

March 5, 2015

**To the Appropriations Committee re: The Permanent Commission on the Status of  
Women's Budget**

The PCSW is an asset for young women of every personality—the outspoken, the self-assured, the ambitious—but it is vital to the girls who find it hard to speak up for themselves, to find their own voice. I was one of those girls until I was given the chance to read an essay at the 2013 Women's Day at the Capitol. I have never been in a room that was filled with so many like-minded, passionate, assuring people who genuinely wanted to hear the words of a young woman trying to figure out how to navigate a world designed for male advancement. I have never been so encouraged to write, to speak, and to act upon my passions for gender equality and the safeties it entails. The PCSW was the affirming oxygen to the spark I had within me; the missing piece that allowed me to burst into a flame of confidence and purpose. The PCSW has proven itself every year at the Women's Day at the Capitol to be an important organization for women and men alike. I can only hope that the opportunity for not only young girls, but men, women, and others across the gender spectrum to be strong in their convictions and to strengthen their voices and to step up and speak about issues in society that move them remains constant, and that the PCSW will remain the space for this conversation.

Thank you,

Kristen Hinz.