

Thomas J. Vilsack, Governor • Sally J. Pederson, Lt. Governor
Charlotte Nelson, Executive Director
Lucas State Office Building • Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Telephone: (515) 281-4461, (800) 558-4427
E-mail: icsw@compuserve.com
Fax: (515) 242-6119



IOWA
COMMISSION
ON THE
STATUS
OF WOMEN

January 15, 1999

1999 Iowa Commission on the Status of Women Legislative Priorities to the Governor and the 78th General Assembly

The Iowa Commission on the Status of Women (ICSW) has formulated a program that it deems necessary to meet important human needs and to eliminate inequities for women, which will benefit all citizens of Iowa. As **priority areas** being proposed to the Governor and General Assembly for 1999, the ICSW supports:

- Naming the Old Historical Building in the Capitol Complex after Ola Babcock Miller, the first female to be elected Iowa Secretary of State and the founder of the Iowa State Patrol.
- Increased funding for displaced homemaker/Iowans in Transition program grants through the ICSW to serve more individuals and to keep up with the rising costs of services.
- Development of a plan to achieve pay equity for employees in private industry thereby eliminating wage discrimination on the basis of gender.
- Increased state funding for community treatment programs for women convicted of nonviolent crimes.
- Restoration of state funding to the FY 1996 level of \$950,000 for the Legal Services Grants Program administered by the Office of the Attorney General.
- Legislation requiring insurance plans that cover prescriptions to cover prescriptive contraceptives.
- Development of preventive programs, early identification, and intervention for adolescent females.
- Continued implementation and enhanced funding of safeguards that FIP recipients involved in an education and training program to acquire skills needed to obtain a well-paying job will not be forced into the job market prior to completing that education or training.
- State funding to provide staff and support for the provision of technical assistance on educational equity for school districts and to monitor implementation of Iowa's multicultural, nonsexist curriculum requirement as well as Title IX.
- Increased funding for elderly service, including support programs for caregivers, such as respite and adult day care, especially relative to care of disabled or elderly persons in their own homes for as long as possible.

- Elimination of gender discrimination in the *Code of Iowa* as a follow-up to recommendations in the *50 States Report* and legislative changes in the 1980s.
- Amending several *Code of Iowa* chapters relative to violence against women:
 - a. Clarifying the *Code of Iowa* so that sexual assault with an object is considered a sexual assault;
 - b. Amending *Code of Iowa* Chapter 236 to clarify legality of extending protection orders beyond one year;
 - c. Amending *Code of Iowa* Chapter 709.4 Section 3 to include additional substances that are not classified as "controlled," and to delete the provision that the substance was consumed without the participant's knowledge;
 - d. Clarifying the definition of intent in *Code of Iowa* Chapter 709.1, Section 1, so that sexual gratification need not be proven as an intent of the sexual assault offender;
 - e. Changing "participant" to "person" or "individual" in *Code of Iowa* Section 709 to avoid any implication that a victim somehow agreed to participate in the crime of sexual assault;
 - f. Redefining *Code of Iowa* Section 229A.2, Subsection 3, to specify that any sexually violent behavior would meet the definition of "mental abnormality";
 - g. Striking *Code of Iowa* Section 229A.2 Subsection 4--criterion for definition of predatory that the predator has established a relationship with the victim for the purpose of victimization; and
 - h. Amendments to the *Code of Iowa* to clarify the interplay between mandatory child abuse reporting and victim counselor/client privilege.
- Legislative action on child care in Iowa with a focus on employment-related child care issues, including:
 - a. Measures designed to guarantee affordable, quality child care, in particular for women seeking training and/or employment;
 - b. Adjusting upward the income guidelines to qualify for child care reimbursement to 185 percent of poverty level;
 - c. Adequate compensation, including benefits, for child care workers;
 - d. Need-based child care centers of adequate size at state educational institutions;
 - e. Increased funding for child care subsidy programs for low-income Iowans;
 - f. Local Child Care Resource and Referral services for parents, providers, and employers and expanding core services by including a Single Point of Access service for parents needing child care assistance;
 - g. Increased training and education for child caregivers/funding for professional development training;
 - h. Funding for family child care "home consultants" to work in targeted areas to increase the capacity and improve the quality of child care for low-income working families; and
 - i. Restructuring of the four child care programs at the Department of Human Services into one, with funding if necessary.



January 15, 1999

1999 Iowa Commission on the Status of Women Proposals to the Governor and the 78th General Assembly

The Iowa Commission on the Status of Women endorses the following proposals, which are coded for legislative action (L), administrative action (A), and/or study (S).

NOTE: The proposals are not in order of importance; priorities are in bold.

Caregiving

In 1990, Iowa ranked #1 in the percentage of population over 85 years of age, #2 in the percentage of population over 75 years of age, and #3 in the percentage of population over 65 years of age. As the baby boom generation gets older, the need for both paid and unpaid caregivers will be at an increasing demand. In 1995, the average hourly wage for paid caregivers, 89.8 percent of whom are women in positions of nursing aide/orderly, was just \$6.77 with few benefits and high turnover. A typical caregiver for dependent adults is a 57-year-old woman who has been forced to terminate her employment and benefits to assume the role of family caregiver. Caregivers often do not recognize this label for themselves. They gain training only on the job. To address the needs of paid and unpaid caregivers for dependent adults, the ICSW supports:

- (L) 1. **Increased funding for elderly service, including support programs for caregivers, such as respite and adult day care, especially relative to care of disabled or elderly persons in their own homes for as long as possible.**
- (L) 2. Maintaining the increased funding for statewide implementation by the Department of Elder Affairs of integrated case management programs for the frail elderly.
- (L) 3. Increased funding for statewide expansion to all counties of the Medicaid Home and Community-based waiver for the elderly to make services available for in-home care including provision of meals and nutrition consultation by a registered dietitian, adult day care, emergency response system, respite care, hospice, etc. (in any integrated case management program).
- (L) 4. Legislative action that increases pay for caregivers who serve as nurse aides.
- (L) 5. Legislation to assure protection of vulnerable persons who are being abused but who do not fit within Iowa's current criteria.

- (L) 6. Amendment of state tax policy in the *Code of Iowa* Chapter 422.9(2)(e) regarding tax deduction to include spouse, brother, and sister for whom in-home care is given.
- (A) 7. The pilot project that promotes nurse aide recruitment and retention.
- (A) 8. Opportunities for specialization certificates for professional caregivers.
- (S) 9. Exploration of ways each Area Agency on Aging addresses issues relating to caregivers, including training, respite care, hospice, definitions, and advocates.
- (S) 10. A study of issues related to the awarding of guardianships and conservatorships taking into account the rights and needs of the parties involved.

Economics

In 1993, the median income for females in Iowa was 68 cents to every \$1 earned by males. While 75 percent of females earned less than \$24,000, 40 percent of males earned less than \$24,000 a year. Of all adults living in poverty in 1990, 61.9 percent were women. The situation for female-headed households was even more tenuous with 45.1 percent of those with children under the age of 18 living in poverty. To address the economic needs of Iowa women, the ICSW supports:

- (L) 1. **Increased funding for displaced homemaker/Iowans in Transition program grants through the ICSW to serve more individuals and to keep up with the rising costs of services.**
- (L) 2. **Development of a plan to achieve pay equity for employees in private industry thereby eliminating wage discrimination on the basis of gender.**
- (L) 3. **Legislative action on child care in Iowa with a focus on employment-related child care issues, including:**
 - a. **Measures designed to guarantee affordable, quality child care, in particular for women seeking training and/or employment;**
 - b. **Adjusting upward the income guidelines to qualify for child care reimbursement to 185 percent of poverty level;**
 - c. **Adequate compensation, including benefits, for child care workers;**
 - d. **Need-based child care centers of adequate size at state educational institutions;**
 - e. **Increased funding for child care subsidy programs for low-income Iowans;**
 - f. **Local Child Care Resource and Referral services for parents, providers, and employers and expanding core services by including a Single Point of Access service for parents needing child care assistance;**
 - g. **Increased training and education for child caregivers/funding for professional development training;**
 - h. **Funding for family child care "home consultants" to work in targeted areas to increase the capacity and improve the quality of child care for low-income working families; and**
 - i. **Restructuring of the four child care programs at the Department of Human Services into one, with funding if necessary.**

- (A) 4. Including in local Service Delivery Area plans needs-based payments and support services (including transportation and dependent care subsidies) for all JTPA participants at least until they receive their first full-month paycheck.
- (A) 5. Promotion of state/federal dependent care pre-tax deductions for in-home day care, in-home nursing care, child day care, adult day care, and household services in conjunction with day care.
- (A) 6. Continued efforts in training and placement of women in nontraditional, higher-paying jobs through employment and training programs operated in the state.
- (S) 7. Study of the impact on women of contingency jobs, such as temporary, part-time, and contractual work, usually with few or no benefits and no job security.
- (S) 8. Study by the Consumer Protection Division of the Attorney General's Office of check-cashing centers and currency exchanges, payday loans, rent-to-own operations, pawn shops, and warranties for used cars, to ascertain extent of victimization of the working poor.

Education

Females are still clustered into secondary and post-secondary courses that reflect the traditional occupational specializations of women and are characterized by low pay, low benefits, and low mobility. A lack of female administrators and teacher role models in traditionally male-dominated fields, sexual harassment (affecting 83 percent of Iowa high school females in 1994), and gender role stereotypes, all impact the educational experience of females. In support of excellence and equity in education, the ICSW recommends:

- (L) 1. **State funding to provide staff and support for the provision of technical assistance on educational equity for school districts and to monitor implementation of Iowa's multicultural, nonsexist curriculum requirement as well as Title IX.**
- (A) 2. Continuation of affirmative strategies to promote opportunities for women and minority persons in educational administration, which in turn results in role mentors for students and a vehicle for change in the educational environment.
- (A) 3. Increased educational support for programs that encourage females and minority students to study mathematics, science, and technology at all levels as well as to pursue careers related to mathematics, science, and computer technology.
- (A) 4. Support for the training and retraining of educators, students and board members on issues related to the prevention of sexual harassment, racism, and xenophobia, and to the promotion of character education, citizenship education, and respect for diversity.
- (A) 5. Support for the infusion of equity training and strategies for effectively working with diverse learners into the college level preparation programs for school administrators, teachers, counselors, and coaches. (To supplement, not replace the current human relations courses.)

- (A) 6. Support and incentives for males and minorities to enroll in programs for training elementary education teachers and secondary family and consumer science teachers, and for females and minorities to enroll in programs of training for secondary industrial technology, mathematics, and science teachers.
- (A) 7. Promotion of female participation in educational programs leading to nontraditional, higher-paying jobs.
- (A) 8. Encouragement for school districts to use methods and resources already at their disposal to gain equitable treatment for young women and men and to insure quality educational environments that insure that all students achieve to their maximum potential.
- (A) 9. Encourage Board of Education to include in their State Plan funding for the sex equity coordinator in vocational education and sex equity and single parent/displaced homemaker programs.

Government

The 1998 *Status of Iowa Women Report* documents the need for continuing to improve the quality of life for women in this state. In support of the role of government in improving the status of women, the ICSW recommends:

- (L) 1. **Naming the Old Historical Building in the Capitol Complex after Ola Babcock Miller, the first female to be elected Iowa Secretary of State and the founder of the Iowa State Patrol.**
- (L) 2. **Elimination of gender discrimination in the *Code of Iowa* as a follow-up to recommendations in the *50 States Report* and legislative changes in the 1980s.**
- (L) 3. Gender balance on boards and commissions of political subdivisions of the state.
- (L) 4. Development of a plan for extending a comparable worth policy to all public employees in Iowa, with state assistance to local government entities in conducting comparable worth studies and a plan for making state revenue-sharing monies at future dates contingent upon adopting comparable worth pay schedules for local government employees.
- (L) 5. A requirement that credit be given for skills developed through volunteer and homemaker work experience for purposes of qualifying for hiring and promotion in all personnel selection systems in Iowa state government, its political subdivisions, and all businesses/parties that contract with the state government.
- (L) 6. Continued enforcement of existing affirmative action plans and careful monitoring of promotions made within the upper pay classifications. The state needs to develop, implement, and expand career ladders where there are concentrations of women and offer career counseling and training programs for women who desire to seek nontraditional jobs or to move up the ladder.
- (A) 7. Policies that promote job sharing and flex-time in state employment.

Health

A 1996 study shows that 9.1 percent of Iowa women did not have a health care plan. A higher percentage of women than men, in all age groups, were unable to see a doctor due to cost. In 1996, women between the ages of 25 to 34 were particularly affected with 13.6 percent of those unable to see a doctor for financial reasons. The ICSW supports:

- (L) 1. Focusing on health care reform until health care coverage is accessible to all Iowans.
- (L) 2. Full funding and implementation of the State's Children's Health Care Initiative (HAWK-I), with consideration of available options.
- (L) 3. Sustained funding for Primary Care Recruitment and Retention Endeavor (PRIMCARRE) with a two-year service requirement.
- (L) 4. Sustained funding to enhance Maternal and Child Health services statewide; and to increase funding for homecare aid, public health nursing, and senior health services.
- (L) 5. Increased funding for the community comprehensive adolescent pregnancy prevention and information services grant program through the Department of Human Services.
- (L) 6. Continued funding to make the chlamydia screening and treatment program available statewide.
- (L) 7. Access for low-income women without medicaid to mammography and colposcopy.
- (L) 8. Funding for follow-up treatment when screening for breast and cervical cancer indicate abnormalities.
- (L) 9. Increased funding for family planning programs through Title XX, with emphasis on education and increasing access for low-income women ineligible for Medicaid.
- (L) 10. Enhanced programs such as Healthy Families that increase the availability of perinatal care including utilization of nurse midwives, nurse practitioners, and physicians assistants.
- (A) 11. Promotion of prenatal screening to include counseling to high-risk women to have confidential HIV test and treatment if necessary to prevent transmission.
- (A) 12. Monitoring managed care for substance abuse and mental health treatment to insure that specific needs of women, including aftercare, are met.
- (A) 13. Recommending a designated portion of continuing education credits for medical practitioners to be on the topic of women and HIV/AIDS.
- (A) 14. Insuring the continuance of cost-based Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement rates to rural health clinics and to community health centers to encourage the continuance and expansion of access to primary care services in underserved areas.

- (A) 15. Providing information that clearly outlines a mother's legal rights and options before completion of a birth certificate or an affidavit of paternity.
- (A) 16. Encouraging workplace accommodation and support for breast-feeding mothers.
- (A) 17. Monitoring the impact of welfare reform on health of families by assessing the quality and availability of well-being visits.
- (A) 18. Monitoring the delivery of services through Empowerment Zones, to assure that needs of families are being met.
- (A) 19. Monitoring the Council for Chemically Exposed Infants and Children, including prenatal chemical exposure.
- (S) 20. Review of treatment of mental health patients in the judicial system and in health care.

Insurance

In recognition of the needs of all persons to insure against the risks related to disability, retirement and death, and in particular noting the needs of persons following divorce or disability or death of a spouse, the ICSW supports:

- (L) 1. Elimination of discriminatory practices on the basis of gender or marital status in the issuance or operation of any type of insurance policy, plan, program, or coverage, including but not limited to rates, payments, or benefits; for example, exclusion of obstetrical care for unwed dependents.
- (L) 2. **Legislation requiring insurance plans that cover prescriptions to cover prescriptive contraceptives.**
- (L) 3. Continuing to reform health insurance coverage for the uninsured and underinsured.
- (A) 4. Expansion of relationship definition for family coverage insurance to include extended family members.
- (A/S) 5. Monitoring impact of managed care health plans on women and children.

Justice

Women in Iowa have unique needs relative to the administration of justice in all areas, including legal assistance. The female prison population in Iowa is on the rise, climbing from fewer than 100 in 1985 to 521 in 1997. Women of color are disproportionately represented in Iowa's prisons. In January 1998, for example, African-American women represented 24.7 percent of the state's female prison population while only 1.7 percent of all females in the state. The ICSW supports:

- (L) 1. Funding for a full-time position to coordinate, develop, and manage legal assistance to meet the needs of low-income women.

- (L) 2. Funding and support for improved educational and vocational training for women throughout Iowa's correctional system. Training for women and men should include parenting education and building family strengths, with follow-up after release by community correctional programming and referral/support agencies.
- (L) 3. Increasing staff, including a full-time volunteer coordinator for the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women.
- (L) 4. **Increased state funding for community treatment programs for women convicted of nonviolent crimes.**
- (L) 5. **Restoration of state funding to the FY 1996 level of \$950,000 for the Legal Services Grants Program administered by the Office of the Attorney General.**
- (L) 6. Provision of English as a Second Language education and opposition to any English-only bills.
- (L) 7. The mediation/arbitration approach to child custody except in cases where domestic violence or child abuse are involved.
- (L) 8. Funding for day treatment and residential programs for adolescent females.
- (L) 9. **Development of preventive programs, early identification, and intervention for adolescent females.**
- (A) 10. Establishment of a task force to examine treatment and equity of opportunity in education and training programs for women throughout the correctional system.
- (A) 11. Monitoring the implementation of the Iowa Supreme Court's Equality in the Courts Task Force's final recommendations.
- (A) 12. Continued education of judicial nominating commission members regarding the need to increase the number of women and minorities in the Iowa judiciary, and encouragement of judicial nominating commission members to give weight and consideration to relevant background and experience in the selection of candidates.
- (A) 13. Improvement of the procedures for enforcement of financial settlements, including alimony and other judicial decisions.
- (A) 14. Hearings with prisoners and families regarding the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women operations.
- (A) 15. Improvement of visiting policies for families at the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women.
- (A) 16. Structured long-term treatment programs for nonviolent offenders, including follow-up.

- (S) 17. Study of the compensation for workers in treatment programs for adolescent females.
- (S) 18. Studying issues related to child custody, including judicial discretion, rulings of Iowa judges, consideration of primary caregiver presumption, and consideration of shared custody presumption.

Violence Against Women

Between January, 1990 and September 1998, 76 women have been murdered in Iowa due to domestic violence. In fiscal year 1997, 16,484 victims of domestic violence were served by programs receiving state dollars. That same year, 3,081 adult, teenage, and child survivors of sexual assault sought services from Iowa's sexual assault crisis centers. Approximately three women seek assistance from domestic abuse programs every hour, and every two and a half hours, a woman and her children seek safe shelter. In light of the number and degree of violent incidents committed against women, the ICSW supports:

- (L) 1. Training for mediators in court proceedings to screen out cases in which domestic violence is a factor.
- (L) 2. Increased funding for services to victims of sexual assault and domestic violence.
- (L) 3. Increased funding for training of criminal justice personnel, community professionals, service providers, and the general public on issues of domestic violence and sexual assault through the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women (contracting with the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault).
- (L) 4. Mandatory training for criminal justice personnel in victim-related issues.
- (L) 5. Keeping confidential the names and addresses of victims of sexual assault prior to an indictment of an alleged perpetrator.
- (L) 6. Confiscating all firearms from a residence involved in a domestic violence assault.
- (L) 7. Expanding definition of relationships in the domestic violence statute to include dating.
- (L) 8. **Clarifying the *Code of Iowa* so that sexual assault with an object is considered a sexual assault.**
- (L) 9. **Amending *Code of Iowa* Chapter 236 to clarify legality of extending protection orders beyond one year.**
- (L) 10. **Amending *Code of Iowa* Chapter 709.4 Section 3 to include additional substances that are not classified as "controlled," and to delete the provision that the substance was consumed without the participant's knowledge.**
- (L) 11. **Clarifying the definition of intent in *Code of Iowa* Chapter 709.1, Section 1, so that sexual gratification need not be proven as an intent of the sexual assault offender.**

- (L) 12. **Changing "participant" to "person" or "individual" in *Code of Iowa* Section 709 to avoid any implication that a victim somehow agreed to participate in the crime of sexual assault.**
- (L) 13. **Redefining *Code of Iowa* Section 229A.2, Subsection 3, to specify that any sexually violent behavior would meet the definition of "mental abnormality."**
- (L) 14. **Striking *Code of Iowa* Section 229A.2 Subsection 4--criterion for definition of predatory that the predator has established a relationship with the victim for the purpose of victimization.**
- (L) 15. **Amendments to the *Code of Iowa* to clarify the interplay between mandatory child abuse reporting and victim counselor/client privilege.**
- (L) 16. Elimination of fees for domestic violence restraining orders.
- (L) 17. Prohibition of polygraph testing for victims of sexual assault.
- (L) 18. Maintaining and preserving rebuttable presumption against joint custody in cases where the court finds domestic abuse.
- (L) 19. Opposing requiring joint physical care legislative language.
- (L) 20. Provision of transitional housing for families leaving abusive situations.
- (L) 21. Provision of funding to domestic violence/sexual assault projects to meet the needs of non-English speaking persons.
- (L) 22. Funding to agencies for collaborative pilot projects to cross-train child protective service workers and domestic violence advocates and for collocation or collaborative projects between Child Protective Investigator workers and advocates.
- (A) 23. Requiring health continuing education units for training on increased sensitivity to domestic violence.
- (A) 24. Monitoring the implementation of recommendations of the Supreme Court Task Force on Courts' and Communities' Response to Domestic Violence.
- (A) 25. Creation of a task force to implement recommendations from the Focus Group Study of Sexual Assault Examination Evidence Storage Solutions in Iowa.
- (A) 26. Encouraging the Prosecuting Attorneys Training Council and the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy to continue to train law enforcement officers and county attorneys regarding better enforcement of legislation governing sexual abuse of teenagers.
- (S) 27. Reviewing the statute of limitations in prosecution for child sexual abuse.

Welfare Reform

In 1998 Iowa will continue its critical work relative to the welfare reforms at the federal level, including the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). To endorse Iowa's efforts to reform the welfare system, particularly to make services available that promote economic self-sufficiency, the ICSW supports:

- (L) 1. Full funding for child care, education, and training for Family Investment Program (FIP) participants.
- (L) 2. Continued state funding for the mentoring component for the FIP participants administered by the Department of Human Services through contract with Iowa Workforce Development.
- (L) 3. **Continued implementation and enhanced funding of safeguards that FIP recipients involved in an education and training program to acquire skills needed to obtain a well-paying job will not be forced into the job market prior to completing that education or training.**
- (L) 4. Increased funding for the Homeless Shelters Operations Grant (HSOG).
- (L) 5. Increased state funding for the Emergency Assistance Program preventing homelessness through emergency payments of utilities and rent.
- (L) 6. Dedication of revenue from real estate transfer tax to fund homeless shelters, low income housing, and rehabilitation.
- (L) 7. Continued medical coverage for former welfare recipients beyond the one-year limit to cover the gap between leaving public assistance and becoming totally self-sufficient.
- (L) 8. Modifying the Family Investment Program to allow continued financial assistance until the recipient earns at least \$7.50 per hour plus medical care.
- (L) 9. Increased funding for the Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) program.
- (L) 10. Opposition to any legislation that would exempt Iowa from minimum-wage laws regarding public assistance recipients.
- (L) 11. Increased grant level for the Family Investment Program.
- (A) 12. Continuing redesign of the delivery system for financial assistance services so that families are served more quickly and effectively.

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