

Testimony Catrina C. Johnson
In Support of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women
Thursday, February 18, 2010

Good evening, Senator Harp, Representative Gregorian, and members of the Appropriations Committee. I humbly come before you today as purely as possible, in an effort to see continuous funding delegated to the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women. I, Catrina C. Johnson, an African American member of the most destitute community in Hartford, and a graduate student at UCONN School of Social Work, know first hand of the need for communities to have a Permanent Commission on the Status of Women as representatives of an unheard voice.

Vital information is delivered to the public through the PCSW. For example, in Connecticut; the leading causes of death for women are major cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, chronic lower respiratory, and HIV/AIDS. There is a clear racial and ethnic disparity as African American and Hispanic women is at a greater risk for these diseases than White women. The extent of the problem with Asian populations is unknown due to lack of sufficient data.

The Permanent Commission of the Status of Women Health's Campaign supports increased education and awareness, early intervention and treatment, and equal access to health care to address racial and ethnic disparities which might otherwise go untouched.

The PCSW represents women in a political spectrum, who will not get the representation elsewhere. Although I had heard of the PCSW from other community members it was not until I enrolled in the Graduate program at UCONN that I realized their ties to the University, and their efforts to educate women on their governmental rights, sexual assault and harassment, and affirmative action.

As I testify here today, I am reminded of having no outlet for my frustrations towards a male dominated society, and the inequalities that women face by astronomical proportions. However, having the PCSW allows me to educate myself and others on new forms of information that will affect us throughout various forms of government.

It is with this testimony that I declare the need for the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women in Connecticut, for the promotion of rights of minority women, and all women, young and old.

Thank you.

i U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, *Mortality by State, Race/Ethnicity, Gender, Age and Causes, 1999-2002*, accessed 9/05 at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs>.