

INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN'S POLICY RESEARCH

The Status of Women in the States Project

Models for Action:

Making Research Work for Women

THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE STATES PROJECT

Models for Action:

Making Research Work for Women

Institute for Women's Policy Research
1707 L Street NW, Suite 750
Washington, DC 20036
Phone 202.785.5100 • Fax 202.833.4362
www.iwpr.org

Acknowledgements

This resource was written and compiled by Jean Sinzduk, States Outreach Associate at IWPR. Amy Caiazza, Ph.D., Study Director for *The Status of Women in the States*; Barbara Gault, Ph.D., Director of Research; and April Shaw, Policy Analyst, also contributed. IWPR would also like to extend thanks for the activism of all the members of the state Advisory Committees for *The Status of Women in the States*. Finally, for their help in compiling the information in this report, thanks to Terri deLangis, New Hampshire; Barbara Devaney, Tennessee; Ann Ferrell, Kentucky; Cathy Hatfield, Colorado; Marianne Hill, Ph.D., Mississippi; Marian Palley, Ph.D., Delaware; Janine Parry, Ph.D., Arkansas; Jeanne Ohta, Hawai'i; and Carol Sack, Arizona. This publication was funded with support from the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Family Fund.

Table of Contents

1 INTRODUCTION	2
2 EDUCATION INITIATIVES / OUTREACH	3
STATEWIDE AND REGIONAL CONFERENCES	3
TOWN MEETINGS / COMMUNITY FORUMS	4
MOBILE DISPLAYS	5
SPEAKERS' BUREAUS & PRESENTATIONS	5
COLLEGE AND HIGH SCHOOL COURSE CURRICULUMS	6
DISTRIBUTION IN LIBRARY SYSTEMS	6
MENTORING PROGRAMS	7
SPECIAL PROJECTS	7
ORGANIZATIONAL NEWSLETTERS	8
REGIONAL RESOURCE DIRECTORIES	8
3 PUBLICITY	9
4 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION / LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY	10
WOMEN'S LEGISLATIVE AGENDAS	10
LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY	10
MOBILIZATION / ADVOCACY EFFORTS	11
5 INSTITUTION-BUILDING	12
WOMEN'S COMMISSIONS	12
NEW ORGANIZATIONS	13
TASK FORCES / STATEWIDE NETWORKS	13
6 RESEARCH INITIATIVES	15
NEW REPORTS	15
NEW RESEARCH INITIATIVES	15
7 GRANTMAKING	17
INNOVATIVE GRANT PROGRAMS	17
FUNDING PRIORITIES	17
8 COALITION-BUILDING	18
PERMANENT COALITIONS ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN	18
APPENDICES	
APPENDIX 1: LETTER ANNOUNCING NEW HAMPSHIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	19
APPENDIX 2: LEGISLATION CREATING MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN	20

Introduction

Using this Resource to Promote Action

The Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) presents this resource as a way of helping state-based advocates, researchers, and policymakers utilize *The Status of Women in the States* reports to further their policy agendas by drawing attention to the issues critical to the status of women in their states.

IWPR is a public policy research organization dedicated to informing and stimulating the debate on public policy issues of critical importance to women and their families. *The Status of Women in the States* is part of an ongoing research project conducted by IWPR to monitor the status of women in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The project is funded by the Ford Foundation and state funders. IWPR works closely with state-based Advisory Committees made up of local leaders. The committees contribute to and review their state's draft report and also take charge of the dissemination and publicity in their state. *The Status of Women in the States* reports have been used effectively by policymakers, advocates, service providers, and public and private sector leaders to make important contributions to improving the status of women.

Many of the state Advisory Committees have asked about ideas and actions other committees have used to enhance their capacity to conduct and promote action around the data presented in the reports. Some of the key questions raised have been: How do you keep the dialogue going after the report is published? How do you keep the information fresh? Essentially, what happens next? This "best practices" resource compiles the best ideas and models from our state partners.

"It's so important to keep in touch with those of us who are on the front lines every day ... because ultimately what works is a combination of taking really great research and putting a face on it."

*Charlotte Zietlow
Chair, Indiana Advisory Committee*

Education Initiatives / Outreach

The Status of Women in the States reports have been used as awareness-building tools through a variety of educational and outreach activities, including town meetings, mentoring programs, public displays, and special projects. Key examples are listed below.

Statewide and Regional Conferences

Several of the Advisory Committees have held statewide or regional conferences to bring attention to the report or to address a key issue raised in the report. The Delaware Advisory Committee, for example, held a conference in May 2001 to address a range of issues, with a special focus on women's health, due to Delaware's low grade in that area of the report published in 2000. IWPR President Heidi Hartmann was a featured presenter at this conference. For more information, contact Delaware Advisory Committee Chair Marian Palley, Director of Women's Studies, University of Delaware, at mpalley@udel.edu.

Kentucky Women Advocates, leaders of *The Status of Women in Kentucky* (1998) Advisory Committee, used the report as the centerpiece of a conference that led to the creation of a women's policy agenda pursued throughout 1999 and 2000, and to public debate with government officials on the nature of the wage gap and economic inequality in the state. IWPR Study Director Amy Caiazza presented on the findings of the report at this conference.

Mississippi advocates hosted the "Mississippi Women's Conference 2000: Challenges of a New Era," which featured a plenary session on *The Status of Women in Mississippi* (1998) report. IWPR Study Director Amy Caiazza presented on the panel, along with other representatives from the state, including Marianne Hill, the Advisory Committee Chair. For more information, contact Marianne Hill, Center for Policy Research and Planning, at 601/432-6376 or mhill@ihl.state.ms.us.

Town Meetings / Community Forums

The Women's Foundation of Southern Arizona, one of the co-chairs of the Arizona Advisory Committee (2000 report series), hosted a community forum in October 2000, prior to the release of the report, entitled "Numbers Too BIG to Ignore," at which IWPR President Heidi Hartmann was the keynote speaker. In addition, the Foundation scheduled a follow-up meeting in January 2001 to build on the momentum of this forum and follow through with concrete action. For more details on these forums, contact Carol Sack, Executive Director of the Women's Foundation, at CarolSack@womensgiving.org.

In response to *The Status of Women in Minnesota* (2000) report, The Center for True Economic Progress, a non-profit organization based in St. Paul, Minnesota, hosted a symposium in April 2001 to address the gap between economic research and policy action that affects women. IWPR President Heidi Hartmann was a keynote speaker at the meeting, and Study Director Amy Caiazza also presented on women's status in Minnesota.

As leaders of the Tennessee Advisory Committee, the Tennessee Economic Council on Women held a series of town forums, "The Status of Women in Tennessee: A Call to Action," with the specific purpose of raising awareness of *The Status of Women in Tennessee* (2000) and encouraging people to mobilize around the data and findings of the report. For more information, contact Barbara Devaney, Executive Director of the Council, at 615/253-4264 or bdevaney@mail.state.tn.us.

The Women's Foundation of Colorado is hosting a series of symposia to inform communities around Colorado of the report and to generate activity around local women's issues. See "Mobile Displays," page 5, and "Innovative Grant Programs," page 17, for more information on their work (2000 report series).

Mobile Displays

The Women’s Foundation of Colorado created mobile displays on key findings in *The Status of Women in Colorado* (2000) report. These displays travel the state and are placed in prominent public sites, such as malls and community colleges. The displays are flexible, six feet tall by three feet wide, and roll down into a small stand, which is carried in a case similar to a briefcase. These mobile displays are part of a larger effort in which the Women’s Foundation is holding kickoff receptions or breakfasts in local communities followed in six to eight weeks by a symposium to identify one to two local key issues affecting women and girls. The displays travel throughout a community for six to eight weeks. For more information, contact Cathy Hatfield at 303/832-8800 or cathyh@wfc.org.

“Response to the displays has been incredible. We are receiving phone calls and emails about how they resonate with individuals.”

Cathy Hatfield

*Programs Director, Women’s Foundation of Colorado
Chair, Colorado Advisory Committee*

Speakers’ Bureaus & Presentations

Some Advisory Committees created Speakers’ Bureaus composed of Advisory Committee members who speak about the report and focus on specific topics covered in the report. The Speakers’ Bureau lists are distributed to organizations, schools, and civic groups. It has been helpful to include a resource list of experts who are available to conduct longer workshops or training on specific issues.

Tennessee Advisory Committee members created a standard PowerPoint presentation about the report and its findings. Committee members use the presentation across the state to rouse Tennessee women to get involved in mentoring programs for girls. They also give copies of the presentation to audience members, who show it to groups in their local areas. Barbara Devaney, Executive Director of the Tennessee Economic Council on Women and Chair of the Advisory Committee, stresses the link between *The Status of Women in Tennessee* (2000) data and the actual experiences of women in the state: “We combine IWPR’s facts with quotes from Tennessee women testifying that these are not just statistics, but reality for women in Tennessee.” For more information on their presentation,

please contact Barbara Devaney at 615/253-4264 or bdevaney@mail.state.tn.us.

IWPR has also created a standard PowerPoint presentation, an overview of *The Status of Women in the States* project, which can be tailored to individual states. Contact Jean Sinzdak at sinzdak@iwpr.org or 202/785-5100 for more information or to obtain a copy of this presentation.

College and High School Course Curriculums

There are plenty of opportunities to utilize the *Status* reports as educational tools in college and high school courses. For example, Janine Parry, Chair of *The Status of Women in Arkansas* committee, employs the report in her Gender and Politics class at the University of Arkansas:

“Women, politics, and policy is a burgeoning sub-field of research and teaching but most work – as in other specialties – started at the national and international levels. The state-specific data provided in The Status of Women in Arkansas provide plentiful, ‘home-grown’ examples and illustrations of the sometimes abstract concepts in my upper-division Gender and Politics class, examples on the feminization of poverty, the wage gap, the gender gap, etc. It’s made the class more accessible and meaningful to the majority of students who are native to the state.”

Contact Janine Parry at 501/575-6439 or parry@comp.uark.edu.

Distribution in Library Systems

To increase access to the reports, Advisory Committees can distribute copies of the reports to library systems in their states. Systems to target include statewide and county public library systems, college, and high school libraries. To find out more information on libraries in your state, check your state government’s home page. This will have a link to the state’s public library system and will usually have links to other library systems and library organizations in the state. The state’s Department of Education should also have links to school library systems.

Mentoring Programs

In Tennessee, the Blount County Women's Empowerment Group will host a day-long “sister to sister” conference in which area women will team up one-on-one with local girls to develop a girls’ agenda for the area. The purpose is to build girls’ self-esteem and empower them to take action on an issue of importance to them in their local community. Barbara Devaney of the Tennessee Economic Council on Women points out, “The information from *The Status of Women in Tennessee* report, especially on the wage gap, helps galvanize women's interest in helping girls.” For more information, contact Barbara Devaney 615/253-4264 or bdevaney@mail.state.tn.us.

Special Projects

Mobilizing around *The Status of Women in Kentucky* (1998) report, the Kentucky Commission on Women (KCW), the Kentucky Department of Education's (KDE) Division of Equity, Division of Curriculum Development, and Division of Customer Support Services, and Kentucky Educational Television (KET) worked together on a four-part project with the purpose of increasing interest in the history of Kentucky women, particularly in the area of public service. This four-part project includes:

- A colorful poster which features brief biographical information on almost 200 women from around the state.
- A film about Kentucky women and public service, *Women of Kentucky: Our Legacy, Our Future*.
- A Teacher’s Resource Guide designed to help teachers incorporate Kentucky women’s history into the classroom year-round, which was developed by KDE, Division of Curriculum Development and a group of Kentucky teachers. The teacher's guide can be accessed by going to the RESOURCES section of the project website or contacting the Commission on Women for a hard copy.
- A website, www.womeninkentucky.com, designed to complement the video, poster, and Resource Guide by providing information and resources for Kentucky students, teachers, and citizens.

This four-part packet was sent to all Kentucky public schools and libraries in early October 2000, through the financial assistance of Governor Paul Patton. For more information, view the website or contact Ann Ferrell at the Kentucky Commission on Women, 502/564-6643 or ann.Ferrell@mail.state.ky.us.

Organizational Newsletters

Advisory Committees could write a standard template article on the *Status* report that every organization represented on the committee can take and customize as their own. As part of an overall dissemination strategy, the committee could make a list of all organizations that would include notices or articles in their newsletters and contact them.

Regional Resource Directories

In addition to the state resource list included in the reports, some committees have created regional directories of women's resources. The Tennessee Economic Council on Women has developed Women's Resource Directories for about 25 Tennessee counties. The Council has parlayed that into further opportunities to network. The Council meets with women in many of these counties to get their input on the directories, to present *The Status of Women in Tennessee* (2000) information, and to get them interested in local efforts to help girls get the skills and education they need.

Publicity

Along with IWPR, Advisory Committees work diligently to spread the word among local and state media about their state's report. During the release of the 2000 round of reports, more than 500 stories appeared in national, state, and local newspapers, on the radio, and on television stations across the country. In every state, major media outlets (major newspapers, radio stations, and/or television stations) covered the events, often on the front page "above the fold." Some of the strategies employed by committees included:

- Developing state and local media contact lists.
- Writing press releases and advisories.
- Choosing and fine-tuning their communications messages.
- Cultivating contacts with the press in advance of the report's release.
- Hosting events in advance of the report's release, such as breakfasts or community forums, to draw attention and galvanize support from the community.
- Planning press events to publicize the release of their state reports. These events varied from a simple press conference to a reception at a local art museum for state legislators. In several states, including Arkansas, Hawai'i, and Delaware, top-ranking elected officials attended these events.

Getting press attention is not limited to state reports being published in the current cycle. To focus attention on updated findings during the release of the 2000 round of reports, Advisory Committees in some states covered in the 1996 and 1998 reports, including Mississippi, New York, and Vermont, also issued press releases and/or held public and press events. Contact Jean Sinzdak at sinzdak@iwpr.org or 202/785-5100 for more information.

Political Participation / Legislative Activity

Many Advisory Committees have been successful in using *The Status of Women in the States* reports to further policy agendas that address the needs of women by creating women's legislative agendas, quoting report data in legislative testimony, and using the reports to mobilize around specific issues critical to women in their state. This section highlights some of their successes.

Women's Legislative Agendas

The New Hampshire Advisory Committee created the first-ever New Hampshire Women's Agenda as a result of the findings of *The Status of Women in New Hampshire* (2000) report (see Appendix 1, page 19). The New Hampshire Advisory Committee also became an official statewide coalition and has worked together extensively to speak, lobby, and track legislation. For more information, contact Terri deLangis, Executive Director of the New Hampshire Commission on the Status of Women, at tdelangis@admin.state.nh.us.

In Pennsylvania, women legislators used *The Status of Women in Pennsylvania* (1998) report to create a women's economic policy agenda and draft and pass legislation related to women-owned businesses.

Legislative Testimony

Many Advisory Committees have used the report data in legislative testimony. As an alternative or addition to a complete women's agenda, Advisory Committee members can create quick, easy-to-read fact sheets summarizing data on the key issues coming up in a state's legislative session, so that those lobbying in support of a policy relating to women's status can access and quote the report in testimony.

Mobilization / Advocacy Efforts

Other committees use the reports to organize around specific pieces of legislation. In Vermont, for example, the Governor's Commission for Women used the report to pursue broader subsidies for child care in the state legislature; and in Tennessee, the Economic Council on Women are using the report to lobby for living wage legislation and funds for non-traditional job training for women. Some Advisory Committees used the *Status* reports to advocate for collecting state and county level data that will more closely address the pertinent issues in their state.

While existing campaigns can use the data from the report to increase their ability to raise awareness and support for their particular issue, other campaigns have been created in direct response to findings of the report. Due to Hawai'i's rank of 49th out of 50 in women's voter registration and 50th out of 50 in voter turnout (in the 2000 report series), the Honolulu County Committee on the Status of Women started a campaign to increase voter participation and registration. The Committee is forming a coalition of several different women's groups to examine the causes of and solutions to this problem. For more information, contact Jeanne Ohta, Executive Director, Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women, 808/586-5757 or hscsw@pixi.net.

Sample Legislative Kit

The New Hampshire Advisory Committee recommends having a complete kit to distribute to interested parties who lobby on policies affecting women. A kit could include:

- ✓ Women's Legislative Agenda
- ✓ Fact Sheets on Key Agenda Issues
- ✓ Form Letters to State Representatives
- ✓ Speakers' Bureau List

Institution-Building

The Status of Women in the States reports have played a role in various institution-building initiatives, including helping to garner support for new state women's commissions and task forces. The projects mentioned below illustrate some of these initiatives.

Women's Commissions

The Governor of Mississippi signed a bill in April 2001 that created a Women's Commission (see Appendix 2, page 20). Inspired in part by *The Status of Women in Mississippi* (1998) report, the Mississippi Coalition of Women compiled information on what has and has not worked across the country for the draft of the legislation. Appointees (13) are to include a current or former food stamps recipient, a health care professional, a lawyer or law professor, and a college educator. There will be an interagency government council that will report annually to the Women's Commission on the work of their agencies for women. The Commission can recommend and advocate for needed policies. For more information on this effort, contact Marianne Hill, Center for Policy Research and Planning, at 601/432-6376 or mhill@ihl.state.ms.us.

The Status of Women in Louisiana (1998) report drew Governor M.J. Foster's attention to the disparity between the status of women in Louisiana relative to women nationwide and to Louisiana men. At the urging of Advisory Committee member Senator Paulette Irons (D-New Orleans), the Governor reestablished the Louisiana Women's Policy and Research Commission. The Commission, established by Executive Order No. MJF 2000-6 (issued on February 16, 2000; amended by Executive Order No. MJF 2000-54, December 1, 2000; and Executive Order No. MJF 2001-6, February 9, 2001; Attachment A), consists of 27 women and men selected from the Women's Legislative Caucus, state agencies, and

academic and business professionals in law, education, health, and the social sciences. The Commission is charged with documenting and monitoring the status of women and girls in Louisiana, identifying persistent gender-based disparities (especially in the areas of earnings potential and health care), and recommending policies that will significantly improve the quality of life for Louisiana women of all ages. For more information, see the web page of the Louisiana Women's Network, www.sisters2002.com, or contact them at Lawomennet@aol.com.

New Organizations

In response to *The Status of Women in Arizona* (2000) report, the Southern Arizona Women's Fund, a co-chair of the Arizona Advisory Committee, is currently working with Arizona State Attorney General Janet Napolitano's office to create a statewide women's lobby. The Women's Action Alliance will address the needs of women in Arizona. The Alliance is modeled after another alliance in the state, and it will be incubated at the Women's Fund, with the eventual goal of having it function as an independent nonprofit. The members of the Arizona Advisory Committee will be the initial members of the Alliance. For more information, contact Carol Sack, Executive Director of the Women's Fund, at CarolSack@womengiving.org.

Task Forces / Statewide Networks

In November 2001, Kentucky Governor Paul Patton appointed a Governor's Task Force on the Economic Status of Kentucky's Women, a project of the Kentucky Commission on Women. Inspired in part by *The Status of Women in Kentucky* (1998), this project is an important opportunity for Kentucky citizens to become involved in efforts to raise the standard of living of Kentucky women and their families. The purpose of the Task Force is to examine the issues that are obstacles to the economic progress of Kentucky women, identify solutions, and develop a plan of action. Key to the success of the Task Force will be Committees of the Task Force, which will meet monthly for a period of 12 months and will collect available data appropriate to their working topic; explore existing resources and determine "best practices" models; and compile and draft reports for presentation to the Task Force. The committees will reflect the diversity of Kentucky's population. They will begin their work after the appointment of the Task Force and will tentatively focus on the following obstacle areas:

- Education and Leadership
- Economic Development and Employment
- Women in Positions of Power

INSTITUTION-BUILDING

- Social and Cultural Barriers
- State Government Employees

For more information on this project, contact Ann Ferrell, Kentucky Commission on Women, at 502/564-6643 or ann.Ferrell@mail.state.ky.us.

Research Initiatives

Some Advisory Committees have used the *Status* report as a launching pad for new state and local level research endeavors. Some of these efforts are highlighted below.

New Reports

Inspired in part by *The Status of Women in New Jersey* (1996) report, the Institute for Women's Leadership partnered with the New Jersey State Division on Women to create *NJWomenCount*, a report with state-level data on various women's issues, including women's wages and poverty, immigration issues, and women's political participation and leadership. For more information, contact the Institute for Women's Leadership at 732/932-1463.

New Research Initiatives

Following the publication of *The Status of Women in Ohio* (1998) report, professors and staff of Wright State University felt that more local data was necessary in guiding policies and services that affect women in the Miami Valley, Ohio, area. They created the Wright State University Women's Research Network (WRN), a multidisciplinary organization designed to facilitate women's research in the Miami Valley through two initiatives:

1) WRN Regional Database Initiative

The first initiative involved creating and maintaining a comprehensive regional database of existing research and data that serves as a resource for scholars, organizations, and individuals throughout the region. The WRN worked to identify a variety of existing national, state, and local databases and research resources on women's issues. The information and data collected by the Network are catalogued in an Access database under one of the following topic areas: demographics, crime, economics, health, reproductive and parenting issues, housing,

RESEARCH INITIATIVES

education, and politics. Each record contains a description of the data (including geography, type, and source) and information on how to obtain the research or data (e.g., hyperlinks are included in the database when available).

2) WRN Survey

The second initiative is a survey providing a baseline portrait of the status of women in the Miami Valley. Network members developed a comprehensive survey that investigated core questions on each of the eight topic areas: demographics, crime, economics, health, reproductive and parenting issues, housing, education, and politics. In May 2001, the Center for Urban and Public Affairs (CUPA) at Wright State piloted the survey to a sample of almost 500 women, age 18 or older, who live in Montgomery County (Montgomery County is the central county in the Dayton-Springfield Metropolitan Statistical Area). An executive summary of the survey analysis is available, and separate reports that provide detailed information on each of the topic areas will be released throughout the year.

For more information on the Women's Research Network, view the website at www.wright.edu/cupa/WRN/wrn.htm or contact Mary Wenning, Assistant Professor, Urban Affairs & Geography, Wright State University, at mary.wenning@wright.edu.

Grantmaking

Several state and local foundations involved in the *States* project have used their state's report to direct their grantmaking goals. Committees can use the information to encourage local foundations to adapt their goals and funding strategies to reflect the needs of the state's women as illustrated in the report's findings.

Innovative Grant Programs

As noted earlier (see "Town Meetings / Community Forums," page 4, and "Mobile Displays," page 5), the Women's Foundation of Colorado is hosting symposia in 24 to 28 cities over a period of two to three years to publicize and disseminate *The Status of Women in Colorado* (2000) report's data. The symposia include planning committees of women academics, elected officials, and other influential women, who will examine issues and trends in the report and how they relate to their communities. After identifying key issues, the planning committees will apply for matching funds available through the Women's Foundation to work on these issues in their communities (the Women's Foundation has allocated about \$250,000 for this work). Counties also interested in having data similar to the reports can apply for funding for county-level data collection and analysis. For more information, contact Cathy Hatfield at 303/832-8800 or cathyh@wfco.org.

Funding Priorities

The Women's Foundation of Southern Arizona, one of the leaders of the Arizona Advisory Committee, reset its funding priorities to address the findings of *The Status of Women in Arizona* (2000) report. Among other things, the report showed that Arizona ranks 49th in health insurance coverage for non-elderly women, 47th in suicides among women, and 43rd for the number of women living in poverty. The Women's Foundation favors grant proposals that seek to address those serious issues. For more information, contact Carol Sack, Executive Director of the Women's Foundation, at CarolSack@womensgiving.org.

Coalition-Building

One of the main goals of *The Status of Women in the States* project is to create opportunities for state and local people and organizations to form new networks and solidify existing informal ones. Several Advisory Committees report that working on the project together gave them an opportunity to interact with groups from a different geographic region or from different issue areas. Following are some examples of how Advisory Committees have translated their work into more long-term efforts.

Permanent Coalitions on the Status of Women

In New Hampshire, the Advisory Committee has become a permanent, statewide coalition of activists. They meet regularly with legislators to push specific policies derived from the data in the report, including raising the minimum wage, providing unemployment insurance to part-time employees, and requiring that all state data be disaggregated by sex and age. This is the coalition responsible for drafting the first-ever New Hampshire Women's Agenda. The coalition will continue to speak, lobby, and track legislation. For more information, contact Terri deLangis, Executive Director of the New Hampshire Commission on the Status of Women, at tdelangis@admin.state.nh.us.

The Mississippi Coalition of Women is an outgrowth of the Mississippi Advisory Committee and has also become a permanent, statewide coalition that continues its work to advocate for women-friendly policies. For more information on this effort, contact Marianne Hill, Center for Policy Research and Planning, at 601/432-6376 or mhill@ihl.state.ms.us.

APPENDIX 1
Letter Announcing New Hampshire Advisory Committee Legislative Agenda



Status of Women in NH
Advisory Committee

Theresa de Langis
Chair
NH Commission
On the Status of Women

Jonathan Baird
NH Legal Assistance

Martin Capodice
NH Employment Security

Martha Fuller Clark
NH State Representative

Elizabeth Dolan, Ph.D.
Family Studies
University of New Hampshire

Sheila Evans
NH Women's Lobby

Jennifer Frizzell
Planned Parenthood of
Northern New England

Grace Mattern
NH Coalition Against
Domestic and Sexual Violence

Mary Rauh
Women's Fund of NH

Ellen Shemitz
Children's Alliance of NH

Jane Stapleton
NH Commission On the Status of Women

February 26, 2001

Dear Legislator,

On behalf of the Advisory Committee to the recently published report, *The Status of Women in New Hampshire*, I proudly announce the 2001 Women's Agenda.

Our legislative agenda focuses on issues of critical concern to the state's women. The bills included empower New Hampshire women to achieve economic autonomy, to better balance work and family, and to be fully counted in statistical data collected and analyzed by the state. We strongly urge you to support the 2001 Women's Agenda.

2001 Women's Agenda

HB 359 Requiring data collected by state agencies to be analyzed relative to age and gender

HB 469 Raising the minimum wage for hourly employees

HB 589 Extending eligibility for unemployment benefits to part-time workers

HB 762 Establishing a NH trust fund for health care for low wage workers, including child care providers

HB 658 Making an appropriation to the Homeless Prevention Fund

Please see the attached "Research-in-Brief" for more information on *The Status of Women in New Hampshire*. If you have any questions about the report, would like to request more copies, or are interested in other resources offered through the Commission on the Status of Women, please to do not hesitate to contact me by phone or e-mail (tdelangis@admin.state.nh.us).

Thank you for your efforts on behalf of New Hampshire women.

Respectfully Yours,

Theresa de Langis
Executive Director, Commission on the Status of Women
Chair, Advisory Committee to *The Status of Women in New Hampshire*

APPENDIX 2
Legislation Creating Mississippi Commission on the Status of Women

MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE

2001 Regular Session

To: Public Health and Welfare; Appropriations

By: Representative Scott (17th), Clarke, Evans, Bailey, Bowles, Broomfield, Cameron, Chism, Clark, Coleman (29th), Coleman (65th), Davis, Dickson, Eads, Eakes, Fillingane, Flaggs, Ford, Franks, Fredericks, Frierson, Gadd, Green, Harrison, Holland, Hudson, Jennings, Markham, Mayo, McCoy, Miles, Mitchell, Montgomery (15th), Moody, Peranich, Pierce, Roberson, Rushing, Scott (80th), Stevens, Stringer, Thomas, Ward, Warren, Wells-Smith, Whittington, Zuber, Brown

House Bill 797

(As Sent to Governor)

AN ACT TO CREATE AND EMPOWER THE MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN; TO PRESCRIBE THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION; TO ESTABLISH AN INTERAGENCY COUNCIL TO ADDRESS ISSUES AFFECTING THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN MISSISSIPPI; TO CREATE A FUND IN THE STATE TREASURY TO RECEIVE ANY PUBLIC OR PRIVATE FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE FOR THE OPERATION OF THE COMMISSION; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

SECTION 1. It is declared to be the public policy of this state to encourage, promote and foster the success and well-being of its citizens and to offer unobstructed access to such opportunities as exist in order that all Mississippians may realize the quality of life for their families to which they aspire. It is a higher public purpose of state government to ensure that no individual is denied the opportunity to succeed and make positive contributions to Mississippi's quality of life because of gender. It is the intent and purpose of this act to create a Commission on the Status of Women.

SECTION 2. (1) There is created the Mississippi Commission on the Status of Women. The commission shall be nonpartisan, and shall be composed of thirteen (13) members to be appointed, with the advice and consent of the Senate, as follows:

(a) Four (4) members shall be appointed by the Governor, including a current or former food stamps recipient and a single parent;

(b) Three (3) members shall be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor, including a current or former college educator with expertise in women's issues;

(c) Three (3) members shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, including a health care professional knowledgeable in women's health issues; and

(d) Three (3) members shall be appointed by the Attorney General, including a law professor or lawyer with expertise in women's issues.

(2) The members of the commission shall be women and men of recognized ability and achievement who are representative of the ethnic, geographic, socioeconomic

APPENDIX 2
Legislation Creating Mississippi Commission on the Status of Women

and cultural diversity of the population of this state, and who have a proven record of efforts to improve the status of women. The initial term of office of one (1) member appointed by the Governor shall expire on June 30, 2002. The initial terms of office of the remaining members shall be fixed by the appointing authorities so that the term of office of one (1) member appointed by each appointing authority expires on June 30, 2003, the term of office of one (1) member appointed by each expires on June 30, 2004, and the terms of office of the remaining three (3) members expires on June 30, 2005. After the expiration of the initial terms, the terms of office of all members shall be four (4) years each, from the expiration date of the previous term. A member may not serve for more than two (2) consecutive terms. All vacancies shall be filled by the appointing authority for the unexpired term.

(3) The commission shall organize by electing a chair, vice chair and secretary from among its members for terms of two (2) years each. Any member is eligible for successive elections to office.

(4) A majority of the members of the commission shall constitute a quorum for transacting business.

(5) Members of the commission may be reimbursed for expenses as provided in Section 25-3-41, and may receive per diem as provided in Section 25-3-69.

(6) The Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House and Attorney General shall notify the Governor after they have made their appointments. The Governor then shall designate a place and time for the initial organizational meeting of the commission, which meeting must be before October 1, 2001.

SECTION 3. The commission shall have the powers and authority necessary to carry out the duties imposed upon it by this act, including, but not limited to, the following:

(a) To conduct research and to study issues affecting the status of women in Mississippi;

(b) To advise and consult with the executive and legislative branches on policies affecting the status of women in Mississippi;

(c) To publish periodic reports documenting the legal, economic, social and political status, and other concerns of women in Mississippi;

(d) To assess programs and practices in all state agencies as those programs and practices affect women;

(e) To maintain an office and to acquire on a contractual or other basis any legal, technical and research expertise and support services as the commission may require for the discharge of its duties;

(f) To hold hearings, meetings, conferences and workshops, to make and sign any agreements, and to do or perform any acts that may be necessary, desirable or proper to carry out the purposes of this act;

APPENDIX 2
Legislation Creating Mississippi Commission on the Status of Women

(g) To appoint advisers or advisory committees if the commission determines that the experience or expertise of the advisors or advisory committees is needed for projects of the commission;

(h) To apply for and accept funds, grants, gifts and services from the state or federal government or any of their agencies, or any other public or private source, for the purpose of defraying clerical, administrative and other costs as may be necessary in carrying out the commission's duties under this act;

(i) To establish nonprofit entities for the purpose of defraying costs incurred in the performance of the commission's duties; and

(j) To utilize voluntary and uncompensated services of private individuals, agencies and organizations as may be offered and needed.

SECTION 4. (1) The commission shall study issues affecting the status of women in Mississippi, including, but not limited to, the following areas:

(a) Women's educational and employment problems, needs and opportunities;

(b) Women's health issues;

(c) The socioeconomic factors that influence the status of women and the development of women's individual potential;

(d) Current or proposed state laws, practices or conditions in regard to the civil, economic and political rights of women, including, but not limited to, pensions, tax requirements, property rights, marriage and dissolution of marriage provisions, domestic violence and other matters affecting the status of women; and

(e) Any other conditions or practices affecting women which impose special limitations or burdens upon them or which tend to limit opportunities available to women.

(2) The commission shall act as an information center on the status of women and women's educational, employment and other related needs, and on current and proposed legislation affecting women. In this capacity, the commission shall serve as a liaison and clearinghouse between government, private interest groups and the general public concerned with services for women, and in this regard, the commission may publish a periodic newsletter, maintain a website and communicate with and provide information in other ways to these constituencies.

(3) The commission shall educate the business, education, state government and local government communities and the general public about the nature and scope of gender discrimination, violence against women, and other matters affecting the status of women in Mississippi.

(4) The commission shall recommend policies and make recommendations to public and private groups and persons concerned with any issue related to improving the status of women. Toward this end, the commission may develop, prepare and

APPENDIX 2
Legislation Creating Mississippi Commission on the Status of Women

coordinate materials, projects or other activities and give technical and consultative advice. The commission may encourage and help women's organizations, public and private offices and other groups to institute self-help activities designed to meet women's educational, employment and other needs.

(5) The commission shall promote consideration of qualified women for all levels of government positions.

(6) Before November 15 of each year, beginning with November 15, 2002, the commission shall report to the Governor and the Legislature on the commission's activities. The report must include the results of the commission's findings of the preceding year, with recommendations for the removal of such injustices as the commission may find to exist.

SECTION 5. There is established an interagency council comprised of representatives of state agencies including, but not limited to, the State Department of Health, State Department of Mental Health, Department of Human Services, State Department of Education, Department of Public Safety, Mississippi Development Authority, Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning, State Board for Community and Junior Colleges, Attorney General's Office, Secretary of State's Office and Mississippi Department of Corrections. Each of these agencies shall report to the commission annually through its representative, addressing the current health, employment, educational and overall status of women and the agency's actions to improve women's status. The commission, in its discretion, may call a meeting of the full council; however, full council meetings may not be called more frequently than once during a fiscal year.

SECTION 6. There is created in the State Treasury a fund into which any public or private funds from any source shall be deposited for the support of the activities of the Commission on the Status of Women.

SECTION 7. The purpose of the Commission on the Status of Women shall be advisory with respect to legislation and regulation and shall not conflict with or supplement state or federal laws or regulations or provide a cause of action relating to any matter contained in this act.

SECTION 8. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2001.