

Task Force Meeting # 1

February 4, 2021

5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

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| Actual Start Time: 5:02 pm Actual End Time: 7:10 pm | Quorum: 14/15 Location: Teleconference/Zoom |
| <u>Voting Members in Attendance</u> Barbara Battiste Christina Ewig Betty Folliard Cheniqua Johnson Nancy Jost Dr. Brittany Lewis (not present at start?) Batala McFarlane Lulete Mola Kate Perushek Erin Maye Quade (co-chair) Sen. David Senjem Connie Smallman Sayda Sadia Tarannum Alene Tchourumoff Rep. Samantha Vang <u>Ad-hoc Members in Attendance:</u> Com. Rebecca Lucero Liz Kramer Melissa Raphan Bethany Winkels Lt. Gov. Peggy Flannagan Donna Cassutt (co-chair) | <u>AGO Staff in Attendance</u> AG Keith Ellison Donna Cassutt Liz Kramer Sadaf Rahmani Carly Melin Hillary Taylor Dan Murphy Angie Behrens Kelly Kemp Luz Maria Frias Caitlin Micko |
| <u>Others/Guests:</u> Will Orfield Lil'Tonia Wright Beasley Sarah Arnold Jane Sidley Jill Larson Lauren Schothorst A.Hassan Bonnie Westin Katie Lim Sophie Leininger Lila Eltawely Meagan Petersn Khadija Zeig Molly Sigel Charles Sutton | |

Others may have jumped on, excuse any errors in attendance

Notes

Welcome and Introductions by Co-Chair Donna Cassutt, AGO Chief of Staff

Taskforce called to order at 5:02 p.m.

- Introduced taskforce, went over agenda, introduced AG Ellison.

Remarks by Attorney General Keith Ellison

AG Ellison started speaking at 5:06

- Provided background regarding taskforce and members chosen.
- Thank you to taskforce members. (special shoutouts to Betty Foliard, Rep. Samantha Vang, Sen. Dave Senjem, Lt. Gov. Peggy Flannagan, Erin Maye Quade, Com. Rebecca Lucero)
- Thank you to everyone attending meeting, guests included.
- AG Ellison personal ask: Get to know each other!
- Asked members to review Women's Security Act and ask how it could be better, how is it performing, and what we need to do to bring women to economic equity. Also look at the pink tax/women as consumers.

Remarks by Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan

Lt. Gov. started speaking at 5:14

- Shoutout to Barbara Battiste.
- "We have the data and research, now we have people at the table to tackle the issue.
- Acknowledged that the current structure/system has not valued women. Women make 80% of what men earn in MN, worse for indigenous women and women of color.
- Talked about how recent state/administrative movements to better support women and families.
- Childcare is backbone of economy – Sen. Warren- The doors are "just a little bit open for women, now push through it and get the doors open wide!"

Member Introductions

Co-chair Donna Cassutt kicked off member introductions at 5:20 p.m. in the following order:

Voting Members

- Barbara Battiste
- Christina Ewig
- Betty Folliard
- Lil'Tonia Wright Beasley

- Nancy Jost
- Dr. Brittaney Lewis (not present at the time)
- Batala McFarlane
- Lulete Mola
- Kate Perushek
- Erin Maye Quade
- Sen. Dave Senjem
- Connie Smallman
- Sadia Tarannum
- Alene Tchourumoff
- Rep. Samantha Vang
- Cheniqua Johnson

Ad Hoc Members:

- Melissa Raphan
- Com. Rebecca Lucero
- Solicitor General Liz Kramer
- Bethany Winkels

Review and Approve Agenda

6:03 pm. Co-chair Donna Cassutt Reviewed Agenda

- Forewent Break
- Agenda Approved.

Elect Co-Chair

6:05 p.m.

- Erin Maye Quade elected as co-chair

Review Charge of the Task Force

6:07 p.m.

- Co-chair Donna Cassutt went over charge of task force as follows:

The mission and purpose of the Task Force is to (1) serve in an advisory capacity to the Attorney General; (2) carry out a retrospective review of the Women's Economic Security Act of 2014; (3) identify the following: (a) structural, cultural, and organizational barriers that prevent gender equity in the workplace; (b) legal and regulatory barriers that limit women's equal participation in the economy; (c) the extent of gendered-based pricing (Pink Tax) in consumer goods and services; (d) the extent intersectional impact of

race, ethnicity, and gender discrimination on the ability of Black, Indigenous and Women of Color's ability to achieve economic security; (e) the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women; (4) conduct a comprehensive analysis of various strategies that have been, and could be, undertaken to advance the economic security of women; and (5) create a recommended set of priorities for the Attorney General to advance the economic security of women; makes recommendations to the legislature on possible solutions, including regulatory reform ("charge").

- Goal for task-force to end in nine months, then issue report.
- EMQ had great idea to put "stack" in the chat for those who want to raise their hand/speak
- What barriers to women face in achieving economic security?
 - Pay disparity between men & women.
 - Laws regarding abortion/women's rights ("if in law says women don't have autonomy over own body- that shows up everywhere," double standard between men/women, issues with 24 hour form).
 - Raising a family (access to paid leave, insurance, sometimes feels like you have to choose between work/job and a family).
 - Paying for education and training needed in order to work (access to education/training, paying for education, student loans etc.).
 - Housing.
 - Affording and accessing child care.
 - Cliff effect (make a certain amount of money to afford healthcare but can't take a salary raise or promotion because you could lose or not afford healthcare).
 - Women treated like second class citizens and left out of foundational documents of the U.S. (women not being treated in court system equally).
 - Lack of Equal Rights Amendment in state constitution (if done, could be a beneficial spiral effect/catalyst for further change, could this be one potential recommendation of the taskforce?).
 - Lack of representation in political/legal system;
 - Policy makers are disconnected from the reality of how policies work in society.
 - Lack of Transportation.
 - Lack of highspeed internet.
 - Personal safety.
 - Lack of mental health care and difficulty finding culturally competent mental health professionals.
 - Disconnect between resources available and those in need of resources (inability or difficulty accessing or being aware of resources available, language barrier, how do you even connect people with .resources? Some forms are online, not everyone has access to internet, long processing time for forms/documents, etc.)
 - Lack of support for mothers/women. Lack of support for women to work.
 - Power dynamics in the rules of the economy. (Ex: when workers steal from their employers, they can be charged for embezzlement, when employers steal from their

- employees, they get fined (maybe) - only recently (thanks to Kate and Keith and everyone who worked on the wage theft law) has MN had ANY criminal penalties for wage theft. Low wage workers (who are more likely to be women and people of color) have so little recourse - amazon was just caught stealing million in tips from their prime delivery folks - and they got a fine. We need exploiters to be held accountable.)
- Systemic nature of discrimination that Betty mentioned is important that manifests across all the types the AG outlined in the beginning (as consumers, workers, etc).

What the Work Process Will Look Like

6:24 p.m. – Tell Sadaf who you would like to hear from and ideas for future meetings.

Presentation on the Women’s Economic Security Act – Carly Melin, AGO Govt. Affairs Director

Started at 6:26 p.m.

Questions about WESA? Contact Carly at 651-238-7884 or carly.melin@ag.state.mn.us
(Carly will share PowerPoint presentation with taskforce.)

- Department of Labor and Industry is responsible for enforcement of five provisions of WESA, Department of Human Rights also has jurisdiction regarding discrimination (familial status now a “protected class”, and AGO now has enforcement of Minn. Stat. §181
- U.S. Ranks Last in Government Mandated Paid Leave! (Not okay...)

Presentation on the Status of Women in Minnesota – Dr. Christina Ewig

- Links shared in chat:

<https://www.wfmn.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/WFM-2020StatusReport-DIGITAL.pdf>

https://www.hhh.umn.edu/sites/hhh.umn.edu/files/2020-12/CWGPP_COVID_Work_Report_Full.pdf

- Dr. Ewig will share presentation with taskforce.

Wrap Up and Adjourn

- AG Ellison: No representatives of women in Hispanic community. Consider reaching out to women in that community for insight as taskforce moves forward.
- Questions? Email Sadaf Rahmani at Sadaf.rahmani@ag.state.mn.us

Next Meeting is March 1, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. re: Women's Economic Security Act.

Adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Miscellaneous ideas that came up:

- Re-establish Commission and Office of Women's Economic
- Include ERA in State Constitution
- Create law/policy that is widely known and communicated- how effective is law if no one knows about it?
- Not just create policy but implement it sustainably and educate the public on it
- Change 24-hour form re: abortion- "That 24 hour form is also full of misinformation - women and pregnant folks are actually lied to by statute"