

Connecticut General Assembly



**PCSW**

**Permanent Commission on the Status of Women**

*The State's leading force for women's equality*

**News  
Release**

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## **PCSW Releases 2014 Legislative Session Report**

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HARTFORD -- The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) has released its Legislative Report for the 2014 session just ended. Many bills having to do with women's health and safety, economic security and the elimination of gender discrimination came up for consideration. Legislation that passed ranges from making mammograms more affordable to significantly strengthening campus sexual assault protocols.

Each year, the PCSW establishes legislative priorities, recommends legislative proposals, testifies on bills and provides information, research and analysis to elected officials and the public regarding issues affecting the status of women across their lifespan. This session, PCSW monitored 86 bills and testified on 29 before the following 11 committees: Aging, Appropriations, Children, Commerce, Environment, Government Administration & Elections, Higher Education & Employment Advancement, Insurance & Real Estate, Judiciary, Labor & Public Employees, and Public Health.

Some highlights of legislation that passed include:

### **Public Act 14-11, An Act Concerning Sexual Assault, Stalking and Intimate Partner Violence on Campus (sH.B. 5029)**

Before passage of this bill, public and independent higher education institutions were required to adopt and disclose policies on sexual assault and intimate partner violence, and offer primary prevention and awareness programming. As of July 1, this law expands protection and prevention efforts by: requiring compliance by for-profit higher education institutions licensed to operate in Connecticut; extending protection to employees and stalking situations; requiring institutions to provide victims written notice of rights and options immediately after a reported incident; and allowing anonymous reporting. Additionally, the law requires all higher education institutions (except Charter Oak State College) to: annually report policy, programming, and statistical information to the Legislature; include information about stalking and family violence in its annual uniform campus crime reports; establish a campus resources team to review and recommend policies and protocols for providing support and services to students and employees who report incidents; and enter a memorandum of understanding with a community-based sexual assault crisis services center and domestic violence agency to establish

a partnership to ensure that victims can have access to free and confidential counseling and advocacy services on or off campus.

**Public Act 14-12, An Act Concerning the Governor's Recommendations to Improve Access to Health Care (sS.B. 36)**

This new law allows advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) to practice independently if they have been licensed and practicing in collaboration with a physician for at least three years. APRNs must fulfill certain continuing education requirements for annual license renewal. Manufacturers of covered drugs, devices, biologicals, and medical supplies must report to the Department of Consumer Protection information about payments or other transfers of value made to APRNs.

**Public Act 14-97, An Act Concerning Copayments for Breast Ultrasound Screenings (sS.B. 10)**

This new law prohibits individual and group insurance policies from imposing a copayment of more than \$20 for a breast ultrasound screening, or more than \$30 per visit for in-network occupational therapy services performed by a state-licensed occupational therapist.

**sS.B. 462, An Act Concerning Civil Restraining Orders and Protective Orders**

Broadens the court's authority in civil restraining order cases when the applicant and respondent are spouses or people who live together and have dependent children in common by allowing the court to order the respondent to maintain the safety and basic needs of the applicant and children.

"This year's bills point out how even small changes in public policy can have large impacts," said PCSW Policy and Legislative Director Natasha M. Pierre. "For example, enhanced civil protection orders now allow the Superior Court to issue restraining orders to protect a woman from assault or stalking, even if the alleged perpetrator is not related to the woman. This potentially significantly widens the pool of women who are now covered by protection orders."

Other laws are significant because of Connecticut's demographics.

"Connecticut ranks second nationally in breast cancer diagnosis rates -- well over 3,000 annually -- and so it's critical that women in our state get access to mammograms," said Pierre. "By capping the co-pays, P.A. 14-97 makes them that much more affordable."

For the full 2014 Legislative Report, click [HERE](#).

For PCSW's testimony on 29 bills before 11 committees, click [HERE](#).

For further information on specific bills, go to [www.cga.ct.gov](http://www.cga.ct.gov) and type in the bill number in the search box at the top of the page.

*The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) 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 to inform public policy, and assesses programs and practices in 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.*