*, Creston, *Leone K. Hopson*, Des Moines, *Janet Shipton*, Iowa City, *Janet Specht*, Marshalltown, *Barbara Chaldy*, Ames, and *Marguerite S. Wright*, Dubuque, to the Comprehensive Health Planning Advisory Council.

## INSURANCE HEARINGS

A public hearing on the regulations concerning discrimination on the basis of sex in the insurance business was held on October 14, before the Commissioner of Insurance, William A. Huff. In his opening remarks Commissioner Huff remarked that the insurance study prepared by the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women was instrumental in forming the proposed regulations.

Alice McKee, executive director, testified on behalf of the Commission in support of the proposed regulations. McKee listed several problem areas that are still of great concern. These include the present lack of protection for the part-time worker, the present lack of disability insurance for the homemaker, and the need for comprehensive health insurance for women.

In the area of health insurance, McKee said, "until women can be fully insured against the medical expense of childbearing it cannot be said that women are fully covered as are men."

The new proposed regulations do deal with two important issues relative to pregnancy. The first is the extension of maternity benefits, when otherwise available, to individuals and the second is the prohibitions against treating complications of pregnancy different from any other illness. McKee urged adoption of the regulations as proposed and commended the Insurance Department in its effort to prohibit sex discrimination.

Several individuals and groups including representatives from the National Organization for Women and the Iowa Women's Political Caucus also testified in favor of the new regulations.

The testimony from the hearings has been reviewed and as of this week, another hearing has tentatively been scheduled for late December.

## MEET YOUR COMMISSIONERS

*With this issue the IoWoman begins a new feature. A member of the Commission will be profiled in each issue in an effort to familiarize IoWoman readers with the individuals who comprise the Commission. Our first profile is on Cristine Wilson, chairperson of the Commission.*

"It has been deeply gratifying for me to watch this agency, this Commission, grow from a staffless, closet sized room (containing one desk, one file cabinet, and no chair) to the present competent staff that has and is enabling this Commission to make a real impact on the state through research on insurance and employment, conferences on the family and on health, and numerous publications covering a variety of concerns to women."

These are the words of Cristine Wilson as she reflects on her experience as a member of the Commission on the Status of Women since 1969. She became chairperson in 1972. Her activities outside Commission work include enrollment at Drake University Law School and together with her husband, raising a two-year-old son. Before entering law school, she was a teacher at Franklin Junior High School in Des Moines. Cris, who is 30, holds a B.A. from Grinnell College and an M.A. from the University of Iowa. She is a life-long resident of Des Moines.

Expressing her outlook for the future work of the Commission Cris noted: "The Commission is in a unique position to advance the needs and concerns of women in its development of close communication with the other state agencies that have an effect on the lives of women either through their policy making and enforcement capabilities, or through their role as an employer of women. I know the Commission will continue to develop and perform an increasingly valuable service in improving the status of Iowa women."

## DRAKE SPORTS

The Women's Athletic Department of Drake University in Des Moines will award 30 tuition and 10 room and board scholarships totaling \$96,500 to eligible women athletes next year. The sports covered include basketball, track, tennis, volleyball and gymnastics.

## SEARCH FOR NEW DIRECTOR

The Iowa Commission on the Status of Women is seeking an executive director with administrative, managerial and budgeting experience. Preferred background in public speaking, writing and public relations. Interested persons should contact the Commission office, 515/281-5952. Deadline for applications is December 10. An equal opportunity employer.

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