

PCSW Supports Bill to Allow Those Receiving Unemployment Compensation to Work Part-time

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HARTFORD -- Teresa C. Younger, executive director of the Connecticut General Assembly's Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW), Wednesday called upon the Legislature's Labor and Public Employees Committee to pass **Senate Bill 113: An Act Concerning Unemployment Compensation**, which would allow individuals receiving unemployment compensation to work on a part-time basis while receiving benefits in order to bring their wages back up to previous levels.

"This bill would help families maintain self-sufficiency during the recession, relieve some of the burden from the State to provide safety net services, and help position the state for a successful recovery," Younger said.

According to data gathered by the PCSW from sources including the U.S. Labor Department, the Connecticut Labor Department and the National Women's Law Center, patterns of unemployment have shifted since the recession began.

"When the recession first hit, it affected males more than females because it took a large toll on the construction and manufacturing sectors, which are dominated by men," said Younger. "However, since September of last year, the recession has spread to female-dominated retail and service sector jobs, and consequently, women's unemployment has risen faster than men's unemployment nationally (20% vs. 16%). Unemployment compensation does not provide enough money to pay all a household's bills; even before this economic downturn, one out of five families in Connecticut has had trouble making ends meet. So we're calling upon the Legislature to make sure that Connecticut's workers can continue to support their families in these dire times."

Other key data from PCSW:

- Nationally in December 2008 the unemployment rate was 7.2%.
- Among adult women the unemployment rate reached 5.9% -- the highest in 15 years.
- This translated to an unemployment rate of 9.5% among women who maintain families, 8.9% among African-American women, and 7.9% among Hispanic women.