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Maine Women's Lobby News Letter (1990 - May) No. 3

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Maine Women's Lobby

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P.O. Box 15, Hallowell, Maine 04347
Telephone: 622-0851

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May 1990

NEWSLETTER

Number 3

LOBBY HAILS PASSAGE OF MAMMOGRAPHY LEGISLATION

Not only members of the Lobby, but all Maine women have great cause for celebration as the 1990 session of the 114th Maine Legislature comes to a close:

On Friday, April 20th, Maine became the 27th state in the nation to guarantee insurance coverage for screening mammograms!

There is no question this session produced the most significant health policy gain for Maine women in many years.

Beginning on March 1, 1991, all insurance policies sold in Maine will include screening mammograms as a covered service when prescribed in accordance with the guidelines of the American Cancer Society: once every two years for women between the ages of 40-49 and on an annual basis for women 50 years and older.

Working for passage of this bill was our top legislative priority in 1990. It was exciting . . . but, not easy!

We had a lengthy, but well-organized public hearing before the Legislature's Banking and Insurance Committee. Although tough opposition was voiced by the Maine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Maine Medical Association, the Health Insurance Association of America, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Maine, and other industry lobbyists, we gathered an impressive group of more than 20 advocates to testify expertly in favor of passage.

During the three committee work sessions, a number of amendments were suggested. Most sought to limit provisions of the original draft by excluding women ages 40-49 or exempting some employers from the mandate. One committee member argued vigorously for a "mandated option" which one of the bill's sponsors labelled an "oxymoron."

The leadership by the bill's sponsors, strong support from other members, and the tenacity of Representative Charlene Rydell, Committee Co-Chair and a co-sponsor

(Continued on page 2)

Darrilyn Peters, MWL Chair

Joanne D'Arcangelo, Lobbyist

Mail: Maine Women's Lobby
P.O. Box 15
Hallowell, ME 04347
Tele: 622-0851

Legislators

Mail: Maine State House
State House Station #2
Augusta, Maine 04333

A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR ALLIES!

The following individuals and organizations testified in support of LD 2297 "AN ACT to Reduce the Incidence of Breast Cancer in Maine." Their support in the face of stiff opposition contributed greatly to our victory!

- Don Magioncalda, M.D., President, American Cancer Society-Maine Chapter
- Carol Eckert, M.D. (family practitioner)
- David Schall, M.D. (family practitioner)
- Peter Shrier, M.D., Chair, American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Maine Chapter
- Lani Graham, M.D., Director of the Bureau of Health (representing the Department of Human Services)
- Patricia Angelone, Portland (consumer)
- Darrilyn Peters, President, Maine Women's Lobby
- Genevieve Delicata, Prospect (consumer)
- Andrew Coburn, Ph.D., President, Maine Public Health Association
- Joe Ditre, Organizer, Consumers of Affordable Health Care Coalition
- Rosemary Aschenfelter, Winthrop (consumer)
- Steve Michaud, Legislative Director, Maine Hospital Association
- Paulie Tibbits, R.N.
- Bonnie Post, Executive Director, Maine Ambulatory Care Coalition
- Anna Gilmore, Director, Maine State Nurses Association and WLAC
- David Lambert, Ph.D., Member, Mandated Benefits Advisory Committee
- Sheila Cumerford, Director, Maine Committee on Aging
- Betsy Mahoney, Public Affairs Director, Family Planning Association of Maine
- Leslie Anderson, Director, Maine Commission for Women
- Ned McCann, Legislative and Public Affairs Advocate, Maine AFL-CIO
- Anne Parker, Chair, Maine Radiological Technologists Association

(Mammography, continued from page 1)

of the bill, resulted in a unanimous "Ought to Pass" report by the committee. Although a fiscal note (to cover the future cost of screening mammograms for state employees) threatened to derail the bill, the many calls made to Appropriations Committee members during the final days of the session proved effective.

As a result of our intensive lobbying effort, which prominently featured scores of telephone calls and letters you, as Lobby members, made to your legislators, we won the battle!

In the final hours of the legislative session, both Republicans and Democrats, the Legislature and the Governor agreed the mammography bill should be approved.

The amended version of the bill, as finally passed:

- Guarantees that all insurance policies and plans sold or renewed in the state after March 1, 1991, will include coverage for screening mammograms in accordance with the American Cancer Society guideline.
- Directs the Maine Health Care Finance Commission to collect information from providers of mammography services, including the number and cost of screening mammograms performed in the state, and directs the Bureau of Insurance to collect information from insurers, including the amount of claims paid for screening mammograms.
- Authorizes the Mandated Benefits Advisory Commission to conduct and complete a study on all other existing mandates and to report to the Legislature on the social effect, financial impact, and medical efficacy of each by June 1, 1991.

The final directive indicates that the Legislature, next session, may take up a full debate on the merits of all mandated benefits—a debate that is likely to generate significant controversy.

We should be very proud and pleased about winning this critically important bill. However, we will need to remain vigilant in our efforts to preserve the mammogram mandate in its present form. Since the debate will be raised sometime in the future—maybe as early as next year—it becomes increasingly important for MWL members to consider becoming Local Lobby Coordinators to help mobilize other members on this and other issues which will arise next year.

NOTE: Although introduced as LD 2297, the mammography bill was assigned priority for passage by Legislative Leadership and the Appropriations Committee, and was, therefore, "amended into" the state budget document LD 2503. The new mammography law appears as Sec. "I" of Public Law 1989, Ch. 875.

MAINE WOMEN'S LOBBY ANNUAL MEETING

THURSDAY • JUNE 7, 1990

5:30 TO 9:00 P.M.

ALL SOULS UNITARIAN CHURCH
KING STREET, AUGUSTA

All Maine Women's Lobby members are encouraged to attend our 1990 Annual Meeting to be held on **June 7**. The evening will provide an opportunity to review the year's accomplishments, to plan for the upcoming challenges and opportunities, and to spend some social time together!*

If you do plan to attend, please RSVP no later than Wednesday, June 6, by calling 622-0851 (Augusta) or 773-0815 (Portland).

We look forward to seeing you on June 7th.

(*An informal dinner will be provided)

Maine NARAL and Maine Choice Coalition
Present:

1st Congressional District Candidate Forum

May 29, 1990

7:00-9:00 P.M.

Luther Bonney Auditorium
University of Southern Maine

Come hear the candidates' positions on abortion,
reproduction rights, and family planning issues.

For more information, call the MWL office, 622-0851

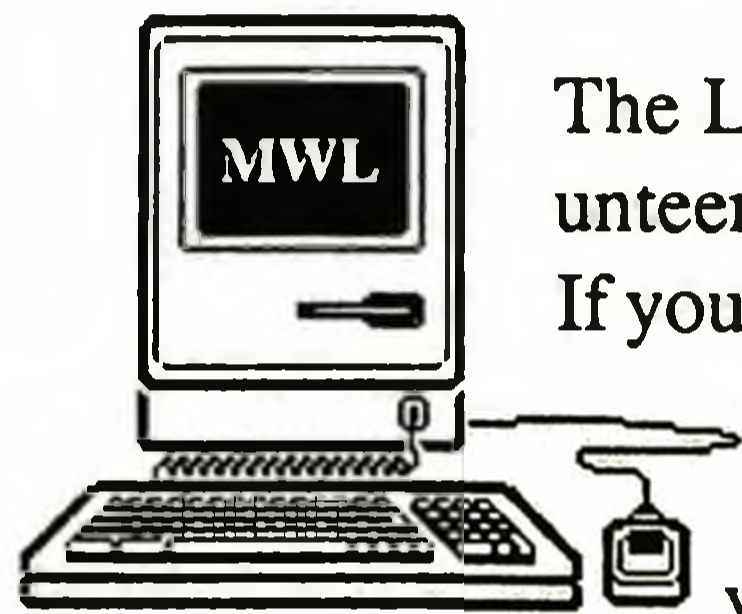
MWL SUMMER STATUS

The Office of the Maine Women's Lobby will be staffed full-time until mid-June and on a part-time basis between July and the end of November. To contact us, call 207/622-0851 or write to:

Maine Women's Lobby
P.O. Box 15
Hallowell, Maine 04347

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!!

CALLING ALL COMPUTERS



The Lobby is always looking for volunteers to enter data for mailing labels. If you have a computer which can generate labels in zip code order and are willing to help us convert lists into labels, please call Debbie at the Lobby office (622-0851). If you do not have a computer but would like to help, you can always work at the Lobby's office.

RAFFLE INCOME RECORD HIGH

MWL Board Thanks Evelyn Kieltyka

This year's raffle grossed a record high of \$3,980. With expenses of \$420, the net to the Lobby was \$3,480. The Lobby also broke new ground with this raffle by having a non-Board member responsible for coordinating the entire event. Evelyn Kieltyka, the Committee Chair, began work on the raffle last summer, recruiting her committee and soliciting arts and crafts donations. With over 20 prizes this year, another record was set!

The Board voted unanimously to commend Evelyn and her outstanding committee for their generous work on the raffle. A round of applause is in order for the Raffle Committee:

Evelyn Kieltyka, Chair
Lucy Grimes
Pat Harcourt
Polly Jones
Lisa Miller
Reid Scher
Linda Wilcox

Special thanks also to Representative Mary Cathcart,
who sold the most raffle tickets this year.

COMMISSION ESTABLISHED

Maine's newly-expanded domestic abuse law (PL 1989, Ch. 862) calls for the authorization of the Maine Commission on Domestic Abuse, a 12-member advisory commission to be appointed by the Governor. The Commission is charged with advising all three branches of government on issues related to domestic abuse.

The designated members of the Commission are listed below. If you represent one of the **public member** categories, you are entitled to apply to Governor McKernan for appointment. The Commission will formally convene some period after the effective date of the law in mid-July.

For more information on the application procedure, contact your local legislator, or call the Office of the Governor at 289-3531.

The law directs the Governor to choose 12 members, as follows:

- Two members who are representatives of the state-wide coalition of family crisis services (**public members**)
- Two members who are representatives of the family counselling profession, one of whom has experience counselling abusers (**public members**)
- One member who is a representative of the Maine Commission for Women
- Two members who are attorneys with experience in domestic relations cases, one of whom has experience representing victims of domestic abuse (**public members**)
- One member who was a victim of domestic abuse and used the court system (**public member**)
- One member who is a district attorney or assistant district attorney
- One member who is chief of a municipal police department
- One member who is a county sheriff
- The Commissioner of Public Safety or the Commissioner's designee

THEY DESERVE YOUR THANKS

As always, we URGE Lobby members to write or call legislators, particularly those who served as sponsors and co-sponsors of bills important to us. While all legislators should be thanked for their support of LD 2297, MWL members living in the districts represented by key supporters listed below should not fail to deliver a very special word of thanks!

Sponsors of LD 2297

AN ACT to Reduce the Incidence of Breast Cancer Mortality in Maine

Senator Tom Andrews, Sponsor
58 Gray Street
Portland, Maine 04101
774-6734

Representative Charlene Rydell,
Co-Sponsor and Chair of Banking
and Insurance Committee
RR #5, Box 5367, Woodward Point Road
Brunswick, Maine 04011
775-5803

Senator Nancy Randall Clark, Co-Sponsor
RR #2, Box 37
Freeport, Maine 04032
865-3363

Senator Pamela Cahill, Co-Sponsor
R.F.D. #3, Box 796
Wiscasset, Maine 04578
443-4429

Banking and Insurance Committee Members

**The Banking and
Insurance Commit-
tee issued a unani-
mous "Ought to Pass"
recommendation**

- Senator Ray Theriault, Fort Kent (Senate Chair)
- * Representative Charlene Rydell, Brunswick (House Chair and Co-Sponsor)
- Representative Carol Allen, Washington
Senator Beverly Miner Bustin, Augusta
Senator Don Collins, Caribou
Representative Phil Curran, Westbrook
Representative Harvey Donald, Buxton
- * Representative Phyllis Erwin, Rumford
 - Representative Joe Garland, Bangor
 - * Representative Ruth Joseph, Waterville
 - * Representative Harriet Ketover, Portland
 - * Representative Ann Rand, Portland
 - Representative Dick Tracy, Rome

Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee Members

The Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee unanimously endorsed LD 2297 with estimated future costs

Senator Michael Pearson, Old Town (Senate Chair)
Representative Don Carter, Winslow
(House Chair)
Senator Joe Brannigan, Portland
Representative Don Carroll, Gray
Representative Lorraine Chonko, Topsham
Representative Judy Foss, Yarmouth
Representative Ruth Foster, Ellsworth
Representative Lin Higgins, Scarborough
Representative John Lisnik, Presque Isle
Representative Pat McGowan, Canaan
Senator Tom Perkins, Blue Hill
Representative Roger Pouliot, Lewiston
Representative Vinton Ridley, Shapleigh

Members of Legislative Leadership

House and Senate Leaders unanimously endorsed LD 2297 as a priority for passage

Senate President Charles Pray, Millinocket
* Senate Majority Leader Nancy Randall Clark, Freeport
Assistant Senate Majority Leader Dennis Dutremble, Biddeford
Senate Minority Leader Charles Webster, Farmington
* Assistant Senate Minority Leader Pam Cahill, Wiscasset
House Speaker John Martin, Eagle Lake
House Majority Leader Dan Gwadosky, Fairfield
Majority Whip Joe Mayo, Thomaston
House Minority Leader Mary Webster, Cape Elizabeth
Assistant House Minority Leader Francis Marsano, Belfast

Please also call or write to Governor McKernan to thank him for his administration's support of the bill:

The Honorable John R. McKernan
Office of the Governor
State House Station #1
Augusta, Maine 04333
Telephone: 289-3531

How can you help mobilize the Maine Women's Lobby? . . .

Volunteer as the
LOCAL LOBBY COORDINATOR
in your area!!!

Next year promises a number of formidable challenges to the MWL at the State House: the possibility of proposals to restrict coverage for the mammogram insurance benefit, won just this past session; the assault on legal abortion and reproductive freedom, expected to be waged by anti-choice forces; and the ongoing battle to save programs threatened by a growing state deficit, expected to double by next year.

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED! To continue to work effectively, the Lobby needs local coordinators to help organize letter-writing or telephone call campaigns in each and every legislative district.

Local Lobby Coordinators are responsible for helping set up a network of responsive MWL members in their area when we face important votes at the Legislature.

The MWL office will provide you the support and guidance necessary to help you communicate effectively with your legislator and to work with other MWL members in your area.

**SERVING AS A LOCAL LOBBY COORDINATOR DOES NOT REQUIRE
A LOT OF TIME OR WORK!**

If you are able to commit a maximum of one and a half hours per month to grassroots lobbying (the most important kind of all), then please agree to serve as a LOCAL LOBBY COORDINATOR. Please complete this form and mail it to us as soon as possible!

THANK YOU

LOCAL LOBBY COORDINATOR FORM

Name: _____ Address: _____

Town and Zip Code: _____

Telephone Numbers: (Day) _____ (Evening) _____

_____ Yes, I am interested in serving as a Local Lobby Coordinator in my area, which includes the following town(s):

_____ I would like to learn more about being a Local Lobby Coordinator.

Please complete and return this form as soon as possible to:
MWL, P.O. Box 15, Hallowell, Maine 04347

114TH LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

END OF THE SESSION REPORT

The fiscal crisis faced by state government this year posed a serious threat to many programs for which the Lobby and its allies have worked for many years. Luckily, no direct budget cuts were proposed for family planning, child care, or rape crisis centers. However, the consequences of the fiscal crisis were, nonetheless, felt in significant ways. For example, for the first time in many years, AFDC families will receive no increase in benefits. No funds were invested in new programs, or programs requiring expansion, to support mothers and children at risk, displaced homemakers, or elderly women.

The Legislature did succeed, however, in restoring the Maine Health Program, revising the domestic violence statute to expand protection to battered women, and providing support for Maine's uninsured and underinsured.

The following summarizes final action on bills actively supported by the Lobby and other partner organizations of the Women's Legislative Agenda Coalition (WLAC), as well as other measures of concern to women and families.

For copies of new laws, call or write the Engrossing Department, Maine State Legislature, State House Station #115, Augusta, Maine 04333 (289-1649). Reference all new laws by their Public Law Chapter number.²

BILLS PASSED INTO PUBLIC LAW

• AN ACT to Reduce the Incidence of Breast Cancer Mortality in Maine •

(PL 1989, Ch. 875 of Section "I")

WLAC Sponsor: Maine Women's Lobby

Legislative Sponsors: Senator Tom Andrews, Senator Nancy Clark, Senator Pam Cahill, Representative Charlene Rydell

Committee: Banking and Insurance

Final Action: "Amended into" budget document and unanimously passed by Legislature (see cover story)

• AA to Provide Greater Protection Under the Domestic Abuse Laws •

(LD 2458; PL 1989, Ch. 862)

WLAC Sponsor: Maine Coalition for Family Crisis Services

Original Sponsors: Representative Mary Cathcart, Representative Susan Farnsworth, Senator Muriel Holloway, Representative Jack Richards

Summary and Final Status: The Judiciary Committee issued this "committee bill" after weeks of deliberation on LD's 2177 and 2287. The committee version, incorporating the best of both bills:

1. Provides for a broader definition of abuse, to include:
 - terrorizing an individual;
 - attempting to place or actually placing an individual in fear of bodily injury, regardless of whether bodily injury actually occurs; and
 - forcing or compelling an individual to engage or sustain from conduct.

²All laws passed by the 114th Legislature are referenced as Public Law 1989, even if they were actually passed in 1990.

2. Creates a broader definition of “family or household members” to include individuals presently or formerly living together as sexual partners.
3. Establishes the Maine Commission on Domestic Abuse (see related article).
4. Expedites and simplifies procedures in the criminal justice system to be more responsive to the victim of abuse, as follows:
 - requiring court personnel to inform a victim of other courts where a judge may be immediately available, if one is not available where the victim files;
 - authorizing the court clerk to provide to victims written notice of legal and social resources;
 - broadening the criteria for issuing a protective order;
 - guaranteeing victims the opportunity to be heard by the presiding judge, if the judge is contemplating denial of protection;
 - simplifying the procedure by which a law enforcement officer serves an order to an abuser;
 - ensuring that only the defendant, and not the victim, can be ordered by the court to receive counselling;
 - prohibiting the court from issuing “mutual orders;”
 - clarifying that the victim’s actions cannot modify or render invalid the protective order against her abuser;
 - prohibiting mandatory mediation; and
 - requiring all Maine law enforcement agencies to adopt a written policy on the handling of domestic abuse cases.

• AA to Ensure Continuity of Health Insurance Coverage •
(LD 2274; PL 1989, Ch. 867)

WLAC Sponsor: Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods. Also the key legislative initiative of Consumers for Affordable Health Care Coalition, of which MWL is a partner organization.

Legislative Sponsors: Representative Charlene Rydell, Senator Ray Theriault, Senator Bev Bustin, Representative Peter Manning

Summary and Final Action: The final version of LD 2274 is a compromise package incorporating aspects of two other competing measures presented by the State Bureau of Insurance and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Maine. This landmark legislation will limit the practice of insurance companies to “dump” customers with pre-existing conditions, thereby increasing the burden of health care costs on public programs, Blue Cross, and the taxpayers. Presently, insurance companies are permitted to refuse coverage to individuals with pre-existing conditions who change jobs or insurance carriers—even if they have been previously insured and even if it is a low-risk, low-cost, low-maintenance condition, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, etc. Providing greater protection for those covered by group policies or contracts, the new law will, as of October 1st, guarantee employers with group plans to seek lower rates and change insurers without fear that workers with previous medical problems will lose coverage. Beginning April 1, 1991, it will guarantee continuous coverage for individuals who transfer from one group policy to another when they change jobs. The new law will also afford continuity protection to Medicaid recipients and veterans re-entering the job market, as well as disabled workers. It will further protect employers changing insurers by imposing a 10% cap as the maximum rate increase allowed. To address the needs of those left unprotected by this law—including “micro” businesses too small to qualify for group coverage, self-employed Mainers, and others with individual policies—the legislation sets up a Task Force for future recommendations. For more information about the new law, contact the Consumers for Affordable Health Care Coalition at P.O. Box 17534, Portland, Maine 04101 (761-4000).

• AA to Provide Access to Preventive Dental Care Services for Medicaid Eligible Elderly, Disabled, and Low-Income Clients •

(LD 1934; PL 1989, Ch. 904)

WLAC Sponsor: Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods

Legislative Sponsors: Representative Marge Clark, Senator Paul Gauvreau, Senator Joseph Brannigan, Representative Christine Burke

Summary and Final Action: The amended version of this bill directs the Department of Human Services to seek waivers from the federal government in order to expand Medicaid dental services, on a demonstration basis, to eligible adults. Presently, the Medicaid dental program provides services to children, but on an emergency basis only to adults. The purpose of a demonstration project is to demonstrate the long-term cost effectiveness of providing diagnostic, corrective, and preventive care.

• AA to Provide Greater Compliance with General Assistance Laws •

(LD 2239; PL 1989, Ch. 699)

WLAC Sponsor: Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods

Legislative Sponsors: Representative Marge Clark, Representative Christine Burke, Senator Paul Gauvreau, Senator Joe Brannigan

Summary and Final Action: The amended version finally passed will require all towns to post, in their local general assistance offices or another designated location, the toll-free state number for making complaints, thereby providing individuals recourse for wrongful denial. Deleted were provisions of the original bill proposing increased penalties against a municipality that wrongfully denies an applicant for public assistance and establishing methods to provide recompense to wrongfully denied clients.

• AA to Amend the Law Governing Family and Medical Leave •

(LD 1908; PL 1989, Ch. 738)

WLAC Sponsor: Maine Commission for Women

Legislative Sponsors: Representative Marge Clark, House Speaker John Martin, Senator Nancy Clark, Senator Don Esty

Summary and Final Action: The measure, passed unanimously by the Legislature, repealed a “sunset” provision which would have made Maine’s family and medical leave law automatically expire on July 1, 1990, and has thereby placed the law permanently on the books. The amended version also requires posting of the rights afforded by the law in all workplaces.

• AA to Implement Certain Provisions of the Federal Family Support Act of 1988 and Improve Access to Services in the Additional Support for People in Retraining and Education Program •

(LD 2202; PL 1989, Ch. 839)

WLAC Sponsor: Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods

Legislative Sponsors: Representative Marge Clark, Representative John Lisnik, House Speaker John Martin, Senator Paul Gauvreau

Summary and Final Action: The provisions included in the bill to restore governing responsibility for the ASPIRE program to the Department of Human Services were rejected. The much amended version which finally passed gave the state authority to adopt options within the Federal Family Support Act, including transitional support services for individuals entering the job market. That support will include 12 months’ compensation for child care expenses, 12 months of Medicaid coverage, and three months for employment-related transportation expenses. The companion measure (LD 2198), seeking additional dollars to address the program’s long waiting list, was rejected.

• **AA to Reduce the Use of Toxic Substances in the Workplace and Minimize the Generation of Hazardous Waste •**

(LD 2192; PL 1989, Ch. 929)

Sponsors: Representative Ida Luther, Senator Judy Kany, Representative Anne Rand, Representative Paul Jacques

Summary and Final Action: Following the Governor's veto of the amended bill issued by the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, the measure was revived, altered, and ultimately won both legislative and gubernatorial approval. The product of a coalition of labor and environmental advocates, the bill will place Maine industries on a schedule, beginning in 1992, to reduce exposure to hazardous wastes and chemicals in the workplace and the environment. The MWL testified in support of the legislation, emphasizing the importance of regulating and minimizing exposure to toxins hazardous to reproductive health. Such efforts are far preferable to discriminatory policies in other states that have restricted equal employment opportunities for women of child bearing age.

• **AA to Amend the Maine Human Rights Act to Prohibit Educational Discrimination on the Basis of National Origin •**

(LD 1877; PL 1989, Ch. 725)

Sponsors: Representative Pat Paradis, House Speaker John Martin, Senator Steve Estes, Senator Barbara Gill

Summary and Final Action: Although the original bill proposed only to extend protection against unlawful educational discrimination based on national origin, an amendment proposed by a private organization proposed to exempt all private clubs from the Maine Human Rights Act, thereby allowing such institutions to discriminate on the basis of race, religion, handicap, and sex. MWL neither supported nor opposed the original bill, but opposed this amendment. Both houses accepted the Judiciary Committee's recommendation to reject the amendment.

• **AA to Promote Equity of Opportunity for Women in Administrative Positions in the Public School System •**

(LD 2342; PL 1989, Ch. 889)

Reported by: Representative Jim Handy of the Joint Standing Committee on Education

Summary and Final Action: Originally the majority report of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Gender Equity in the Public School System, the amended version passed will: 1) establish, in the Department of Education and Cultural Services (DECS), a model hiring procedure to increase access by women to administrative positions; 2) develop a statewide five-year goal for appointment of women in administrative positions; and 3) direct the University of Maine system to work in cooperation with the DECS and the Human Rights Commission to determine how it will implement similar recommendations. The bill's price tag, which would have funded a progress report to the Legislature and the Governor, was deleted.

• **AA Concerning Living Wills •**

(LD 2074; PL 1989, Ch. 830)

Reported by: Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

Summary and Final Action: This committee bill refines the law governing individual declarations concerning the withholding or withdrawing of life-sustaining treatment. One of the original measures upon which the committee's deliberations was based included a restriction on the right of a pregnant patient to have a valid living will, a provision the MWL opposed. This provision was not included in the final version passed.



BILLS KILLED FOR LACK OF FUNDING

- **AN ACT to Develop a Pilot Project for a Substance Abuse Halfway House for Pregnant Women and Mothers of Young Children •**
(LD 2280)

WLAC Sponsor: Maine Women's Lobby

Legislative Sponsors: Representative Marge Clark, Senator Nancy Clark, Senator Pam Cahill, Representative Lorraine Chonko

Summary and Final Action: This measure originally proposed a \$150,000 General Fund appropriation to provide child care services for pregnant and parenting women in residential substance abuse treatment. Given general fund budget constraints, an amendment was presented to save the measure by proposing that future increases in the federal block grant for alcohol and drug rehabilitation be utilized for the pilot project. The Appropriations Committee resisted committing future dollars and issued a unanimous "Ought Not to Pass" recommendation.

- **AA to Enhance Access to Prenatal Care in Underserved Areas •**
(LD 1983)

WLAC Sponsor: Family Planning Association of Maine

Legislative Sponsors: Senator Pam Cahill, Senator Paul Gauvreau, Representative Marge Clark, Representative Donnell Carroll

Summary and Final Action: Proposed a \$75,000 General Fund appropriation to provide clinic-based prenatal services to Medicaid recipients in underserved areas of the state. Although the Family Planning Association organized a strong show of support from the medical community at its public hearing, the bill died in Appropriations Committee.

- **AA to Increase Displaced Homemakers Program Funding to Continue Rural Outreach, Employment, and Training and Support Services for Maine Displaced Homemakers •**
(LD 1856)

WLAC Sponsor: Maine Displaced Homemaker Project

Legislative Sponsors: Representative John Lisnik, Representative Ruth Foster, Representative Judy Foss, Senator Nancy Clark

Summary and Final Action: This measure, which died in the Appropriations Committee, called for \$225,378 to continue seven displaced homemaker project staff positions to maintain and expand outreach, training, and support services to displaced homemakers living in rural areas of the state.

- **AA to Provide for Smoking Cessation Programs and Substance Abuse Education in the Maine WIC Program •**
(LD 1997)

WLAC Sponsor: WIC Directors' Association

Legislative Sponsors: Senator Nancy Clark, Senator Barbara Bill, Representative Ruth Foster, Representative John Lisnik

Summary and Final Action: Proposed \$70,000 to establish smoking cessation and substance abuse counselling in Maine's Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program. Died in Committee.

- **AA to Improve the Standard of Living of Children from Low-Income Families •**
(LD 2136) and

- **AA to Provide for Annual Increases in the Aid to Families with Dependent Children Standard of Need •**
(LD 2430)

WLAC Sponsor: Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods

Legislative Sponsors: Senator Nancy Clark, Senator Joe Brannigan, Representative Christine Burke, Representative Donnell Carroll

Summary and Status: Of all bills killed due to the budget shortfall, these clearly have the gravest consequences. Although Maine has been more generous than other states in compensating for diminishing federal dollars, the rate of increases to Maine's AFDC families lags 35% behind the rate of inflation. The 8% increase proposed by LD 2136 or the automatic annual increases proposed in LD 2430 would have helped AFDC families gain ground. The single AFDC-related bill which survived will direct the Department of Human Services to study how the state might draw down federal dollars to fund a special housing allowance within the AFDC program.

**• AA Concerning Availability of Income Between Spouses in the Determination of
Medicaid Eligibility for Nursing Home Level Care •**
(LD 2081)

Sponsors: House Speaker John Martin, Representative John Lisnik

Summary and Final Action: Would have directed the Department of Human Services to conform state policy with federal law governing the spousal impoverishment provision of the Medicare Catastrophic Illness Act. The bill would have required that no more than 50% of a couple's income be considered available to one spouse. This asset equity provision would guarantee that a couple's income would not be entirely depleted by medical care expenses if one spouse is placed in a nursing home.

• RESOLVE, to Support a Study on Gender Bias in the Maine Courts •
(LD 2003)

Sponsors: Senator Nancy Clark, Representative Judy Foss, Senator Muriel Holloway

Summary and Final Action: Requested a \$151,750 appropriation to fund a study to determine to what extent gender bias toward women clients and lawyers exists in Maine's judicial system.

**• AA to Provide Emergency Supplemental Funding to Maintain the Current Level of
AIDS-Related Community-Based Services Provided Through the AIDS Project •**

Sponsor: Representative Gerry Conley

Summary and Final Action: Initiative proposed a \$92,000 appropriation to maintain the AIDS Project's outreach and education program at present levels.

BILLS DEFEATED

**• AN ACT to Remove Barriers to the Location of Family Day Care Homes in
Areas Zoned for Residential Use •**
(LD 2209)

Sponsors: Representative Wendy Ault, Representative Charles Priest

Summary and Final Action: Because some municipalities have prohibited family day care providers from operating in certain areas, this bill would have prohibited towns from "zoning out" day care centers with 12 or fewer children. Opposing arguments that such a law would violate the spirit of "home rule" prompted withdrawal of the bill prior to unanimous rejection by the full Legislature.

• AA Concerning the State Minimum Wage •
(LD 2279)

Sponsors: Representative Ed McHenry, Senate President Charles Pray, House Speaker John Martin

Summary and Final Action: The amended version issued from the Labor Committee, with a majority "Ought to Pass" recommendation, proposed to annually "index" the state's minimum wage by the same percentage increase (or decrease) of the state's average weekly wage for the prior calendar year. In addition to delaying the effective date until January 1, 1993, the amendment proposed a 3% cap on each annual increase. The bill died in "committee of conference" when the Senate and House refused to agree.

MAINE HEALTH PROGRAM RESTORED

Thanks to the hard work of a coalition of business people, health care providers, and consumer advocates—including Consumers for Affordable Health Care—the Maine Health Program is back on line!

Rather than the nine-month delay proposed by the Governor, the program will be delayed only three months. It is now scheduled to begin on September 1, 1990. (This start-up date is contingent on receipt of federal grant dollars; if Maine does not receive those funds, the program will begin on October 1, 1990.)

The lengthy and challenging battle to come up with the additional \$10 million for the Maine Health Program start up illustrates how programs so critically important to low-income and working people were hit hardest by the state's deficit.

Our applause and thanks to members of the coalition, including Kit St. John of Pine Tree Legal, Bonnie Post of the Maine Ambulatory Care Coalition, Roger Mallar of the Maine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Steve Michaud of the Maine Hospital Association.

AT&T WITHDRAWS FUNDING

AT&T has yielded to pressure from the Christian Action Council and other right wing anti-choice groups, ending its 25-year support of Planned Parenthood's education and teen pregnancy programs.

AT&T's financial support, which in recent years has totalled \$50,000 annually, was not used to provide abortion services.

Planned Parenthood is asking all pro-choice supporters to protest the AT&T board action by calling or writing:

Robert E. Allen
CEO and Chairman of the Board
AT&T, 550 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022-3297
212/644-1000

**DON'T DELAY -
LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD
TODAY!**



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