



March 4, 2015

State Senator Beth Bye
State Representative Toni E. Walker
Chairs, Legislative Appropriations Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2700
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Senator Bye and Representative Walker,

On behalf of the Aurora Women and Girls Fund community, I am writing to express our continuing support for the work of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women. It has come to our attention that your committee will be considering budget cuts that will impact the Commission's work. We believe that this type of decision could have a significant ripple effect on the work of the twelve women and girls funds throughout CT that count on both the research and statewide coordination provided by PCSW.

The Aurora Foundation has recently completed the Aurora Report, a first-time look at the profile, needs, and opportunities related to women and girls in Hartford County. Although this report is proving extremely helpful in guiding our work and informing the work of other Hartford County non-profits, it does not address data of this nature at a statewide level. PCSW has taken on and fulfilled this role admirably during its tenure, with the promise of further research and coordination efforts to come. I have been informed that additional work in this area is planned by PCSW as it relates to women's leadership, workforce and healthcare issues.

The move to consolidate data and action at a statewide level is occurring throughout the country. I was just approached in mid-February by the national Women's Funding Network regarding the Aurora Foundation's interest in participating in a 2015 national data release by state of information in eight different areas affecting women and girls. Many of these very topics have been, or will be compiled, at a statewide level by PCSW if they are given the opportunity to continue working at this level. Without it, CT will continue to be perceived as a small state that cannot find a way to coordinate and collaborate as other much larger states have been doing for some time.

Please consider our opinions in your decision-making process. There are many individuals who will watch this process with interest.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Dumont-Smith
Executive Director