



2013 Testimony Before the  
Appropriations Committee  
In support of the independence and funding of the  
Permanent Commission on the Status of Women

February 19, 2013

Thank you for this opportunity to provide written support of Permanent Commission on the Status (PCSW) of Women on behalf of the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce and the women we serve in Connecticut.

For 40 years the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women, the State's leading force for women's equality, has played a critical role in the state and nationally to ensure women's voices are heard. We submit this testimony today to urge your continued support for the PCSW as a stand-alone independent commission and to oppose further cuts to their budget.

PCSW is the only nonpartisan comprehensive state institution that evaluates laws and policies for their impact on the lives of women and their families. Many well-regarded groups turn to them – and especially now as the economy struggles to recover.

Because of their position, PCSW has the ability to monitor state policy on a broad range of issues. They do so in part by working with numerous coalitions and workgroups to bring women's voices to different discussions and debates. In the past few years alone, PCSW was involved in legislative efforts to strengthen women's earning capacity advocating around Equal Pay for Equal Work, Minimum Wage and Paid Sick Days bills. In this economic climate, these legislative issues are extremely important for women, especially those who are the sole providers for their families.

Additionally, these efforts benefit women-owned businesses. Women-owned firms pay and promote fairly and work to provide family friendly work environments. It is only with these measures in place that the playing field is level and women-owned firms can compete in the fairly in the marketplace.

And when women-owned firms grow, the state and local economies grow through increased tax revenues, job creation and decreased dependence on government assistance programs.

Investing in the PCSW is an investment in the economy. The U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce asks that the Legislators maintain the PCSW's budget and independence to prevent any further rollbacks in the progress of women's issues in the State. Merging the PCSW with other commissions will silence the voices of women and their families in a time when more than ever, their needs and concerns must be heard. By maintaining independence and funding for the PCSW, the State will be doing right for the women of Connecticut and thus the economic progress of the State and its citizens.

Thank you.