



Connecticut General Assembly Appropriations Committee
Room 2700 Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

February 14, 2013

Alice Reitz
Co-president, American Association of University Women Connecticut
18 Lawson Drive
Madison, CT 06443

Dear Senators Harp and Kane and Representatives Walker and Miner,

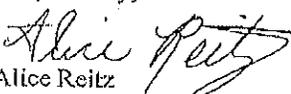
I am writing on behalf of the 12 Connecticut Branches of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), our 27 College and University Partners, and our more than 1,000 Connecticut members to strongly urge our State Government to support the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) as a fully-funded, independent entity. Through leadership, advocacy, education, events and the coordination of organizations that advance women, PCSW functions as an indispensable, irreplaceable asset to the women of Connecticut. It is regarded by AAUW as a model for all states.

Merging PCSW with other advocacy commissions or reducing its funding is penny wise and pound foolish. Any short-term budgetary gains obtained from limiting or diluting PCSW are likely to yield long-term losses in areas that are crucial for the viability and prosperity of our State. A few examples of PCSW's key role include:

- Providing opportunity and developing resources to help girls and women successfully enter and remain in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) careers. PCSW leads and facilitates various educational, social, and industry group efforts to develop resources and promote STEM among the girls and women of Connecticut. The future of Connecticut's crucial engineering and technology industry is highly dependent on the numbers and careers of women and girls excelling in STEM.
- Facilitating the successful growth of women-owned and women-managed business to provide jobs for our citizens. PCSW leads, advocates for, and empowers established efforts to increase the number and effectiveness of women-owned and women-managed businesses. PCSW is a key advocate regarding equal pay and important health benefits for women. Nationally, the growth of small women-owned business is one of the brightest rays of hope in a difficult employment picture.
- Increasing the numbers and expanding the roles of women in government. PCSW leads and advances state activities to promote and prepare more women to run for office and to obtain positions within government. This is crucial for fair and equitable representation as well as being a great resource for our State.

It is AAUW CT's sincere hope and recommendation that the Connecticut General Assembly Appropriations Committee support and maintain PCSW as a fully-funded entity focused on advancing women and the important contributions that women make to Connecticut.

Respectfully,


Alice Reitz

Co-president, American Association of University Women Connecticut