

OFFICE ON THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN

95 STATE OFFICE BUILDING • ST. PAUL, MN 55155 • 651.296.8590

WWW.OESW.LEG.MN • OESW@OESW.LEG.MN

2008 LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

Highlights from the 2008 Legislative Session are outlined in the attached summary. Several bills related to victims of domestic and sexual assault were signed into law as well as some technical changes to public assistance regulations. Many other bills relevant to the economic status of Minnesota's women were signed into law, while others did not progress or were vetoed.

Several overarching themes in the attached summary help explain why this compilation of bills is significant to the women in Minnesota.

In order to be economically successful:

- Women must be **physically safe**, free from violence in their homes and communities. Preventing violence and protecting victims is essential.
- Women must be **healthy**, have access to health care, and benefit from public policy that supports preventative efforts. Women must be recognized and financially rewarded for their roles as caregivers for the multiple generations of their families.
- Women must have **work that is equal in pay to men**, particularly in low-paying sectors where women are often clustered. The workplace must enable them to enter and exit without penalty of financial loss. Pay equity must extend through later life for women.
- **Childcare** must be available, accessible and affordable for women, men and families.
- **Safety net programs** must be present to enable the large percentage of poor women in our state to maintain or build economic success; programs must be designed with elasticity so women are not trapped by competing program requirements, but can utilize programs in times of crisis and need.

Many of the bills included reflect the work we have been doing in conjunction with the Commission to End Poverty in Minnesota by 2020. The majority of the poor in Minnesota are women. Many of these women are older, have outlived spouses and are significantly economically disadvantaged. Many of these women are victims of domestic and sexual assault. Many of these women are disabled. Many of these women have not had access or opportunity to work or have life experiences that are equal to their male counterparts.

The bills reported here are a small percentage of the bills the OESW has tracked through this biennium. A full listing of these bills is available upon request. Additionally, as required by our authorizing statute, the OESW will present a biennial report to the legislature which will include a comprehensive summary of legislation as well as recommendations to the legislature for activity the next biennium.

2008 Legislative Summary

Office on the Economic Status of Women

Topic	Description	Further Information	Status
Public Safety			
Prostitution of Native Girls and Women	HF3196: Commissioner of public safety's annual report on human trafficking required to include information on trafficking of American Indian women and girls, and money appropriated	Puts into law requirement for DPS to include data on American Indian women in their annual Human Trafficking report. The study portion allows funding to document the largely undocumented trafficking of American Indian women and girls in Minnesota; the study uses culturally appropriate standards and researchers.	One hearing
International Marriage Brokers	SF1480: International marriage brokers regulation	Enacts state and local laws to regulate International Marriage Brokers.	No hearings
Separating Human Trafficking and Prostitution in Statute	SF 2618: Illegal immigration status requirements and federal immigration law compliance requirements for state licensure; crime of aggravated forgery provisions modifications; crime of sex trafficking.	A technical change that separates the section of the law for "trafficking" from prostitution statutes.	No hearings
Human Trafficking Victim's Grant	SF3124: Safety for human trafficking victims grant.	Allocates state funds to cover a gap in federal funding for aid to human trafficking victims.	No hearings
Orders for Protection	SF3492: Orders for protection and restraining orders duration extension.	Eliminates the need for victims to renew their Order for Protections annually; extends standard duration from one year to two.	Signed into law: Ch 316
Advocate's Privilege Testimony	SF3441: Domestic abuse advocates testimony restriction.	Protects and privatizes a victim's testimony to advocates.	Signed into law: Ch 302
Criminal Background Checks for Coaches	SF2369: School districts athletic coaching or extracurricular services hiring criminal history background check requirements.	Requires criminal background check before hiring.	Signed into Law: Ch. 275
Joint Custody Study/Comprehensive Family Court Study	HF 2996: Sexual offender provisions modified relating to confinement, data access, registration requirements, commitment hearings, MINNCOR marketing plan, parole, payments and fees, district courts, controlled substances, and joint physical custody.	Establishes two study groups, including one addressing the effectiveness of the Family Court system, and one exploring joint physical custody issues at the time of divorce. Appointees to the latter group must include those with the view point of "parent advocacy groups, academics, policy analysts, judges, court administrators, attorneys, domestic violence advocates, citizen members who are not associated with a parent advocacy group, and other interested parties are	Signed into law: Ch 299

		represented.”	
Safe at Home Program Modified	SF2642: Safe at home program data practices provisions modification	Provides further data and location privacy for victims of abuse.	Signed into law: Ch 227
Crime Victim Service Fund	HF1812: No decreases to Crime Victim Service Fund.	Maintains current levels of crime victim service dollars; no reductions.	Signed into law: Ch 363

Health and Health Care

Information on HPV Vaccine Distributed	SF3005: Meningococcal and human papillomavirus diseases information through schools requirement; preteen immunization information distributed through schools requirement.	Requires schools to distribute information on pre-teen vaccinations, both required and recommended by CDC, including the HPV and Meningococcal vaccines. (HPV is one of the leading causes of cervical cancer.)	Several hearings; some floor activity
Health Care Reform	SF3780: Health Care Reform - Statewide health improvement program; health care homes and reporting requirements; interoperable health records; electronic prescription drug program; health care reform review council.	Extends coverage to 12,000 uninsured Minnesotans; provides benefits for long-term care workers; workforce shortages study within health care careers studied (including long-term care workers). Establishes health care homes and provisions to lower obesity rates and reduce smoking.	Signed into law: Ch 358
Safe Cosmetics Act	HF3154: Safe Cosmetics Act established, cancer causing ingredients disclosure required for manufacturers of cosmetics.	Requires cosmetic companies to disclose ingredients (similar to warning on packs of cigarettes).	Several hearings.
Doula Support	SF2825: Patient's bill of rights; doula support and nonpharmacological pain relief information modification.	Modifies the patient's bill of rights to allow maternity care patients in a maternity care facility to receive continuous support from the doula of her choice and to be fully informed under certain conditions of evidence based nonpharmacological pain relief methods.	Several hearings.
Gestational Carrier Regulations	HF3448: Gestational carrier (surrogate) arrangements regulations and assisted reproduction provisions.	Provides minimal requirements of any gestational carrier contract; requires documentation that there is a medical need; and mandates that both the carrier and the intended parents have had a mental health evaluation and legal counsel. Also includes provisions for compensation and health insurance.	Vetoed
Comprehensive Sexuality Education	HF615: Expanding the sexually transmitted infections and diseases program for students to include pregnancy prevention, requiring materials to be medically accurate and age appropriate, requiring curriculum to promote healthy relationships, communication skills and individual	Began as Responsible Family and Sexuality Education (see HF3731/SF3349) – a bill to require and establish standards for sexuality education in Minnesota public schools for grades 7 – 12.	Several hearings; vetoed; reintroduced, laid on table.

	responsibility.		
Adoption	SF3193: Adoption records and original birth certificates access provisions modifications.	Allows adults age 19 and older to obtain a copy of their original birth certificate, if there was no affidavit of disclosure on file.	Vetoed
Minnesota Women and Pregnancy Support Act	HF2640: Prenatal insurance waiting periods prohibited; pregnancy preexisting condition eliminated; parenting grant and hotline established; alpha-fetoprotein and adoption information required; adoption tax credit established; and money appropriated.	Addresses certain programs and supports related to pregnancy and childcare.	Informational hearing
Older Adults Community Consortium Demonstration Project	HF3955: Community-based care for older adults promoted through the establishment of a community consortium demonstration project, account established, and evaluation required.	Demonstration project that allows three community consortium serving older adults to pool health care funds for long-term care purposes. (Pooling funds will provide flexibility in distribution of health care dollars.) Report due Jan. 2013	Signed into Law: Ch. 338
Health Care Access Fund	HF 1812: \$50 million on health care access funds used in budget reconciliation.	Uses health care access dollars to fund health care services for low-income people, this reduction decreases number of individuals served.	Signed into Law: Ch 363

State and Local Government Operations

Repeal Office on the Economic Status of Women	HF3581: Repeals the statute establishing the Office on the Economic Status of Women	Passage would have eliminated OESW.	No committee hearings.
Adjust Pay Equity standards for certain state employees	SF2736: State employees equitable compensation limits and procedures modifications; state commissioner salaries cap modifications	Changes the compensation limits applicable to all state commissioners and a variety of other officials within state government to the salary compensation that applies to local government employees. Requires the use of a recognized system for classification analysis to attain compensation equity for all state employees. Does not impact pay equity legislation.	Several hearings
Extension of Commission to End Poverty	HF1812: Omnibus State & Local Government Operations	Extends commission thru FY 2009 (June 30, 2009)	Signed into law Ch. 363

Workforce and Economic Development

Minimum Wage Increase	SF0875: Minimum wage increased and indexed, training wage eliminated, and new employee notice required.	Increases minimum wage to \$6.75 this year; \$7.75 next year; tip credit (allowing business owners to pay less to employees who receive tips) was not included.	Vetoed
Displaced Homemaker Funds	SF2644: Criminal offense surcharges, DWI license reinstatement fees, court	Removes statute-mandated funding for statewide displaced homemaker programs – funding comes	Several hearings

fees transferred	fees and public defender copayment fee reductions.	from divorce court fees.	
Non-Traditional Training for girls and women	HF743: Women in nontraditional careers grants provided, and money appropriated.	Allocates state funds to programs that educate and train women and girls in career areas that currently have 25% or less representation by women.	One hearing
Voluntary Paid Parenting Leave	HF2676: Voluntary paid parental leave provided, and money appropriated.	Allocates state funds to pay for a paid parental leave where the cost of a voluntary six-week leave would be shared by the employer, the state and the employee. The bill would require the leave to be at least six consecutive weeks, and reimbursement would be capped at \$250 per week.	One hearing
Sick Leave benefits extended	SF1128: Personal sick leave benefits use modification, including domestic partners.	Expands audience for use of sick leave to additional family members; current law only allows sick time to be used for ill or injured children.	Vetoed

Childcare & Education

Basic Sliding Fee Childcare	HF1812: \$9.227 million is cut from the Basic Sliding Fee child care appropriation.	This \$9 million would have provided child care assistance to many of the approximately 4,000 families currently on the waiting list	Signed into law: Ch 363
Pre-K and Childcare	HF1812: \$250,000 is cut from the Pre-K Allowances pilot project and 1.8%, or \$110,000, is cut from Child Care Development Grants.	Affects a small amount of dollars for Pre-K Allowances, the FFN grants, quality improvements, and child care resource and referral services.	Signed into law: Ch 363
Childcare Advisory Task Force Established	HF3376: HHS Technical Policy Bill: task force to reduce barriers to child care assistance programs.	Establishes a Child Care Advisory Task Force of stakeholders to review and make recommendations to the legislature to remove barriers facing families applying for and receiving child care assistance.	Signed into law: Ch 361
SIDS prevention at licensed day care establishments	HF3197: Child care licensure requirement modified.	Requires childcare providers to receive a note from child's doctor, (currently required from parent only), to allow a child to sleep on her/his back in childcare facilities.	Several hearings; some floor activity
Stricter Teacher Background checks	HF2657: School boards required to seek information from prospective employees and the Board of Teaching about disciplinary actions against employees.	Requires background check for prospective teachers to ensure they have not been disciplined for sexual misconduct.	Signed into law: Ch. 369

Public Assistance

Temporary Paid Work Experience	HF 1812 (HF3619): MFIP participant supported work and auto-related costs funding provided, and money appropriated.	Provides resources to establish paid work experience for unemployed to gain work opportunity.	Signed into law: Ch 363
MFIP Family Cap	HF3618: Minnesota family investment	Repeals the MFIP family cap, which limits the	Several hearings

Repeal	program family cap repealed.	increase in MFIP benefits to a family that has a new baby while receiving MFIP benefits to certain circumstances.	
Auto Purchase and Repair Fund	HF3208: Community Action Grants for auto repair and purchase for MFIP recipients.	As in HF3619 above – funds Community Action Program to assist low income working families with car purchase and repair to get to and from work.	Several hearings
Resident requirements to receive MFIP benefits disallowed	HF3376: MFIP provisions modified, child placement and welfare provisions changed, Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children established, child in voluntary foster care for treatment established, and data practices and technical changes made.	Disallows county residency requirement for low-income families in receiving emergency assistance.	Signed into law: Ch 361
TANF reallocation	HF1812: Federal Welfare dollars reappropriated.	\$80 million in TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) reserve funds (one time allocation) reallocated to balance budget.	Signed into law: Ch 363