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April/May/June 1989

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Inform

Published by The Maine Commission for Women

FROM THE CHAIR

This issue of *Inform* focuses on activities relating to women in the 114th legislative session. The Maine Commission for Women continues to take a lead role in working with the Women's Legislative Agenda Coalition in supporting legislation which includes bills that will improve access to child care, establish a Blue Ribbon Task Force to study sex discrimination in the public school system, amend sex offense statutes to make them stronger, improve family communications with adolescents, provide increased funding for family planning associations and displaced homemakers. In addition, the Commission continues its opposition to the parental consent bill which would restrict a pregnant teen's right to reproductive choice.

Also in this issue you will find an update of our three regional commissions from northern, eastern and southern Maine. Many of the members of the regional commissions attended the conference the Commission co-sponsored with 17 other women's groups in Maine called "We the People: Women's Day at the Legislature" held in March. This was a very successful day with over 350 women (and men) in attendance. A special thank you to President of the Senate Charles Pray and Speaker of the House John Martin for welcoming our group. In addition, Senate Majority Leader Nancy Randall Clark and House Minority Leader Mary Clark Webster updated us on current legislative issues. We are very proud to have these women representing us in the legislature.

As of April 1, 1989, Betsy Sweet, our Executive Director, has taken a job with the Aspirations Program at the University of Maine at Orono. We are very pleased that she has been given this opportunity to work with students throughout the state of Maine and thank her for all her efforts in

working for equality for women over the past four years. We are pleased to welcome Leslie Anderson, from Saco, who is serving as Acting Executive Director through June.

Our second annual meeting will be held on June 16, 1989 at the Augusta Civic Center (see enclosed agenda and registration form). The Commission is asking for nominations for its Annual Progress Awards to recognize individuals, businesses or organizations who have made a significant contribution in one of our focus areas: 1. Women, Work and Family, 2. The Quest for Equality, or 3. Creation of a Nonviolent Future.

We are very excited to have Tabitha King from Bangor as our keynote speaker this year. As I'm sure you know, she and her husband Steven King are both authors and Tabitha has been active in women's issues for many years. I hope to see many of you at our Annual Meeting on June 16.

- Patricia C. Bourgoin

Overview of Legislation Relating to Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

by Jennifer Wiggins, Esq.

The development of sexual harassment law is one of the greatest achievements in law of the recent women's movement. It is probably the only legal theory (so far) to be developed primarily by and for women. It can, of course, protect men as well. Sexual harassment in employment is now recognized in every State as a form of sexual discrimination - it is outlawed just as paying women less for the same work as men is outlawed. Sexual harassment on the job in Maine is outlawed by the Maine Human Rights Act, and by regulations which spell out employers' obligations in some detail. Victims of sexual harassment can make a complaint through the Human Rights Commission and can sometimes sue on other grounds as well.

Employers have for the last several years made the argument that sexual harassment is essentially a "workplace injury" which is covered by workers' compensation. Under workers' compensation, an employee who has a workplace injury where the employer has workers' compensation insurance, can not sue the employer but must seek workers' compensation instead.

The employers' argument means that if a woman is sexually harassed at work, she is limited to the remedies in the workers' compensation act. A Woman must report the harassment within 10 days, her recovery will always be limited no matter how severe the harassment was, and she

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will not be able to sue for discrimination or anything else arising from the harassment. This means that most sexual harassment claims will be thrown out because most women do not think of sexual harassment as a workplace injury and simply miss the 10-day reporting deadline.

People who are concerned about workplace sexual harassment have been fighting this notion, because, they argue, women should not be limited to the remedies in the workers' compensation act and because sexual harassment is, in fact, sex discrimination. It is not the equivalent of breaking an arm at work and should not be treated that way by the law.

The Maine Supreme Court last year in Knox vs. Combined Insurance Co. of America (denied June 7, 1988), seemed to begin to accept the employers' argument. The court wrote that sexual harassment could be work-related because of the nature of the workplace setting or other factors, and that if it was work-related, the

sexual harassment victim could only use the workers' compensation law to get justice.

This is a dangerous idea. It seems to ignore fact that sexual harassment is a form of discrimination. Imagine a Court decision about racial harassment which said that for some jobs, racial harassment simply arose because of the nature of the workplace setting and it should be treated under workers' compensation. In addition, it means that the employees' recourse, if the injury is "work-related" is extremely limited. It also means courts will have to get involved in all kinds of determinations about whether sexual harassment is so "work-related" that it falls under workers' compensation, which are really side issues to the fact of sexual harassments and the harm it causes.

A bill sponsored by Senator Marge Clark seeks to address this problem of remedies for victims of workplace sexual harassment. The bill would allow women to choose whether to use the route of workers' compensation, which may bring a quicker recovery but which would limit

the possible recovery, or whether to instead seek other remedies like discrimination claims or suits for assault and infliction of emotional distress. This bill will protect the rights of employees who are victims of sexual harassment and ensure that they have maximum flexibility in seeking compensation.

—Jennifer Wriggins

REGIONAL COMMISSION REPORTS

EASTERN REGION

We began, as most groups do, as an amalgam of friends, acquaintances and strangers. Wading through the start-up process as quickly as possible, we christened ourselves the Eastern Regional Commission for Women – not glamorous but descriptive. Then we set about our task of working for women in the eastern Maine area.

Public Forum Held

Early on we decided on an annual public forum as the means of setting our agenda for the following year, informing our constituency of what had been accomplished in the struggle for women's rights (when will that phrase become obsolete?) and recruiting new members.

At the first public meeting Betsy Sweet and Patty Bourgoin joined us for a meeting with about fifty Bangor-area women. Among the problems listed were child care, rape crisis counseling, pay equity, women in poverty, educational and job opportunities, housing, self-worth, political access, domestic violence – the normal litany of problems assaulting women. The BIG job lay in assigning priorities to the tasks.

Priority Issues

We chose rape crisis services as the first priority because Bangor had been without a crisis center for about three years. Sharon Barker headed the committee of four which began OUR assault on rape. We spent the winter gathering information on why the old center failed, what financial support we might expect from the state and what emotional support we would get from the state Rape Coalition. In April we held another public meeting

NOMINATION REQUEST for the Maine Commission for Women 1989 Progress Awards

The Maine Commission for Women (MCW) wishes to announce its 1989 Progress Awards to be given to at least one individual and one organization or business that have made a significant contribution to the advancement of women and girls in Maine. The 1989 Progress Awards will be presented at the MCW's annual meeting to be held in June 1989.

Nominations may be made by an individual, organization or business and should explain in no more than 250 words or less how the nominee has made a qualitative difference in one of the following MCW priority areas: women, work and family (including such areas as child care, provision of benefits, pay equity, flexible workplace policies); the quest for equality (including areas such as affirmative action, civil rights, reproductive health); and the creation of a non-violent future (including issues concerned with domestic violence, rape, incest services for victims and preventive measures).

Please complete the following:

Nominee's Name: _____

Organization/Business (if any) _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Your Name: _____

Organization/Business (if any) _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

(Please type or print on a separate sheet, in no more than 250 words or less, in what ways the nominee has made a significant contribution to one or more of the MCW's goals as stated above.)

All nominations must be received at the MCW office no later than May 26, 1989. Please mail to: MAINE COMMISSION FOR WOMEN, STATE HOUSE STATION 93, AUGUSTA, ME 04333. THANK YOU.

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which resulted in the nucleus of a board of directors to guide the new Bangor rape crisis center. At that point, the ERCW formally withdrew; we had reached our goal of starting the project.

The Commission member who has remained (by choice) with the rape project reports that the Executive Director, Lennie Mullen-Giles, has jumped into the fray with both feet. The first class of over 30 volunteers begins training in May. The hotline should be in place by the end of July and then the real work begins!

In February we held our second annual public meeting. It was a bitterly cold night, but about twenty-five new faces attended. What emerged as the overriding concern this year was reproductive choice. In response to those concerns, ERCW formed a Pro-Choice Committee, which immediately reached out into the community to draw in more women. At present there are about 30 women who are actively involved in lobbying legislators to defeat the Parental Consent Referendum. The group plans to become the nucleus of a chapter of the National Abortion Rights Action League – the first in Maine.

At least three members of the ERCW – Mary Cathcart, Martha Wildman and Sharon Barker – attended the march in Washington on April 9. All three returned exhausted but exhilarated and empowered by the spectacle of hundreds of thousands of people banded together in support of a woman's right to privacy and choice.

Women's History Month

During Women's History Month in 1988 and 1989, the ERCW coordinated the placing of window displays in store windows in downtown Bangor. Both years, eight women's organizations participated.

In 1989, we decided we wanted to do something more than the window displays. We settled on a tabloid supplement to the Bangor Daily News. Initially dismayed at the cost, we decided to negotiate with the BDN. Chair Bobbie Flynn and Barbara Bowler met with BDN editorial and advertising heads and convinced them to undertake the supplement entirely as an advertising venture. The MCW was then brought in and assumed editorial control of the project. While the supplement was not as large as we had initially hoped, the BDN was delighted, reader response was positive and the paper plans to do it again next year.

In late summer and fall, the ERCW held two news conferences in conjunction with those held by the MCW on the Parental Leave Act and Get Out the Vote. Both were well attended by Bangor media.

Committees and Projects

The Women's Veterans Committee has been searching for constructive ways to identify and help Maine women veterans of Vietnam. Joe DeGrasse, a counselor with the Vietnam Veterans Center in Bangor, has been invaluable in his help and support. We will keep you informed.

The Women in Poverty Committee at first suffered from an "It's-so-big-where-do-we-start" syndrome, but has begun to see a way in which we can both serve low-income women and also begin the process of community education regarding their plight.

An on-going activity we have added, at the suggestion of Juliet Kellogg, is an advertising watch. Commission members keep an eye – and ear – alert for advertising messages that portray women in a derogatory or sexist manner. We then notify the advertiser, the medium, and the advertising agency about the offending advertisement. We are also keeping a file of the material.

In the midst of these activities the Commission as a whole has remained concerned about process and continuity. Martha Wildman agreed to chair the Policies and Procedures committee, which has undertaken the job of "how" and "why" we do what we do, to lay out guidelines for Commissioners who will follow us. The committee has managed to accomplish a great deal in a very short time, and our basic organizational structure is now nearly complete.

Commission members for the first year were Sharon Barker, Barbara Bowler, Mary Cathcart, Linda Conn, Cynthia Esty-Kendall, Bobbie Flynn, Judy Harrison, Chris Hartman, Maureen Holden, Juliet Kellogg, Carol Kulberg, Patti Lisse, Alicia Nichols, Susan McKay, Kathryn Richards, Deborah Riley, Mary Skaggs, Blanca Skidgel, Mary Strathdee, Martha Wildman. Over the year Susan D'Alessandro and Evelyn Dearborn joined us. And just recently – to fill vacancies created by expired terms –

we have added Stefani Berkey, Suzanne Estler and Cathy Pope.

In working in the community during the past year we have discovered that while there have been gains in women's rights, the goal of equality of opportunity often seems as elusive as it was at Seneca Falls. But when we hear the report of the recent March, and attend meetings and see the resolve in the faces of the women – young, old and in between – we can understand the faith and hope that buoyed up Alice Paul, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony and all of our nameless sisters who have struggled through centuries of prejudice and oppression.

It gives one hope!

Contact: Chair - Roberta Flynn - 947-8493.

SOUTHERN REGION

The SRCW has experienced start-up difficulties, but a core group of members have now passed a set of by-laws which have been sent to the Maine Commission for Women for their approval. We have been meeting every month since last May when the organizational session was held and at which many members were present. Since that time, we have done a re-evaluation of our meeting dates, times and organization in order to become a more participatory and effective group.

Committees:

Cindy Arn was elected Chairperson and is assisted by Helen Leddy and Diane Merrifield. Ginny LaCrow serves as Chairperson of the Membership Committee. That committee is currently concerned with the recruitment of new members and

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PRO-CHOICE RALLY

June 14 – 5:00 P.M.

Monument Square, Portland

Sponsored by the
Maine Coalition for Choice

Anyone interested in further information or in assisting
in planning the event please contact
Helen Leddy 775-5411 or Cynthia Arn 775-6371.

is planning a program to recruit more members from diverse segments of the Southern Maine population. Pam Tetley is serving as Chairperson of the Focus Group committee. We have been meeting with groups of women in Southern Maine who represent various segments of the population. The focus groups are facilitated by members of the Southern Maine Commission who have devised a series of questions which are posed to the individual women attending the focus group sessions. We have accumulated much data from these groups, but want to expand the number of women with whom we have been meeting; thus, the committee was formed to implement this new perspective.

Women's History Month

Members of the Commission were asked to speak at various educational agencies in Southern Maine to explain Women's History Month and the contest. Several members also served as readers for the contest.

Pro-Choice Coalition and Rally

The Southern Regional Commission for Women has recently begun to rally around the issue of reproductive choice. The decision to make that issue a focal point was spurred on by the parental consent bill currently before the legislature. Chair pro tem Cynthia Arn attended the legislative hearing on this bill on April 6 and testified to the ineffectiveness and burdensomeness of the judicial bypass aspect of the bill. She also took part in a panel discussion at USM on March 21, sponsored by the USM Women's Forum, dealing with various reproductive choice issues. Most recently the SRCW has begun plans to coordinate a coalition in Southern Maine supporting pro-choice issues.

At our May 9 meeting, we will be organizing a pro-choice rally in Portland which will be held on June 14. We are asking women in community organizations and the community-at-large to come to the organizational meeting in order to build a coalition of women for more participation in the June 14 event. We also plan to invite the Maine members of Congress as well as State legislators. Anyone interested in joining this coalition or supporting this effort, please contact Cynthia Arn at 775-6371 or Vice Chair pro tem Helen Leddy at 775-5411.

Contact Chair - Cindy Arn - 775-6371.

CALENDAR

- | | |
|------------|---|
| June 10 | "Fifty Ways to Make Money with Your Computer, with Emphasis on Home-Based Business", sponsored by the non-profit Island/Reach Computer Users Group of Hancock County. China Hill Restaurant, Ellsworth, \$30.00 with lunch and resource materials. Call or write Rowan Wakefield, I/RCUG, P.O. Box 73, Deer Isle, ME 04627, 348-9917. |
| June 14 | Pro-Choice Rally, Portland, 5:00 p.m. Sponsored by Southern Regional Commission for Women (Helen Leddy 775-5411). |
| June 15-17 | First New England Conference on Adult Children of Alcoholics, Sonesta Hotel, Portland. (Training in support and services for children of all ages who experienced growing up in an alcoholic/chemically dependent home.) 775-5411 |
| June 16 | Maine Commission for Women - Annual Meeting, North Wing, Civic Center, Augusta (289-3417). |
| June 17-19 | Summer by the Sea - Sponsored by "Looking Up" - a 3-day outdoor challenge trip for non-backpackers - for adult women survivors of incest. Registration deadline June 2, limit, 8 (Call 626-3402 for information.) |
| July 23-28 | UCLEA Summer Institute for Union Women - Bureau of Labor Education and the University and College Labor Education Association, University of Maine in Orono. (Conference designed to increase women's participation in their unions.) |
| Oct. 27-28 | New England Regional National Association for Commission Women meeting, Brattleboro, VT., Quality Inn. |

NORTHERN REGION

After four months of meetings in 1987, the Northern Regional Commission for Women (NRCW) voted unanimous approval of proposed bylaws in January 1988. These bylaws were subsequently approved by the MCW and we became an official organization.

Focus Issues

The NRCW members determined that the NRCW needed to make a realistic assessment of our goals and objectives. Discussion of this issue concluded that the NRCW is charged with attempting to identify any issues that create deterrents for women and girls that are unique to Aroostook County.

A policy committee was formed to define how the NRCW would determine what types of activities the NRCW should consider supporting. Primarily, the policy committee recommended a careful evaluation of all proposals before determining an action the NRCW might want to undertake. These should be programs or activities that promote a greater well being of the women and girls in Aroostook County.

NRCW members have concluded that there are four areas of concern that the Commission needs to pursue. They are (1) needs of elderly women (2) child care (3) a violent free society and (4) economic

equity. The Commission created committees to study each of these issues. The committees meet on a regular basis and report to the full commission at regular meetings.

At our March meeting, the NRCW decided to add a fifth issue, education and aspirations. This committee may become consolidated with the economic equity committee. We have learned very quickly that most women's issues are intricately interrelated. For example, availability of child care has a great influence on women's ability to be successful in the workforce.

Women's History Month

The NRCW has been very supportive of all National Women's History Month (NWHM) activities. Members individually contacted many area schools and encouraged participation in the MCW essay contest. The NRCW has forwarded to the MCW a recommendation that there be regional essay contest winners in 1990. We feel that recognizing a larger number of individuals at a more local level will generate more interest and also increase participation in the contest.

The NRCW underwrote the cost for 22 first-year female students at Presque Isle High School to attend a luncheon with a

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special speaker from Loring Air Force Base. 1st Lieutenant Patricia Bear is a KC-135 co-pilot and she spoke very effectively to these students on raising aspiration levels. This was a very worthwhile event, generating good public relations and increasing awareness of the NRCW.

Forum to be Held

The NRCW will be holding a forum in Houlton later this spring similar to the one held in Fort Kent in September, 1987. The purpose of the forum is twofold: (1) to increase the visibility of the NRCW and therefore the MCW in southern Aroostook County and (2) to listen to the concerns of people in southern Aroostook County regarding issues affecting women.

The NRCW is currently reviewing the treatment choices available to women who have breast cancer in Aroostook County. A medical provider has been approached in an effort to find out what role, if any, the NRCW can play in opening up discussion about this very troubling issue.

The challenges to the NRCW sometimes seem overwhelming but all members share a strong determination to make the path just a little bit smoother for the next generation of girls and women in Aroostook County.

NRCW officers for the 1988-89 year are:

Dayle Ashby	Chairperson
Rory Collings	Vice Chairperson
Martha Grant	Treasurer
Laura Pike	Secretary

NRCW members are: Laura Pike, Ashland, Francoise Paradis, Presque Isle, Lois Haines, Fort Fairfield, Dena York, Presque Isle, Dayle Ashby, Fort Fairfield, Martha Grant, Presque Isle, Hazel Cameron, Presque Isle, Judith Litz, Presque Isle, Rory Collings, Fort Kent, Barbara Wary, Presque Isle, Denise Hogan, Presque Isle, Marilyn Etscovitz, Fort Kent, Elizabeth Beane, Presque Isle, Brenda Barker, Fort Fairfield, Frances Chapmen, Caribou, Paula Fowler Kilby, Presque Isle, Carol St. Amand, Presque Isle and Angela Meister, Houlton.

Contact: Chair - Dayle Ashby - 764-3266.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS FACT SHEETS

The Maine Commission for Women, with help from an IOLTA grant, will be publishing ten fact sheets for women. Entitled "Women's Rights/Women's Responsibilities", the fact sheets will cover the topics of: discrimination in hiring, domestic violence, divorce, sexual harassment, equal pay/comparable worth, maternity rights, low income/welfare, credit, housing, and equality in education. The fact sheets are expected to be completed in September, and ready for distribution.

1989 Maine Commission for Women Legislative Report

Following is a list of bills prioritized by the Commission, most of which are sponsored by the Women's Legislative Agenda Coalition (WLAC).

For the most up-to-the-minute report - the hearing date/disposition of a particular bill - call Legislative Information at the State House, 289-1692, or Leslie Anderson at the Commission for Women, 289-3417.

If you are particularly interested in one or more of the issues below, call or write your Senator and/or Representative and advise them of your interest. You may reach them by calling the following toll-free numbers and leaving a message for them to return your call.

Senate: 1-800-423-6900

House of

Representatives: 1-800-423-2900

(If you have difficulty figuring out who your state senator or representative is call your local Town Office and they will know). Again, if you need help in becoming involved in the political process call MCW's Leslie Anderson at 289-3417.

Finally, please keep in mind that the status of any given bill changes frequently at this time of year. Legislative information (see above) is your best source for status reports.

AN ACT TO CLARIFY THE LAW RELATIVE TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT, L.D. 1489

Sponsors: Rep. Clark of Brunswick

Committee: Judiciary

Public Hearing: Not yet scheduled

The purpose of this legislation is to allow the victims of sexual harassment a choice in seeking compensation either through receiving worker's compensation or through suing for civil damages under the Maine Human Rights Act.

AN ACT TO IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS PROPOSED BY THE BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION ON THE REGULATION OF HEALTH CARE EXPENDITURES, L.D. 920

Sponsors: Sen. Gauvreau of Androscoggin for the Commission to Study the Regulation of Health Care Expenditures.

Committee: Human Resources

Public Hearing: April 26, 1989

A complex set of proposals to ease the burden to hospitals of providing health care. Included will be proposals, for instance, to relax the cost-regulation of hospitals.

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AN ACT TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE AND RELIEVE HOSPITAL COSTS DUE TO CHARITY AND BAD DEBT CARE. L.D. 1322

Sponsors: House Speaker John L. Martin; Senate President Pray; Rep. Charlene Rydell of Brunswick; Sen. Pearson of Old Town.

Committee: Banking and Insurance
Public Hearing: Tuesday, May 9th, State Office Building, Room 113, 1:30 p.m.

Bill provides for 4 programs designed to increase access to health care and to lessen the burden on third-party payers of health care costs.

AN ACT TO REQUIRE PARENTAL CONSENT TO A MINOR'S ABORTION L.D. 622

Sponsors: Rep. Carter of Winslow; Sen. Dutremble of York; Sen. Collins of Aroostook; Sen. Matthews of Kennebec.

Committee: Judiciary
Public Hearing: April 7, 1989

Initiated by the Maine Right-to-Life organization this bill, designed to limit teenagers' access to abortion, was vigorously opposed by the Maine Commission for Women and by H.A.R.T., a broad based coalition of women and children's organizations. The bill is not yet out of Committee. This is also true for the other two bills proposed by those who would limit access to reproductive choice: AN ACT TO ALLOW RECOVERY FOR WRONGFUL DEATH OF AN UNBORN CHILD. L.D. 551, and AN ACT REGARDING THE DISPOSAL OF FETAL REMAINS. L.D. 881.

AN ACT TO IMPROVE FAMILY COMMUNICATIONS WITH ADOLESCENTS, L.D. 1194

Sponsors: Sen. Cahill of Sagadahoc; Sen. Brannigan of Portland; Rep. Marsano of Belfast; Rep. Stevens of Bangor.

Committee: Appropriations & Financial Affairs
Public Hearing: May 12, State House, Rm. 228, 9:00 a.m.

This is the Maine Women's Lobby's pro-active response to the problem of teenage pregnancy. This bill, yet to be printed, will provide funds for new and existing education programs for parents, teens, peers, school personnel, clergy and others on how to communicate with young people about sexuality issues.

AN ACT TO INCREASE DISPLACED HOMEMAKER PROGRAM FUNDING, TO CONTINUE RURAL OUTREACH, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR MAINE DISPLACED HOMEMAKERS L.D. 392

Sponsors: Rep. Lisnik of Presque Isle; Rep. Foster of Ellsworth.

Committee: Appropriations & Financial Affairs

Public Hearing: May 2, State House, Rm. 228, 1:00 p.m.

Would provide \$670,000 to continue current level of outreach, assessment and training programs, and rural community development. Now in its fourth and final year of Maine VISTA volunteers.

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH STANDARDS FOR OPERATORS OF VIDEO DISPLAY TERMINALS, L.D. 661

Sponsors: House Speaker Martin; Sen. Titcomb of Cumberland, Rep. Rand of Portland; Rep. Rulin of Brewer.

Committee: Labor
Public Hearing: May 3rd, State House, Rm. 134, 1:30 p.m.

Presented by the Maine Women's Lobby in response to a growing number of health complaints from VDT operators, this bill would require employers to implement basic safety standards, including user-adjustable workstations, equipment, and chairs; flexible work schedules providing for periods of rest or alternative work away from VDT's; employee education and training programs; and baseline and annual eye exams.

AN ACT TO INCREASE THE STANDARD OF NEED FOR AID TO FAMILIES WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN, L.D. 1369

Sponsors: Sen. Clark of Cumberland; Rep. Oliver of Portland; Sen. Brannigan of Cumberland; and Rep. Burke of Vassalboro.

Committee: Appropriations & Financial Affairs

Public Hearing: Not scheduled

Will provide a 10% increase in Aid to Families with Dependent Children payments in each year of the biennium to increase these families' ability to purchase basic necessities. It increases the Standard of Need by 15% (now at 75% of the national poverty level).

RESOLVE TO ESTABLISH A BLUE RIBBON TASK FORCE TO STUDY SEX DISCRIMINATION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, L.D. 1034

Sponsors: Sen. Clark of Cumberland; House Speaker John L. Martin; Rep. Higgins of Scarborough; Rep. Small of Bath.

Committee: Education

Public Hearing: May 2, State House, Rm. 427, 1:30 p.m.

Would examine discrimination against women in the public school system and make recommendations to the 1990 session of the Legislature. Task Force to be jointly appointed by the Governor and the Legislature.

* * * *

AN ACT TO AMEND THE PROTECTION FROM HARASSMENT LAWS, L.D. 721

Sponsors: Sen. Gauvreau of Androscoggin; Rep. Marsano of Belfast; Rep. Conley of Portland.

Committee: Judiciary

Public Hearing: April 5th

To correct problems with existing law to prevent its use under inappropriate circumstances. Still in Committee.

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAWS RELATING TO SEX OFFENSES, L.D. 1067

Sponsors: Rep. Paradis of Augusta; Sen. Holloway of Lincoln; Rep. Farnsworth of Hallowell; Rep. Hastings of Fryeburg

Committee: Judiciary

Public Hearing: April 25th

Will strengthen Maine's rape and sexual violence laws enacted over 12 years ago by clarifying definitions and/or increasing the penalties for crimes already defined as illegal. This bill proposes to expand the definition of rape to include anal intercourse (currently defined as gross sexual misconduct); raise to felony status the crime of having sexual intercourse or performing a sexual act with anyone under 18 if that person is a relative or under the guardianship of the perpetrating adult; raise the status of sexual assaults committed against an individual who is impaired and unable to give meaningful consent; makes illegal the act of sexual intercourse between a psychiatrist (and certain other medical professionals) and a current patient; and expands the definition of "compulsion" to include coercive means of obtaining consent.

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AN ACT TO FUND RURAL OUTREACH PROGRAMS, COMMUNITY RESPONSE PROGRAMS, MINIMUM STANDARD REQUIREMENTS AND INCREASED INSURANCE COSTS IN THE NINE MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY CRISES SERVICES, L.D. 979

Sponsors: Sen. Clark of Cumberland; Rep. McGowan of Canaan; Rep. Cathcart of Orono.

Committee: Appropriations and Financial Affairs

Public Hearing: May 2, State House, Rm. 228, 1:00 p.m.

To enable family crisis service providers to continue existing level of services.

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FUNDS FOR SCHOOL-BASED CHILD CARE L.D. 384

Sponsors: Rep. Clark of Brunswick; Sen. Estes of York; and Rep. Greenlaw of Standish.

Committee: Appropriations and Financial Affairs

Public Hearing: May 2, State House, Rm. 228, 1:00 p.m.

Initiated by the Maine Home Economics Association, this bill would provide funds to cover start-up costs to local school districts that wish to establish school-based child care.

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR THE WOMEN, INFANTS & CHILDREN'S PROGRAM, L.D. 1163

Sponsors: Rep. Lisnik of Presque Isle; Sen. Gill of Cumberland; and Rep. Clark of Brunswick.

Committee: Appropriations and Financial Affairs

Public Hearing: May 8, State House, Rm. 228, 1:00 p.m.

To provide the WIC program with \$84,000 for FY '90 to enable the full delivery of direct services. Currently only 40 to 50% of eligible women are reached because of inadequate funding.

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A SPECIAL HOUSING ALLOWANCE FOR THE AID TO FAMILIES WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN PROGRAM, L.D. 1111

Sponsors: House Speaker John L. Martin; Sen. Brannigan of Cumberland; Rep. Manning of Portland; and Rep. Strout of Corinth.

Committee: Appropriations and Financial Affairs

Public Hearing: Not yet scheduled

To provide funds for special needs payments of up to an additional \$80 per month to families receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children benefits whose shelter costs exceed 75% of their income.

AN ACT TO PREVENT DISCRIMINATION, L.D. 556

Sponsors: Rep. Conley of Portland; Sen. Gill of Cumberland; Sen. Gauvreau of Androscoggin; Rep. Rand of Portland.

Committee: Judiciary

Public Hearing: April 19th

This bill, sponsored by the Maine Human Rights Commission, with the full support of the Attorney General, would extend to all citizens, regardless of their sexual orientation, the same civil rights now guaranteed to citizens on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, and physical or mental handicap. This bill is not yet out of Committee.



AN ACT TO END HOMELESSNESS IN MAINE, L.D. 456

Sponsors: Rep. Nadeau of Lewiston; Sen. Dutremble of York; Rep. Carter of Winslow; and House Speaker John L. Martin

Committee: Housing & Economic Development

Public Hearing: April 11

Provide funds to give temporary assistance to people facing imminent homelessness; to support the creation of transitional housing units; and to reimburse emergency shelter providers. Bill not yet out of Committee.

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR HOMESTEAD LAND TRUST L.D. 1299S

Sponsors: House Speaker John L. Martin; Rep. Swazey of Bucksport; Sen. Andrews of Cumberland; Rep. Nadeau of Lewiston

Committee: Appropriations and Financial Affairs

Public Hearing: Not yet scheduled

To provide affordable housing throughout Maine by encouraging the development of homestead land trusts, locally controlled non-profit organizations which own land and build housing to be sold or leased to families with low or very low income.

AN ACT TO PROVIDE A CLOTHING ALLOWANCE FOR RECIPIENTS OF AID TO FAMILIES WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN, L.D. 1583

Sponsor: Rep. Foss of Yarmouth

Provides for an annual clothing allowance of \$100 to be paid to AFDC families for the purpose of purchasing school and winter clothing.

AN ACT TO PROVIDE INCREASED FUNDING FOR THE FAMILY PLANNING ASSOCIATION'S BASIC CLINICAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES, L.D. 645

Sponsors: Sen. Clark of Cumberland; Rep. Foss of Yarmouth; Sen. Perkins of Hancock; Rep. McGowan of Canaan.

Committee: Appropriations and Financial Affairs

Public Hearing: April 27

This bill would provide funds to continue existing level of services.

AN ACT TO INCREASE FUNDING OF LEGAL SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY, L.D. 1232

Sponsors: House Speaker John L. Martin; Rep. Lisnik of Presque Isle; Rep. Foster of Ellsworth; Sen. Brannigan of Cumberland

Committee:

Public Hearing: Not yet scheduled

The bill will fund a position to help the organization operate more effectively and provide additional services for Maine's elderly. It would also provide additional staffing in Portland, increase the salary structure and fund other expenses. Request total \$98,500.

The Commission is also interested in the following bills:

Several bills related to Sunday sales:

- * An Act to Allow Sunday Retail Sales From Memorial Day to Labor Day, L.D. 587
- * An Act to add Consistency to the Retail Sales Law, L.D. 1201
- * An Act to Allow Retail Stores to Remain Open on Sundays, L.D. 1254
- * An Act to Limit the Sunday Closing Law, L.D. 1153

An Act to Amend the Occupational License Disqualification Law, L.D. 563

Enacted by both the House and the Senate and sent to the Governor.

An Act to Establish Child Care Availability for Individuals in the Substance Abuse Treatment System, L.D. 463

**MAINE COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
ANNUAL MEETING**

June 16, 1989

North Wing, Augusta Civic Center

5:30 - 6:30 Social Hour - Cash Bar Available
6:30 - 7:30 Dinner
7:30 - 9:00 Reports of activities of the Maine Commission for Women and
presentation of 1989 Progress Awards

Cost: \$15.00 per person

_____ Enclosed is \$ _____ for _____ people.

_____ I will not be able to attend the dinner but will attend the program at 7:30.
(No charge)

_____ I need child care: (Available through advance notification no later than
June 5.)

_____ I will not be able to attend but enclosed is a donation to the Maine
Commission for Women of \$ _____.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Reservations must be made no later than June 9, 1989. Please send to MCW, State
House Station #93, Augusta, ME 04333.

**SECOND ANNUAL
MEETING AND DINNER**

The Maine Commission for Women will hold its 2nd annual meeting and dinner on Friday, June 16, 1989. The State Commissioners are scheduled to meet from 12 noon until 3 p.m. This session will be followed by a joint meeting with the Regional Commissioners from 3 p.m. until 5 p.m. The evening festivities will begin with a 5:30 social hour at the North Wing of the Augusta Civic Center, and a buffet dinner to follow. Author Tabitha King will be our after-dinner keynote speaker. Directly after a report on the Commissioner's year in review, we will conclude with the annual MCW progress awards presented to individuals, organizations, or businesses who have made a significant contribution to the advancement of women and girls in Maine. We hope that many of you will be able to join us for an informative and entertaining day with the Maine Commission for Women.

For more information call Maine Commission for Women - 289-3417.

Inform

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