

2006 North Carolina Women's Legislative Agenda

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

♀ *HB 2411 Women's Health Services Fund*-Increase funding by \$450,000 for family planning services to uninsured women who are not eligible for Medicaid.

♀ *HB 1059 Public School Health Curriculum*-Correct some of the medical inaccuracies and biased language in the state's currently mandated Abstinence Until Marriage school health curriculum.

♀ *HB 1358 Health Care for All*-Amend the state constitution to recognize healthcare as a fundamental human right.

♀ *HB 2056 Additional Funds for Home and Community Care Block Grant*-Increase funding by \$5 million to reduce 9000-person waiting list.

NCWU also recommends the following actions:

-Remove the eligibility restrictions that bar women from using the State Abortion Fund.

CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EQUALITY

♀ *HB 851 Same Day Registration at One-Stop Sites*-Provides for in-person registration and voting at one-stop early voting sites.

♀ *HB 1024 Instant Runoff Voting*-Authorizes up to 10 counties to use Instant Runoff Voting, a method where voters rank their choices 1-2-3, when there are multiple candidates, to end any need for a second primary.

♀ *HB 1563/SB 1042 Voter-Owned Elections*-Expands the current Voter-Owned Public Financing Program for candidates to the top courts to begin a program for candidates to head the agencies in the Council of State. Another bill, *HB 1851*, would begin public financing in legislative campaigns with a pilot program for four districts.

♀ *OPPOSE HB 2438/SB 1228 Defense of Marriage*-NCWU opposes this attempt to amend the NC Constitution to limit marriage to opposite-sex couples and to deny same-sex couples civil union, domestic partnership, or any other form of legal recognition.

NCWU also recommends the following actions:

-Support lobbying and ethics reform, including: 1) creating an Independent Ethics Commission to cover Legislative and Executive branches; 2) banning registered lobbyists from providing gifts (\$10 exception) to lawmakers, their staff and family members; 3) banning fundraising or campaign contributions from registered lobbyists to Legislative and Executive branch candidates; and 4) fully implementing the Lobbying Reform bill SB 612 this year.

ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY

♀ *HB 2174 Raise Minimum Wage*-Raise minimum wage to \$6.15; 63% of North Carolinians who work for minimum wage are women.

♀ *HB 2109 NC Housing Trust Funds*-Support the Campaign for Housing Carolina to increase the Housing Trust Fund so that affordable housing is more available for vulnerable populations.

♀ *HB 928/SB 908 State Gov't Fair Wage Funds/Study Fair Pay*-Create a State Government Fair Pay Study Commission. Women comprise 49% of the total State workforce, but comprise 72% of the low wage occupations.

NCWU also recommends the following actions:

-Complete funding of the State's low wealth supplemental fund that directs additional resources for education to low wealth counties, in accordance with the Leandro decision.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

♀ *HB 1415 Report Denial of Some Pistol Permits*-Requires that pistol permit denials and firearm surrender orders per 50B domestic violence protective orders are reported to the State Bureau of Investigation for entry into a statewide database.

♀ *SB 1478 Rape Crisis and Sexual Assault Funds*-Increase funding by \$382,500 for North Carolina's 71 rape crisis centers and the NC Coalition Against Sexual Assault.

♀ *HB 1463 Assault/Rape of a Child by Parent or Guardian*-Enhances the penalty by one level for any person convicted of assaulting or raping a child 15 years or younger that the offender had any type of guardianship over.

♀ *HB 2089/SB 1450-Joint Legislative Committee on Domestic Violence*-Support recommendations from committee to mandate domestic violence training for educators and strengthen the laws related to violations of domestic violence protective orders.

♀ *SB 1039 Increase Rape Penalties/Helpless Victims*-Increases the penalty for 2nd degree rape and 2nd degree sexual assault to a B2 felony. Further enhances 1st degree rape and 1st degree sexual assault to include victims who are mentally handicapped, incapacitated or physically helpless.

NCWU also recommends the following actions:

-Support budget recommendations for increased funding to domestic violence programs.
-Support registry laws that tighten restrictions on sex offender registration.
-Increase TANF funding for family violence services and education.