



# Official Statement

18-20 Trinity St., Hartford, CT 06106 • 860/240-8300 • [pcsw@cga.ct.gov](mailto:pcsw@cga.ct.gov) • [www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw/](http://www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw/)

**CONTACT:** Christine Palm, Communications Director at 860/240-8449; or 860/836-2145

**FROM:** Teresa C. Younger, Executive Director (Cell: 860/305-6583)

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**RE:** International Women's Day

“The current attack on the rights of women and girls is profound and coming from many fronts. Whether it takes the form of efforts to limit access to the full range of reproductive healthcare, attempts to silence individual women through public media ridicule, or the attrition in the numbers of women on corporate boards and in elective office, gender discrimination is rampant.

“While we can always point to signs of progress, on International Women's Day, I think it's important to remember there is still plenty of work to be done. By focusing on the inequities, we can propel our society forward.

“PCSW has the following recommendations as legitimate ways to ‘celebrate’ this day:

- Ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the United Nations' international treaty that is considered an international Women's Bill of Rights. Currently, the failure of the United States to ratify CEDAW puts us in league with Iran, Sudan, Somalia and only four other countries. If women's rights are not ensured, human rights are not ensured, and so the United States' inaction on CEDAW makes it hard to defend America's reputation as a world leader in human rights.
- Reject the efforts by religious and ideologically-based groups to limit or roll back women's reproductive rights. Contraception, abortion and the Plan B pill are necessary components of legal, safe and effective healthcare for women.
- Reinstate full funding of the Women's Bureau at the Department of Labor, which is currently at risk of a 22% budget slash. Since early in 1920, when women couldn't vote, the Women's Bureau has worked on such critical issues as enforcement of anti-discrimination laws, public education, research, and outreach on issues critical to women's economic security, including the pay gap and career gender bias.
- Retain the Women's Access to Non-Traditional Occupations (WANTO) program. Again, why cut a program that fosters economic self-reliance at a time when it is most needed? WANTO funds to community-based organizations help train women for manufacturing and trades that pay a living wage at a time when more and more women are becoming the primary breadwinners for the families.”

*About the PCSW: The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women was formed in 1973 under Sec. 46a-1 of the Connecticut General Statutes to study and improve Connecticut women's economic security, health and safety; to promote consideration of qualified women to leadership positions and to work toward the elimination of gender discrimination. As a non-partisan arm of the General Assembly, the agency monitors, critiques and recommends changes to legislation in order to inform public policy, and assesses programs and practices in all State agencies for their effect on the state's women. The PCSW serves as a liaison between government and its diverse constituents, and convenes stakeholders, including the business, non-profit and educational communities, local governments, and the media, in order to promote awareness of women's issues.*