

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library  
Digital Library Collections

---

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

---

**Collection:** Barr, William: Files  
**Folder Title:** [Women's Issues: Republican  
Congresswomen] (1)  
**Box:** 14

---

To see more digitized collections visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digital-library>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library inventories visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/document-collection>

Contact a reference archivist at: [reagan.library@nara.gov](mailto:reagan.library@nara.gov)

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/citing>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>

LYDIA J. SNOWE  
2ND DISTRICT, MAINE

COMMITTEES:  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
SMALL BUSINESS  
SELECT COMMITTEE  
ON AGING

WASHINGTON OFFICE:  
130 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515  
(202) 225-6306

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

DISTRICT OFFICES:

IN MAINE, CALL TOLL-FREE  
1-800-432-1599

FEDERAL BUILDING  
202 HARLOW STREET, ROOM 209  
BANGOR, MAINE 04401  
(207) 942-6308

146 MAIN STREET  
AUBURN, MAINE 04210  
(207) 786-2451

440 MAIN STREET  
POST OFFICE BOX 722  
PRESQUE ISLE, MAINE 04769  
(207) 764-5124

February 3, 1983

The Honorable Ronald Reagan  
President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

123005

Dear Mr. President:

As Republican Members of Congress and as women, we found cause for optimism in your State of the Union address. You demonstrated a clear new awareness of the hardships currently confronting many women in this country. More importantly, you made a number of pledges to address some of the most difficult problems of our day, foremost among them the lack of legal and economic equity for women. Each of us shares a deep sense of commitment to these goals, and offers you her assistance and the promise of tireless effort in the U.S. Congress on behalf of the women of America.

The opening of the 98th Congress presents both the Republican Members of Congress and your administration with a prime opportunity for a critical reevaluation of the legal and economic inequities confronting women, and the initiation of new efforts to eliminate these barriers to full equality. We take this opportunity to present our concerns, and provide you with our recommendations for addressing these serious problems. Further, we would like the opportunity to sit down with you in the near future and develop a course of action for confronting this issue in the 98th Congress.

We believe the two pieces of legislation in the 98th Congress that would do the most to insure legal and economic equity to the women in this country are the Equal Rights Amendment and the concepts embraced by the Women's Economic Equity Act. A variety of other legislative and administrative remedies will be necessary during the next two years, as well. In particular, we are eager to review Justice Department proposals to seriously address the issue of child support enforcement.

The Women's Economic Equity Act has enjoyed broad-based bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. The original package was developed by Senator Durenberger, and cosponsored by twelve of the Senate's most prominent Republican members. Separate provisions of the bill address some of the major reasons that women are economically disadvantaged, particularly important are those that seek to

The Honorable Ronald Reagan

Page Two

February 3, 1983

remedy pension inequities and child care burdens. We urge a prompt and comprehensive administration initiative to address women's economic situation, and believe endorsement of this legislation would represent a very important first step.

The Equal Rights Amendment continues to have the support of the vast majority of men and women in this country. We recognize your long-standing opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment as the formal means of eliminating the barriers to equality that women presently face. As you know, the ERA was reintroduced into the 98th Congress with the support of 280 House Members and 56 Senators. We regret that you do not share our position on this issue, but would ask that you let the Congress work its will.

Perhaps the most difficult problem for either the Congress or your administration to remedy is the problem of wage discrimination. Its causes are complex, and in many cases, deeply intertwined with our most basic institutions and socialization patterns. Yet, as we come face to face with a new phenomenon described as the "feminization of poverty," we can no longer accept or excuse the pervasive wage discrimination that has remained essentially unchanged throughout the 20th Century. Last fall the Social Security Commission confronted the demographic and economic changes that threatened the very survival of the Social Security program, and developed legislative proposals to insure its solvency. The ability of this Commission to translate complex demographic and economic causes into legislative remedies in the face of serious problems is encouraging. We thereby recommend the creation of a Commission to study the problem of wage discrimination and develop specific legislative proposals to begin to reverse one of the greatest injustices confronted by women in this country every day.

In the immediate future, we encourage a special focusing of attention within all new and existing programs with regard to occupation segregation and wage discrimination in the workforce. Any new block grants to stimulate advancement in math and science should have built in insurances that women will benefit equally. New jobs programs to help the unemployed should have a special component aimed at addressing the special employment problems women face. The proposed state grants to aid dislocated workers should recognize and address the problem of displaced homemakers, a prime example of the "dislocated worker."

We have a deep concern for the apparent disproportionate share of budget reductions that are directed toward programs of greatest benefit to women and children. The Women's Educational Equity Act Program, the only program which specifically addresses educational equity for women should be fully funded and vigorously administered. Further cuts in child nutrition, food stamps, and AFDC will have their greatest impact on women, particularly women who are maintaining families and represent one of the fastest growing poverty groups in the country today.

The Honorable Ronald Reagan  
Page Three  
February 3, 1983

In short, Mr. President, we support fully the pledges you made in the State of the Union address. It is now time to move beyond pledges to the enactment of specific legislation to remedy the fundamental legal and economic inequities women face daily. We believe passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, the Women's Economic Equity Act, and a strong attack on wage discrimination are urgently needed. Further, we strongly support strict child support enforcement laws and adequate funding levels for programs important to the economic well-being of the women in this country. We respectfully request a meeting with you to expand on these comments and to work with you to develop a course of action to remedy these problems.

Sincerely,

*Claudine*

*Claudine Schneider*

CLAUDINE SCHNEIDER

*Olympia Snowe* *Olympia*

OLYMPIA J. SNOWE

*Marge* *Marge Roukema*

MARGE ROUKEMA

*Nancy Johnson* *MJ3*

NANCY JOHNSON

*Lynn* *Lynn Martin*

LYNN MARTIN

*Bobbi Fiedler* *Bobbi*

BOBBI FIEDLER

---

Bill,

For your information.

Velma ..

7TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright (c) 1983 Reuters Ltd.

February 8, 1983, Tuesday, AM cycle

SECTION: Domestic News

LENGTH: 193 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

KEYWORD: ERA

## BODY:

Six Republican congresswomen today asked President Reagan for a meeting to discuss ways of reducing legal and economic discrimination against women.

The women urged Reagan to support passage of the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution, which bars discrimination based on sex. Reagan has opposed the amendment, which failed to win ratification by the required number of states last year and was re-introduced in Congress this year.

They also called for passage of the Women's Economic Equity Act, to change inequities in pension laws and child care burdens, and creation of a commission on wage discrimination.

"It is now time to move beyond pledges to the enactment of specific legislation to remedy the fundamental legal and economic inequities women face daily," they wrote Reagan.

The letter was signed by Bobbi Fielder of California, Nancy Johnson of Connecticut, Lynn Martin of Illinois, Marge Roukema of New Jersey, Claudine Schneider of Rhode Island and Olympia Snowe of Maine. All are in the House of Representatives.

There are 12 Democratic and nine Republican women in the 435-member House and two Republican women out of 100 senators.

8TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Proprietary to the United Press International 1983  
February 8, 1983, Tuesday, AM cycle

SECTION: Washington News  
LENGTH: 377 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON  
KEYWORD: Women

BODY:

Six GOP congresswomen said Tuesday they asked President Reagan for a meeting on legislation to attack legal and economic inequities facing women.

Reagan has been under fire from women's groups for his opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment and more recently because of claims that women have suffered most from his budget cuts.

"We're women, we're members of Congress and we're Republicans so we feel a responsibility to send him a message," said Rep. Olympia Snowe of Maine, heading the group of women signing the letter.

She went on to note "growing evidence Republicans lost support from women during the last election."

That dwindling support has caused concern at the White House. Reagan has recently appointed two women to his Cabinet. He also gave prominent mention to equal rights in his State of the Union address.

The Republican womens' letter asked him to take the pledges in that speech even further.

"It is now time to move beyond pledges to the enactment of specific legislation to remedy the fundamental legal and economic inequities women face daily," said the letter sent Friday. The White House has yet to respond.

The letter asked Reagan's support for the Women's Economic Equity Act, legislation that has not been introduced yet, to remedy pension inequities, among other things.

The letter asked Reagan not to actively oppose the ERA when Congress reconsiders passage of the newly introduced amendment. It asked him to create a commission to study wage discrimination. And the letter noted "a disproportionate share of budget reductions for fiscal year 1984" in programs for women and children.

Signing the letter besides Mrs. Snowe were Reps. Lynn Martin of Illinois, Nancy Johnson of Connecticut, Marge Roukema of New Jersey, Claudine Schneider of Rhode Island and Bobbi Fiedler of California. There are 21 women in the House, nine of them Republicans.

Three other GOP women in the House did not sign the letter or attend Tuesday's news conference to announce it. Spokesmen for them said Rep. Barbara

Proprietary to the United Press International, February 8, 1983

Vucanovich of Nevada abstained because she opposes the ERA, Rep. Virginia Smith of Nebraska has not decided whether to support the Women's Economic Equity Act and Rep. Marjorie Holt of Maryland opposes that act.



# Judges Allow Gramm Election to Proceed

**The Show Must Go On:** A three-judge federal panel in Austin yesterday refused to delay Saturday's special congressional election to fill the seat of former Democratic representative Phil Gramm of Texas, who resigned to seek reelection as a Republican after the Democrats threw him off the House Budget Committee because of his support for President Reagan's economic policies.

The judges refused a preliminary injunction to delay the election. The plaintiffs argued that the election should have been approved by the Justice Department under the Voting Rights Act.

But the judges unanimously ruled that former governor Bill Clements did not change procedures already approved by the Justice Department when he called the election.

Democrats have been trying to delay the election to give their candidates more time to campaign against Gramm, a favorite to be returned to Congress. After the ruling, one Democrat said, "I think we just lost the election."

**Will He or Won't He?:** White House counselor Edwin Meese III said yesterday that President Reagan hasn't decided whether to run for another term, but that he probably will announce his decision between July and October.

Speaking at a luncheon meeting with senior editors of The Washington Times, Meese said he

expects the president to seek reelection, the Associated Press reported. He also said that Reagan's timing on the matter is dictated by his desire to be fair and non-political.

In a transcript released before publication today in The Times, Meese said that the president will have to wait at least until summer to announce his plans because "there will be some, at least, who will ascribe political motivations to everything Reagan does and says."

## POLITICAL NOTES

He added that Reagan "really cannot go much beyond October, just in fairness to the other people who would be uncertain."

**Earlier Curtain Time for Labor's Drama?** The AFL-CIO is seriously considering doing its pre-primary endorsement of a Democratic presidential candidate in early October, when it holds its full convention, rather than in December as originally planned, informed sources said.

This would give labor more time to organize on behalf of its candidate before the crucial caucuses in Iowa and the New Hampshire primary.

AFL-CIO spokesman Murray Seeger confirmed

the possibility of a speedup but added that it is contingent on a clear enough consensus for one candidate when the federation's general convention starts Oct. 3. This move is seen as a boost to former vice president Walter F. Mondale.

**Talk Is Cheap:** Six of the nine Republican women House members yesterday called on President Reagan to "move beyond pledges" in his State of the Union address and support legislation to "remedy the fundamental legal and economic inequities women face daily."

In a letter to Reagan Friday and in a news conference at the Capitol yesterday, the congresswomen asked for a meeting with the president. They endorsed the Equal Rights Amendment and asked that Reagan "let the Congress work its will" on it.

Expressing "deep concern" over budget cuts, the letter noted that "further cuts in child nutrition, food stamps and AFDC will have their greatest impact on women."

The signers included Reps. Olympia J. Snowe (Maine), Bobbi Fiedler (Calif.), Nancy Johnson (Conn.), Lynn M. Martin (Ill.), Marge Roukema (N.J.) and Claudine Schneider (R.I.). Rep. Marjorie S. Holt of Maryland did not sign the letter.

—Dan Balz, Kathy Sawyer and Margot Hornblower

HUD 16

WHITE HOUSE  
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

O - OUTGOING

H - INTERNAL

I - INCOMING

Date Correspondence Received (YY/MM/DD) 83102105

Name of Correspondent: Olympia J. Snowe

MI Mail Report

User Codes: (A) \_\_\_\_\_ (B) \_\_\_\_\_ (C) \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: Supports passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, the Women's Economic Equity Act, strong attack on wage discrimination, strict Child support enforcement laws & adequate funding levels for program important to the economic well being of women.

ROUTE TO:

ACTION

DISPOSITION

Requests a meeting with the President to expand on their conc

| Office/Agency (Staff Name) | Action Code       | Tracking Date YY/MM/DD | Type of Response | Completion Date YY/MM/DD |
|----------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| <u>TD Duke</u>             | <u>ORIGINATOR</u> | <u>8302105</u>         | <u>KD</u>        | <u>A 830214</u>          |
| <u>PD Rock</u>             | <u>D</u>          | <u>830216</u>          |                  | <u>1 1</u>               |
| <u>SC Sadl</u>             | <u>A</u>          | <u>830216</u>          |                  | <u>1 1</u>               |
|                            |                   | <u>1 1</u>             |                  | <u>1 1</u>               |
|                            |                   | <u>1 1</u>             |                  | <u>1 1</u>               |

ACTION CODES:

- A - Appropriate Action
- C - Comment/Recommendation
- D - Draft Response
- F - Furnish Fact Sheet to be used as Enclosure

- I - Info Copy Only/No Action Necessary
- R - Direct Reply w/Copy
- S - For Signature
- X - Interim Reply

DISPOSITION CODES:

- A - Answered
- B - Non-Special Referral
- C - Completed
- S - Suspended

FOR OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE:

- Type of Response = Initials of Signer
- Code = "A"
- Completion Date = Date of Outgoing

Comments: Reply sent to all agrees

Keep this worksheet attached to the original incoming letter.  
 Send all routing updates to Central Reference (Room 75, OEOP).  
 Always return completed correspondence record to Central Files.  
 Refer questions about the correspondence tracking system to Central Reference, ext. 2590.

February 14, 1983

Dear Claudine:

On behalf of the President, I would like to acknowledge and thank you for the recent letter which you cosigned with your colleagues setting forth your concerns for ensuring legal and economic equity for women.

The President very much appreciated receiving your thoughts and recommendations. Please know that the meeting you requested will be arranged in the very near future and that the specific points raised in your letter will be given careful study and attention.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Kenneth M. Duberstein  
Assistant to the President

The Honorable Claudine Schneider  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

KMD/CMP/Sy6-KMD2

cc: w/copy of inc., Emily Rock (OPD) for DRAFT response  
cc: w/copy of inc., Bill Sadleir - for appropriate action re  
Scheduling Request.

w/copy of inc., Susan Nelson, Dee Jepsen, Mike Horowitz, and  
B. Oglesby - FYI

WH RECORDS MANAGEMENT HAS RETAINED ORIG. INC.

COMMITTEES:  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
SMALL BUSINESS  
SELECT COMMITTEE  
ON AGING

WASHINGTON OFFICE:  
130 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515  
(202) 225-6306

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, D.C. 20515

IN MAINE, CALL TOLL-FREE  
1-800-432-1399

FEDERAL BUILDING  
202 HARLOW STREET, ROOM 209  
BANGOR, MAINE 04401  
(207) 942-6308

146 MAIN STREET  
AUBURN, MAINE 04210  
(207) 786-2451

440 MAIN STREET  
POST OFFICE BOX 722  
PRESQUE ISLE, MAINE 04769  
(207) 764-5124

February 3, 1983

The Honorable Ronald Reagan  
President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

123005

Dear Mr. President:

As Republican Members of Congress and as women, we found cause for optimism in your State of the Union address. You demonstrated a clear new awareness of the hardships currently confronting many women in this country. More importantly, you made a number of pledges to address some of the most difficult problems of our day, foremost among them the lack of legal and economic equity for women. Each of us shares a deep sense of commitment to these goals, and offers you her assistance and the promise of tireless effort in the U.S. Congress on behalf of the women of America.

The opening of the 98th Congress presents both the Republican Members of Congress and your administration with a prime opportunity for a critical reevaluation of the legal and economic inequities confronting women, and the initiation of new efforts to eliminate these barriers to full equality. We take this opportunity to present our concerns, and provide you with our recommendations for addressing these serious problems. Further, we would like the opportunity to sit down with you in the near future and develop a course of action for confronting this issue in the 98th Congress.

We believe the two pieces of legislation in the 98th Congress that would do the most to insure legal and economic equity to the women in this country are the Equal Rights Amendment and the concepts embraced by the Women's Economic Equity Act. A variety of other legislative and administrative remedies will be necessary during the next two years, as well. In particular, we are eager to review Justice Department proposals to seriously address the issue of child support enforcement.

The Women's Economic Equity Act has enjoyed broad-based bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. The original package was developed by Senator Durenberger, and cosponsored by twelve of the Senate's most prominent Republican members. Separate provisions of the bill address some of the major reasons that women are economically disadvantaged, particularly important are those that seek to

The Honorable Ronald Reagan

Page Two

February 3, 1983

remedy pension inequities and child care burdens. We urge a prompt and comprehensive administration initiative to address women's economic situation, and believe endorsement of this legislation would represent a very important first step.

The Equal Rights Amendment continues to have the support of the vast majority of men and women in this country. We recognize your long-standing opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment as the formal means of eliminating the barriers to equality that women presently face. As you know, the ERA was reintroduced into the 98th Congress with the support of 280 House Members and 56 Senators. We regret that you do not share our position on this issue, but would ask that you let the Congress work its will.

Perhaps the most difficult problem for either the Congress or your administration to remedy is the problem of wage discrimination. Its causes are complex, and in many cases, deeply intertwined with our most basic institutions and socialization patterns. Yet, as we come face to face with a new phenomenon described as the "feminization of poverty," we can no longer accept or excuse the pervasive wage discrimination that has remained essentially unchanged throughout the 20th Century. Last fall the Social Security Commission confronted the demographic and economic changes that threatened the very survival of the Social Security program, and developed legislative proposals to insure its solvency. The ability of this Commission to translate complex demographic and economic causes into legislative remedies in the face of serious problems is encouraging. We thereby recommend the creation of a Commission to study the problem of wage discrimination and develop specific legislative proposals to begin to reverse one of the greatest injustices confronted by women in this country every day.

In the immediate future, we encourage a special focusing of attention within all new and existing programs with regard to occupation segregation and wage discrimination in the workforce. Any new block grants to stimulate advancement in math and science should have built in insurances that women will benefit equally. New jobs programs to help the unemployed should have a special component aimed at addressing the special employment problems women face. The proposed state grants to aid dislocated workers should recognize and address the problem of displaced homemakers, a prime example of the "dislocated worker."

We have a deep concern for the apparent disproportionate share of budget reductions that are directed toward programs of greatest benefit to women and children. The Women's Educational Equity Act Program, the only program which specifically addresses educational equity for women should be fully funded and vigorously administered. Further cuts in child nutrition, food stamps, and AFDC will have their greatest impact on women, particularly women who are maintaining families and represent one of the fastest growing poverty groups in the country today.

The Honorable Ronald Reagan  
Page Three  
February 3, 1983

In short, Mr. President, we support fully the pledges you made in the State of the Union address. It is now time to move beyond pledges to the enactment of specific legislation to remedy the fundamental legal and economic inequities women face daily. We believe passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, the Women's Economic Equity Act, and a strong attack on wage discrimination are urgently needed. Further, we strongly support strict child support enforcement laws and adequate funding levels for programs important to the economic well-being of the women in this country. We respectfully request a meeting with you to expand on these comments and to work with you to develop a course of action to remedy these problems.

Sincerely,

*Claudine*

Claudine Schneider

CLAUDINE SCHNEIDER

*Olympia Snowe* *Olympia*

Olympia J. Snowe

OLYMPIA J. SNOWE

*Marge* Marge Roukema

MARGE ROUKEMA

*Nancy Johnson* *MJ3*

Nancy Johnson

NANCY JOHNSON

*Lynn* Lynn Martin

LYNN MARTIN

*Bobbi Fiedler* *Bobbi*

Bobbi Fiedler

BOBBI FIEDLER




MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 3, 1983

To: Michael Uhlmann  
Bill Barr  
Bob Carleson  
Velma Montoya  
Ken Clarkson

From: Edwin L. Harper 

Re: Proposed Meeting with Republican Congresswomen

Please prepare no more than a one page memo for the President on the topic in your area that is raised by Republican Women Congresswomen in the attached letter.

I would like to have a draft in my office by cob Thursday, March 4.



OLYMPIA J. SNOWE  
2ND DISTRICT, MAINE

COMMITTEES:  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
SMALL BUSINESS  
SELECT COMMITTEE  
ON AGING

WASHINGTON OFFICE:  
130 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515  
(202) 225-6306

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

February 3, 1983

DISTRICT OFFICE:

IN MAINE, CALL TOLL-FREE  
1-800-432-1599

FEDERAL BUILDING  
202 HARLOW STREET, ROOM 209  
BANGOR, MAINE 04401  
(207) 942-6308

146 MAIN STREET  
AUBURN, MAINE 04210  
(207) 786-2451

440 MAIN STREET  
POST OFFICE BOX 722  
PRESQUE ISLE, MAINE 04769  
(207) 764-5124

123005

The Honorable Ronald Reagan  
President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As Republican Members of Congress and as women, we found cause for optimism in your State of the Union address. You demonstrated a clear new awareness of the hardships currently confronting many women in this country. More importantly, you made a number of pledges to address some of the most difficult problems of our day, foremost among them the lack of legal and economic equity for women. Each of us shares a deep sense of commitment to these goals, and offers you her assistance and the promise of tireless effort in the U.S. Congress on behalf of the women of America.

The opening of the 98th Congress presents both the Republican Members of Congress and your administration with a prime opportunity for a critical reevaluation of the legal and economic inequities confronting women, and the initiation of new efforts to eliminate these barriers to full equality. We take this opportunity to present our concerns, and provide you with our recommendations for addressing these serious problems. Further, we would like the opportunity to sit down with you in the near future and develop a course of action for confronting this issue in the 98th Congress.

We believe the two pieces of legislation in the 98th Congress that would do the most to insure legal and economic equity to the women in this country are the Equal Rights Amendment and the concepts embraced by the Women's Economic Equity Act. A variety of other legislative and administrative remedies will be necessary during the next two years, as well. In particular, we are eager to review Justice Department proposals to seriously address the issue of child support enforcement.

The Women's Economic Equity Act has enjoyed broad-based bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. The original package was developed by Senator Durenberger, and cosponsored by twelve of the Senate's most prominent Republican members. Separate provisions of the bill address some of the major reasons that women are economically disadvantaged, particularly important are those that seek to

The Honorable Ronald Reagan  
Page Two  
February 3, 1983

remedy pension inequities and child care burdens. We urge a prompt and comprehensive administration initiative to address women's economic situation, and believe endorsement of this legislation would represent a very important first step.

The Equal Rights Amendment continues to have the support of the vast majority of men and women in this country. We recognize your long-standing opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment as the formal means of eliminating the barriers to equality that women presently face. As you know, the ERA was reintroduced into the 98th Congress with the support of 280 House Members and 56 Senators. We regret that you do not share our position on this issue, but would ask that you let the Congress work its will.

Perhaps the most difficult problem for either the Congress or your administration to remedy is the problem of wage discrimination. Its causes are complex, and in many cases, deeply intertwined with our most basic institutions and socialization patterns. Yet, as we come face to face with a new phenomenon described as the "feminization of poverty," we can no longer accept or excuse the pervasive wage discrimination that has remained essentially unchanged throughout the 20th Century. Last fall the Social Security Commission confronted the demographic and economic changes that threatened the very survival of the Social Security program, and developed legislative proposals to insure its solvency. The ability of this Commission to translate complex demographic and economic causes into legislative remedies in the face of serious problems is encouraging. We thereby recommend the creation of a Commission to study the problem of wage discrimination and develop specific legislative proposals to begin to reverse one of the greatest injustices confronted by women in this country every day.

In the immediate future, we encourage a special focusing of attention within all new and existing programs with regard to occupation segregation and wage discrimination in the workforce. Any new block grants to stimulate advancement in math and science should have built in insurances that women will benefit equally. New jobs programs to help the unemployed should have a special component aimed at addressing the special employment problems women face. The proposed state grants to aid dislocated workers should recognize and address the problem of displaced homemakers, a prime example of the "dislocated worker."

We have a deep concern for the apparent disproportionate share of budget reductions that are directed toward programs of greatest benefit to women and children. The Women's Educational Equity Act Program, the only program which specifically addresses educational equity for women should be fully funded and vigorously administered. Further cuts in child nutrition, food stamps, and AFDC will have their greatest impact on women, particularly women who are maintaining families and represent one of the fastest growing poverty groups in the country today.

The Honorable Ronald Reagan  
Page Three  
February 3, 1983

In short, Mr. President, we support fully the pledges you made in the State of the Union address. It is now time to move beyond pledges to the enactment of specific legislation to remedy the fundamental legal and economic inequities women face daily. We believe passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, the Women's Economic Equity Act, and a strong attack on wage discrimination are urgently needed. Further, we strongly support strict child support enforcement laws and adequate funding levels for programs important to the economic well-being of the women in this country. We respectfully request a meeting with you to expand on these comments and to work with you to develop a course of action to remedy these problems.

Sincerely,

*Claudine*

*Claudine Schneider*

CLAUDINE SCHNEIDER

*Olympia Snowe* *Olympia*

OLYMPIA J. SNOWE

*Marge* *Marge Roukema*

MARGE ROUKEMA

*Nancy Johnson* *MJ3*

NANCY JOHNSON

*Lynn* *Lynn Martin*

LYNN MARTIN

*Bobbi Fiedler* *Bobbi*

BOBBI FIEDLER

**OFFICE OF POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

**STAFFING MEMORANDUM**

DATE: 3/4/83 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: FYI

SUBJECT: Information for Meeting with Republican Congresswomen

|                | ACTION                   | FYI                                 |                              | ACTION                   | FYI                                 |
|----------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| HARPER         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | DRUG POLICY                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| PORTER         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | TURNER                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| BARR           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | D. LEONARD                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| BLEDSOE        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | OFFICE OF POLICY INFORMATION |                          |                                     |
| BOGGS          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | HOPKINS                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| BRADLEY        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | PROPERTY REVIEW BOARD        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| CARLESON       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | OTHER                        |                          |                                     |
| DENEND         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Red Caveney                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| FAIRBANKS      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | B. Oglesby                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| FERRARA        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Jim Cicconi                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| GALEBACH       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Bill Lacey                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| GARFINKEL      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Joanna Bistany               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| GUNN           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Judy Pond                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| B. LEONARD     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Ken Cribb                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| LI             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Nancy Risque                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| MONTOYA        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | John Roberts                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| ROCK           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | _____                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| ROPER          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | _____                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| SMITH          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | _____                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| UHLMANN        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | _____                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| ADMINISTRATION | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | _____                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

REMARKS:

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 4, 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR EDWIN HARPER  
MIKE UHLMANN  
BILL BARR  
RED CAVENEY  
B. OGLESBY  
JIM CICONI  
BILL LACEY  
JOANNA BISTANY  
JUDY POND  
KEN CRIBB  
NANCY RISQUE  
JOHN ROBERTS

FROM: EMILY ROCK *ERH*

SUBJECT: Information for Meeting with Republican Congresswomen

Please find attached draft talking points prepared by Barbara Selfridge for Ken Clarkson of OMB.



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

March 4, 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: KEN CLARKSON  
FROM: Barbara Selfridge BS  
SUBJECT: Information for Meeting with Republican  
Congresswomen

Attached is information for the President's meeting with Republican Congresswomen. We have dealt with all the issues raised in their letter, with the exception of the ERA. Because we had to provide the material in such a short time frame, it is not as tactfully worded as it might be and would benefit from a political spin. However, we have covered a lot of the substance, and I assume our contribution will be meshed with others Harper is collecting.

The incoming letter is now a month old, and it may well be that the Congresswomen will be loaded for bear on other topics. You may want to consider suggesting that the President go through the items in their letter as one means of controlling the agenda.

Among the major points we would suggest be underlined in the meeting are the following:

- Economic growth and strong child support information are most critical to many women's well-being and the Administration is moving forcefully in these areas.
- A great deal has already been done which benefits women, and the Administration needs the Congresswomen's support in letting the public know this, as the gender gap stems in part from incorrect perceptions.
- Well intentioned initiatives benefiting women have to be considered in the light of other important priorities, such as economic growth and the Administration commitment to Federalism principles.

Attachment



## Congresswomen's Proposal

That the Administration endorse the Economic Equity Act (EEA) and the concepts embraced in it, particularly measures to remedy pension inequities and child care burdens.

### Background

EEA was developed by Senator Durenberger and co-sponsored by 12 Republican Senators and the 97th Congress. Several significant provisions of the bill were enacted in the last session (see attachment). No bill has yet been introduced in the 98th Congress.

### Talking Points

The Administration is extremely concerned about equity in pension programs because it affects the standard of living for millions of women and men in their retirement years.

- Since June 1982, a working group of the Cabinet Council on Legal Policy has devoted an extraordinary amount of time and effort to analyzing the extremely difficult and complex legal, actuarial and economic questions involved in equal private pension plan benefits. In addition to the efforts of dozens of staff members, the working group, chaired by the Solicitor of Labor, has met about 20 times to debate and discuss the issues.

- These efforts provide the basis for the Administration's legislative proposal to remedy inequities based on sex discrimination in employer pension systems, promised for delivery before the end of the year in the State of the Union Address.

- They already have resulted in a Department of Justice memorandum filed in support of a petition to the Supreme Court for review of the Spirt case. The Government took the position that the employer in question violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibiting sex discrimination in employment, by its use of sex-based actuarial tables resulting in unequal pension benefits to males and females.

- In addition, the 1984 budget contains several new initiatives long sought by women's groups, which would expand Social Security benefits. Under these proposals developed by the National Commission on Social Security Reforms:

- Divorced spouses could receive benefits even if their insured former spouse chose not to retire.

- Widowed divorced spouses would not lose their benefits upon remarriage.

- Benefits for disabled widow(er)s between the ages of 50 and 60 would be raised to the levels now provided to disabled widow(er)s 60 years old and older.

-- Benefits for survivors widowed at a relatively young age would now reflect economy-wide gains in real income from the time of the worker's death as well as gains before that time.

The Administration also recognizes the importance of child care, reflected in the President's strong support for the Economic Recovery Tax Act which:

- Raised the tax credit for dependent care from a flat percent to a progressive, sliding percentage of adjusted gross income, with the result that \$1.8 billion in tax expenditures will be devoted to dependent care in 1984.
- Allows employees to exclude the value of employer-provided child care services from taxable income.

As the economy goes into a period of recovery, employers can be expected to provide additional child care services. Moreover, as real wages once again begin to rise, women who have been forced into the labor market to help buttress eroding family incomes will once again be freer to stay at home and care for their children.

Increased child care availability will also be enhanced by a variety of 1984 budget proposals.

- For example, under the mandatory Community Work Experience Program proposed for Food Stamps and AFDC, participants will work in programs providing child care, increasing its availability to working parents.

- Similarly, the proposed major expansion of the college work-study program will allow significant increases in the numbers of students providing child care services.

The Administration, of course, will carefully consider other measures to improve pension inequity and relieve child care burdens. These measures, however, must be considered in light of the need to continue to encourage recovery, investment and employment and to limit Federal Government to its appropriate role.

- Measures which significantly increase costs to employers or the Federal Government could abort the recovery now underway, denying jobs to millions of women in or entering the labor force and forcing others who would choose to work in the home to enter into paid employment.

- Measures which remove freedom of choice from married couples in deciding how best to meet their retirement needs or which involve Federal intrusion into domestic relation matters normally reserved to the States would also cause us concern, given our commitment to family responsibility and Federalism.



ECONOMIC EQUITY ACT PROPOSALS ENACTED BY THE 97th CONGRESS

- Rules on Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) made by the Economic Recovery and Tax Act of 1981 (ERTA).

- Allows employees who participate in employer-provided pension plans to set up IRAs.

- Allows a divorced spouse to include alimony for contribution to an IRA established by a former spouse.

- Raises the maximum contribution for earners from \$1,500 to \$2,000.

- Raises the joint contribution for one-earner married couples from \$1,750 to \$2,250 and eliminates the requirement that contributions be split evenly between the worker and the spouse.

- Changes in military retirement benefits available to ex-spouses made in the Military Authorization Bill.

- Allows Defense Department to make military retirement payments to an ex-spouse in accordance with awards made by a State court. (The Civil Service Retirement System already allows OPM to make payments to ex-spouses.)

- Permits military personnel to voluntarily designate an ex-spouse as a beneficiary under the Survivor's Benefit Plan (SBP).

- Permits military medical care and commissary privileges for ex-spouses married to a service person during at least 20 years-of creditable service.

Legislation on dependent care tax credits also was enacted by the 97th Congress. These provisions are outlined in the talking points.

## Congresswomen's Interest

Measures to enforce child support responsibilities.

### Background

Under the Child Support Enforcement (CSE) program, HHS provides funds for State and local administrative expenses incurred in establishing paternity and in collecting support payments from legally liable absent parents.

### Talking Points

The President's FY 1984 budget includes landmark proposals to improve the CSE program. Reforms proposed would increase total collections and the cost-effectiveness of the collection process in several ways:

- As a condition of continuing to receive Federal support, States would be required to have in place laws and procedures which facilitate collections. Examples include mandatory wage assignments; State income tax refund offsets; and use of selected administrative and quasi-judicial, rather than time consuming and cumbersome, judicial procedures.

- States would receive financial incentives for increasing collections. These incentives would take into account collections on behalf of all parents with children in their care, not just AFDC applicants, who are the focus of this program.

- States would be required to obtain medical support from absent parents through private (employers') insurance plans, thus making Medicaid in AFDC cases the payor of last resort.

The reforms will result in total support collection of \$1.8 billion in 1984, slightly less than half of which will be from AFDC parents.

## Congresswomen's Proposal

A Commission be created to study the problem of wage discrimination by sex and to develop specific legislative proposals to reverse it. They predicate their proposal on the success of the recent National Commission on Social Security Reform (NCCSSR) in coping with little complex demographic and economic problems. They also believe action is imperative because of the new "feminization of poverty."

### Talking Points

- The NCCSSR was unusual in several respects.

-- Through complex, Social Security is fundamentally a government tax and transfer program. Hence, its solvency remedies are simple to delineate, if not always easy to enact. In contrast, wage discrimination by race, sex or other criteria involves interactions and outcomes within a complex national economy grounded in the private sector.

-- Through successive quadrennial advisory councils, annual trustee reports, and other means, an analytic consensus had developed about the facts and causal factors underlying Social Security problems. What remained was the necessary political consensus, which the political membership of the NCCSSR provided. In contrast, informed opinion remains divided about the degree to which wage differences between men and women follows from invidious discrimination, as such, as opposed to differences in the ways family responsibilities traditionally have been shared and traditional differences in education and occupational choices.

- Under existing laws both the courts and the civil rights enforcement agencies not only are redressing individual cases of discrimination, but also are forcing large employers with internal, articulated classification systems to review and purge their job-classification schemes of historical sex biases.

- While additional Federal action might be desirable, establishment of a commission carries the inherent danger of capture by advocates of "equal pay for work of comparable worth." The 1980 Republican Platform Study opposed this concept, which would move the American economy from one based on private enterprise to one based on government prescription.

- The "feminization of poverty" is a complex phenomenon:

-- As two-parent families increasingly have moved out of poverty because of economic growth, families remaining in poverty increasingly are one-parent, usually female-headed, households. Single earners can produce less household earnings and are more constrained by family responsibilities from maximizing their income. Economic growth, vigorous enforcement of child support responsibilities and effective child care provision are key steps to eliminating poverty in one-parent households, and the Administration is moving forcefully on all these fronts.

### Follow-up Option

- The already existing National Commission on Employment Policy and its staff could be tasked to synthesize the research on this subject, catalog the various enforcement activities throughout government at all levels, and assess options for change.

## Congresswomen's Proposal

That special attention be directed to the issues of occupational segregation and wage discrimination in any new and existing programs; specifically, that new programs to stimulate math and science education contain assurances for women, that any jobs programs contain a special component for women, and that grants to States for dislocated workers include displaced homemakers as eligible recipients.

### Talking Points

The Administration understands your concerns and will be alert to them as we review new initiatives and examine existing programs. There may well be opportunities for gains in this area.

In the course of these considerations, however, we must take into account factors such as the purposes of the program or initiative, as well as the extent to which other programs meet the needs you are interested in addressing. For example:

- The needs of displaced homemakers can best be met through other provisions of the new Job Training Partnership Act, rather than through the dislocated workers title:

- The intent of this title of JTPA is to assist experienced workers who find their jobs terminated or skills outmoded due to plant closings, technological developments, or other structural causes. It was deliberately drafted and narrowly targeted to help experienced workers or local communities that have been or are expected to be affected by major shifts in demand or other events outside their control which cause plants to close, workers to lose jobs, and tax bases to erode. Resources for this program are primarily allocated to States by a formula based on unemployment.

- Other provisions of JTPA do provide for displaced homemakers:

- Under the required annual coordination plan, governors could target vocational education, public assistance resources, and employment services toward displaced homemakers as a group requiring special assistance.

- The JTPA specifically cites displaced homemakers as one of the groups that are not necessarily economically disadvantaged upon whom 10 percent of the program's resources may be spent.

- The new act also makes special provision for displaced homemakers in multi-State national programs and in pilot projects designed to eliminate employment barriers faced by these women.

Congresswomen's Proposal

That the Women's Educational Equity Act Program be fully funded and vigorously administered.

Background

WEEA is one of many small Federal categorical project grant programs in the Education Department. The purposes of WEEA are to provide educational equity for women and financial assistance to enable educational agencies and institutions to meet the requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. (Title IX prohibits discrimination based on sex under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.) The Administration has proposed that WEEA be phased out by 1984.

Talking Points

• Regardless of the relative merit of individual projects funded under WEEA and similar categorical programs, as a group they represent a lower priority use of scarce Federal resources than, for example, compensatory education programs. Given limited resources and WEEA's narrow purposes and relatively low priority, the Administration has proposed that it be phased out by 1984.

• The same and similar activities, however, can be funded by States under the State Education Block Grant, for which the Administration is requesting the same level of funding in FY 1984 as is available in FY 1983 (\$451 million).

• In addition, the Commission on Civil Rights plans to conduct a major hearing in calendar year 1983 on Title IX, highlighting Federal interest in enforcement of this law.

## Congresswomen's Concern

That further cuts in Child Nutrition, Food Stamps and AFDC will have their greatest impact on women, particularly women who are maintaining families.

### Talking Points

It is critical to emphasize that 1984 savings proposals will have little or no effect on typical beneficiaries.

- In the major entitlements designed to meet the needs of the poor -- AFDC, SSI, Medicaid, Food Stamps, and free and reduced price lunches -- 80 percent of the savings in the budget reflect efficiency improvements and reduction of payment errors.

- In Food Stamps, States will be held accountable for payment error rates over three percent, and complex deductions and eligibility provisions which lead to much of the current error and waste will be simplified. Benefit reductions associated with these simplifications account for only 25 percent of the savings proposed and are spread across so many beneficiaries that their impact on each is small. The effect of a simpler standard deduction on an average beneficiary will be less than \$6 a year.

- AFDC savings reflect increased effectiveness of the Child Support Enforcement system and improved work opportunities through a mandatory Community Work Experience Program, as well as targeted reforms which will not effect the average beneficiary at all.

- No changes are proposed for free lunches, which will remain costless to poor children. The freeze on indexing reimbursements for six months would add less than two cents to the cost of an average meal for higher income families if States or school districts do not absorb these costs.

- The WIC program (feeding program for Women, Infants and Children) would be continued at the 1983 level in 1984.

- The Administration has proposed that three small nutrition programs -- Summer Feeding, Child Care Feeding, and School Breakfast -- be consolidated into a simplified grant to the States. The proposed 15 percent reduction in funding represents savings in administrative expenses and waste and should not affect adversely the benefits actually received. Funding for nutrition programs in family day care homes was excluded from the consolidation, for evidence exists that it was not serving a needy population; States, of course, would have the option of using funding for this program under the new nutrition grant. In addition, resources have been added to Headstart, reflecting the transfer to that program of some Child Nutrition responsibilities.

In the last analysis, the creation of substantial job opportunities and vigorous enforcement of child support responsibilities are the best means to help low-income women and children in poverty. Jobs and regular child support payments are, by any standard, preferable to AFDC and Food Stamps. The Community Work Experience initiative in AFDC and training services under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) will help women get ready for jobs in the private sector as the economy rebounds. The new JTPA requires targeting on low-income individuals and equitable treatment of AFDC recipients in services provided under its programs.



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

March 4, 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: KEN CLARKSON

FROM: Barbara Selfridge BS

SUBJECT: Information for Meeting with Republican Congresswomen

Attached is information for the President's meeting with Republican Congresswomen. We have dealt with all the issues raised in their letter, with the exception of the ERA. Because we had to provide the material in such a short time frame, it is not as tactfully worded as it might be and would benefit from a political spin. However, we have covered a lot of the substance, and I assume our contribution will be meshed with others Harper is collecting.

The incoming letter is now a month old, and it may well be that the Congresswomen will be loaded for bear on other topics. You may want to consider suggesting that the President go through the items in their letter as one means of controlling the agenda.

Among the major points we would suggest be underlined in the meeting are the following:

- Economic growth and strong child support information are most critical to many women's well-being and the Administration is moving forcefully in these areas.
- A great deal has already been done which benefits women, and the Administration needs the Congresswomen's support in letting the public know this, as the gender gap stems in part from incorrect perceptions.
- Well intentioned initiatives benefiting women have to be considered in the light of other important priorities, such as economic growth and the Administration commitment to Federalism principles.

Attachment

## Congresswomen's Proposal

That the Administration endorse the Economic Equity Act (EEA) and the concepts embraced in it, particularly measures to remedy pension inequities and child care burdens.

### Background

EEA was developed by Senator Durenberger and co-sponsored by 12 Republican Senators and the 97th Congress. Several significant provisions of the bill were enacted in the last session (see attachment). No bill has yet been introduced in the 98th Congress.

### Talking Points

The Administration is extremely concerned about equity in pension programs because it affects the standard of living for millions of women and men in their retirement years.

- Since June 1982, a working group of the Cabinet Council on Legal Policy has devoted an extraordinary amount of time and effort to analyzing the extremely difficult and complex legal, actuarial and economic questions involved in equal private pension plan benefits. In addition to the efforts of dozens of staff members, the working group, chaired by the Solicitor of Labor, has met about 20 times to debate and discuss the issues.

- These efforts provide the basis for the Administration's legislative proposal to remedy inequities based on sex discrimination in employer pension systems, promised for delivery before the end of the year in the State of the Union Address.

- They already have resulted in a Department of Justice memorandum filed in support of a petition to the Supreme Court for review of the Spirt case. The Government took the position that the employer in question violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibiting sex discrimination in employment, by its use of sex-based actuarial tables resulting in unequal pension benefits to males and females.

- In addition, the 1984 budget contains several new initiatives long sought by women's groups, which would expand Social Security benefits. Under these proposals developed by the National Commission on Social Security Reforms:

- Divorced spouses could receive benefits even if their insured former spouse chose not to retire.

- Widowed divorced spouses would not lose their benefits upon remarriage.

- Benefits for disabled widow(er)s between the ages of 50 and 60 would be raised to the levels now provided to disabled widow(er)s 60 years old and older.



-- Benefits for survivors widowed at a relatively young age would now reflect economy-wide gains in real income from the time of the worker's death as well as gains before that time.

The Administration also recognizes the importance of child care, reflected in the President's strong support for the Economic Recovery Tax Act which:

- Raised the tax credit for dependent care from a flat percent to a progressive, sliding percentage of adjusted gross income, with the result that \$1.8 billion in tax expenditures will be devoted to dependent care in 1984.

- Allows employees to exclude the value of employer-provided child care services from taxable income.

As the economy goes into a period of recovery, employers can be expected to provide additional child care services. Moreover, as real wages once again begin to rise, women who have been forced into the labor market to help buttress eroding family incomes will once again be freer to stay at home and care for their children.

Increased child care availability will also be enhanced by a variety of 1984 budget proposals.

- For example, under the mandatory Community Work Experience Program proposed for Food Stamps and AFDC, participants will work in programs providing child care, increasing its availability to working parents.

- Similarly, the proposed major expansion of the college work-study program will allow significant increases in the numbers of students providing child care services.

The Administration, of course, will carefully consider other measures to improve pension inequity and relieve child care burdens. These measures, however, must be considered in light of the need to continue to encourage recovery, investment and employment and to limit Federal Government to its appropriate role.

- Measures which significantly increase costs to employers or the Federal Government could abort the recovery now underway, denying jobs to millions of women in or entering the labor force and forcing others who would choose to work in the home to enter into paid employment.

- Measures which remove freedom of choice from married couples in deciding how best to meet their retirement needs or which involve Federal intrusion into domestic relation matters normally reserved to the States would also cause us concern, given our commitment to family responsibility and Federalism.

ECONOMIC EQUITY ACT PROPOSALS ENACTED BY THE 97th CONGRESS

- Rules on Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) made by the Economic Recovery and Tax Act of 1981 (ERTA).

- Allows employees who participate in employer-provided pension plans to set up IRAs.

- Allows a divorced spouse to include alimony for contribution to an IRA established by a former spouse.

- Raises the maximum contribution for earners from \$1,500 to \$2,000.

- Raises the joint contribution for one-earner married couples from \$1,750 to \$2,250 and eliminates the requirement that contributions be split evenly between the worker and the spouse.

- Changes in military retirement benefits available to ex-spouses made in the Military Authorization Bill.

- Allows Defense Department to make military retirement payments to an ex-spouse in accordance with awards made by a State court. (The Civil Service Retirement System already allows OPM to make payments to ex-spouses.)

- Permits military personnel to voluntarily designate an ex-spouse as a beneficiary under the Survivor's Benefit Plan (SBP).

- Permits military medical care and commissary privileges for ex-spouses married to a service person during at least 20 years of creditable service.

Legislation on dependent care tax credits also was enacted by the 97th Congress. These provisions are outlined in the talking points.

## Congresswomen's Interest

Measures to enforce child support responsibilities.

### Background

Under the Child Support Enforcement (CSE) program, HHS provides funds for State and local administrative expenses incurred in establishing paternity and in collecting support payments from legally liable absent parents.

### Talking Points

The President's FY 1984 budget includes landmark proposals to improve the CSE program. Reforms proposed would increase total collections and the cost-effectiveness of the collection process in several ways:

- As a condition of continuing to receive Federal support, States would be required to have in place laws and procedures which facilitate collections. Examples include mandatory wage assignments; State income tax refund offsets; and use of selected administrative and quasi-judicial, rather than time consuming and cumbersome, judicial procedures.

- States would receive financial incentives for increasing collections. These incentives would take into account collections on behalf of all parents with children in their care, not just AFDC applicants, who are the focus of this program.

- States would be required to obtain medical support from absent parents through private (employers') insurance plans, thus making Medicaid in AFDC cases the payor of last resort.

The reforms will result in total support collection of \$1.8 billion in 1984, slightly less than half of which will be from AFDC parents.

## Congresswomen's Proposal

A Commission be created to study the problem of wage discrimination by sex and to develop specific legislative proposals to reverse it. They predicate their proposal on the success of the recent National Commission on Social Security Reform (NCSSR) in coping with little complex demographic and economic problems. They also believe action is imperative because of the new "feminization of poverty."

## Talking Points

- The NCSSR was unusual in several respects.

-- Through complex, Social Security is fundamentally a government tax and transfer program. Hence, its solvency remedies are simple to delineate, if not always easy to enact. In contrast, wage discrimination by race, sex or other criteria involves interactions and outcomes within a complex national economy grounded in the private sector.

-- Through successive quadrennial advisory councils, annual trustee reports, and other means, an analytic consensus had developed about the facts and causal factors underlying Social Security problems. What remained was the necessary political consensus, which the political membership of the NCSSR provided. In contrast, informed opinion remains divided about the degree to which wage differences between men and women follows from invidious discrimination, as such, as opposed to differences in the ways family responsibilities traditionally have been shared and traditional differences in education and occupational choices.

- Under existing laws both the courts and the civil rights enforcement agencies not only are redressing individual cases of discrimination, but also are forcing large employers with internal, articulated classification systems to review and purge their job-classification schemes of historical sex biases.

- While additional Federal action might be desirable, establishment of a commission carries the inherent danger of capture by advocates of "equal pay for work of comparable worth." The 1980 Republican Platform Study opposed this concept, which would move the American economy from one based on private enterprise to one based on government prescription.

- The "feminization of poverty" is a complex phenomenon:

-- As two-parent families increasingly have moved out of poverty because of economic growth, families remaining in poverty increasingly are one-parent, usually female-headed, households. Single earners can produce less household earnings and are more constrained by family responsibilities from maximizing their income. Economic growth, vigorous enforcement of child support responsibilities and effective child care provision are key steps to eliminating poverty in one-parent households, and the Administration is moving forcefully on all these fronts.

## Follow-up Option

- The already existing National Commission on Employment Policy and its staff could be tasked to synthesize the research on this subject, catalog the various enforcement activities throughout government at all levels, and assess options for change.

## Congresswomen's Proposal

That special attention be directed to the issues of occupational segregation and wage discrimination in any new and existing programs; specifically, that new programs to stimulate math and science education contain assurances for women, that any jobs programs contain a special component for women, and that grants to States for dislocated workers include displaced homemakers as eligible recipients.

## Talking Points

The Administration understands your concerns and will be alert to them as we review new initiatives and examine existing programs. There may well be opportunities for gains in this area.

In the course of these considerations, however, we must take into account factors such as the purposes of the program or initiative, as well as the extent to which other programs meet the needs you are interested in addressing. For example:

- The needs of displaced homemakers can best be met through other provisions of the new Job Training Partnership Act, rather than through the dislocated workers title:

- The intent of this title of JTPA is to assist experienced workers who find their jobs terminated or skills outmoded due to plant closings, technological developments, or other structural causes. It was deliberately drafted and narrowly targeted to help experienced workers or local communities that have been or are expected to be affected by major shifts in demand or other events outside their control which cause plants to close, workers to lose jobs, and tax bases to erode. Resources for this program are primarily allocated to States by a formula based on unemployment.

- Other provisions of JTPA do provide for displaced homemakers:

- Under the required annual coordination plan, governors could target vocational education, public assistance resources, and employment services toward displaced homemakers as a group requiring special assistance.

- The JTPA specifically cites displaced homemakers as one of the groups that are not necessarily economically disadvantaged upon whom 10 percent of the program's resources may be spent.

- The new act also makes special provision for displaced homemakers in multi-State national programs and in pilot projects designed to eliminate employment barriers faced by these women.

### Congresswomen's Proposal

That the Women's Educational Equity Act Program be fully funded and vigorously administered.

### Background

WEEA is one of many small Federal categorical project grant programs in the Education Department. The purposes of WEEA are to provide educational equity for women and financial assistance to enable educational agencies and institutions to meet the requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. (Title IX prohibits discrimination based on sex under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.) The Administration has proposed that WEEA be phased out by 1984.

### Talking Points

- ° Regardless of the relative merit of individual projects funded under WEEA and similar categorical programs, as a group they represent a lower priority use of scarce Federal resources than, for example, compensatory education programs. Given limited resources and WEEA's narrow purposes and relatively low priority, the Administration has proposed that it be phased out by 1984.

- ° The same and similar activities, however, can be funded by States under the State Education Block Grant, for which the Administration is requesting the same level of funding in FY 1984 as is available in FY 1983 (\$451 million).

- ° In addition, the Commission on Civil Rights plans to conduct a major hearing in calendar year 1983 on Title IX, highlighting Federal interest in enforcement of this law.

## Congresswomen's Concern

That further cuts in Child Nutrition, Food Stamps and AFDC will have their greatest impact on women, particularly women who are maintaining families.

### Talking Points

It is critical to emphasize that 1984 savings proposals will have little or no effect on typical beneficiaries.

- In the major entitlements designed to meet the needs of the poor -- AFDC, SSI, Medicaid, Food Stamps, and free and reduced price lunches -- 80 percent of the savings in the budget reflect efficiency improvements and reduction of payment errors.

- In Food Stamps, States will be held accountable for payment error rates over three percent, and complex deductions and eligibility provisions which lead to much of the current error and waste will be simplified. Benefit reductions associated with these simplifications account for only 25 percent of the savings proposed and are spread across so many beneficiaries that their impact on each is small. The effect of a simpler standard deduction on an average beneficiary will be less than \$6 a year.

- AFDC savings reflect increased effectiveness of the Child Support Enforcement system and improved work opportunities through a mandatory Community Work Experience Program, as well as targeted reforms which will not effect the average beneficiary at all.

- No changes are proposed for free lunches, which will remain costless to poor children. The freeze on indexing reimbursements for six months would add less than two cents to the cost of an average meal for higher income families if States or school districts do not absorb these costs.

- The WIC program (feeding program for Women, Infants and Children) would be continued at the 1983 level in 1984.

- The Administration has proposed that three small nutrition programs -- Summer Feeding, Child Care Feeding, and School Breakfast -- be consolidated into a simplified grant to the States. The proposed 15 percent reduction in funding represents savings in administrative expenses and waste and should not affect adversely the benefits actually received. Funding for nutrition programs in family day care homes was excluded from the consolidation, for evidence exists that it was not serving a needy population; States, of course, would have the option of using funding for this program under the new nutrition grant. In addition, resources have been added to Headstart, reflecting the transfer to that program of some Child Nutrition responsibilities.

In the last analysis, the creation of substantial job opportunities and vigorous enforcement of child support responsibilities are the best means to help low-income women and children in poverty. Jobs and regular child support payments are, by any standard, preferable to AFDC and Food Stamps. The Community Work Experience initiative in AFDC and training services under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) will help women get ready for jobs in the private sector as the economy rebounds. The new JTPA requires targeting on low-income individuals and equitable treatment of AFDC recipients in services provided under its programs.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 28, 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR FAITH WHITTLESEY

THRU: JONATHAN VIPOND  
FROM: DEE JEPSEN DJ  
SUBJECT: President's Meeting With Republican Congresswomen

In the March 24, 1983 meeting with the Republican Congresswomen and Senator Hawkins, they, in unison or individually, requested that:

- a series of meetings regarding women's issues with the Administration be held.
- the Republican Party take the lead in the women's area.
- the President endorse the Economic Equity Act.
- a commission to study pay equity in government be appointed and job evaluations be done.
- if the House and the Senate pass the ERA again, the President should still say he is opposed to it but not interfere with state's working their will.
- a response for the critics of the budget as to the effect it will have on low income women should be prepared. This should address the welfare gap and consider eligibility for welfare recipients below the minimum wage.
- earned income disregard be reviewed. (This was not too clear as per their request.)
- medicare and medicaid be provided for women who are just entering the job market -- perhaps just part-time.
- an initiative for low income women be provided beyond child care.
- day care assistance be refundable and tax deductions for day care be expanded.
- funding for clearinghouses for day care services be supported.
- tax credit for hiring displaced homemakers be supported.



- full IRA (\$2,000) be provided for homemakers.
- day care for the elderly at hospitals, while the provider of care works, be developed.
- the President should call a conference with industry leaders and urge them to provide on site day care and take advantage of the tax incentives to do so.
- some legislative initiative be taken within the next two weeks before the Democrats get up front when Congress reconvenes, as is their plan.

The meeting was intense, but harmonious. Nothing specific was promised, except more meetings and that consideration would be given the requests and suggestions they made. They were reassured that legislation will be forthcoming by the end of the year to bring about pension equity and that efforts would be expanded to provide tougher child support enforcement.

The President relayed to them that he had been considering a new approach to the ERA which encompassed the idea that since the ERA was up for the third time after having ten years in which it failed to pass that it would only be fair for the other amendments to also be sent out for the will of the people to decide, i.e. school prayer, busing, abortion, balanced budget, etc. The response by the Congresswomen was negative. Senator Hawkins did not voice her opinion.

bcc: Mike Uhlmann  
✓ Bill Barr