

Women's Policy Coalition Meeting

Office of Women's Advancement & Advocacy

State of Delaware, Department of Human Resources

Meeting Minutes

Monday November 1, 2019

Present:	Marie Maks	Monica Henry	Marian Palley
	Michele Whetzel	Linda Barnett	Alicia Clark
	Sherese Brewington-Carr	Shamarla McCoy	Rebecca Cotto
	Aida Waserstein	Sophia Sotiello	Melanie Ross Levin

Location: Carvel Building
820 N. French Street
Wilmington, DE 19801

1. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 12:00p.m. The Chair thanked everyone for coming. Minutes from the last meeting were approved, all in favor, none opposed.

2. Review of Advocacy Training

The Chairperson discussed the advocacy training hosted by the Delaware Women's Coalition on September 9th. Eighteen organizations were represented at the meeting, including around half of the coalition members. Invited guests from the Morris James law firm in Delaware and the Alliance for Justice in Washington, DC spoke about how to effectively advocate and lobby as a 501 C (3). The training for lobbying and advocating for nonprofits groups is free and early educational groups were included in the training. OWAA will investigate the possibility for a webinar option to ensure that more groups can be included in the training. People who could not attend the training in Wilmington can contact the Alliance for Justice and a recorded webinar can be provided. The Coalition may have to look into other venues with a central location for the training in order to include more folks from downstate.

3. Legislative Updates

- There was discussion around how the Office of Women's Advancement and Advocacy is working with Representative Valerie Longhurst a bill for female students to be offered free tampons and sanitary napkins. The bill will support female students ages 6 to 12, that is between middle and high school ages. Coalition members were asked if they would like to take a position before the start of session. The draft of the bill will be circulated bill when it is released, and coalition members will be told when the hearings

will be held. Most of the hearings are on Wednesday. The coalition members can write letters to legislators to find out where the legislators stand on the issue.

- State Representative Melissa Minor Brown would like to have an accommodation for women in prison by having a nursery for children inside the prison for mothers and children so that they can bond for 18 months. Aida Weinstein talked about if bill is passed there will need to be pediatricians on staff and other partnerships will need to be formed to help with this accommodation. There was discussion about having someone from Christiana care to come and talk about the cost of pediatricians. Aida Weinstein would like someone from A.I. Dupont for Children to come in and talk to the coalition concerning this matter. The coalition members can write letters or talk to Representative Minor Brown office about the bill. OWAA will provides updates to the coalition on this bill.
- The group discussed SB 144. This bill is about genetic discrimination and how the use of genetic information in disqualifying coverage for non-health insurance products is a gap in the protection provided by the federal Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act. The bill would prohibit discrimination based upon genetic information in the issuance or renewal of disability, long-term care, and life insurance. There was discussion about getting the Insurance Commissioner involved. Coalition members inquired about whether breast cancer coalitions will advocate for the bill.
- The group discussed HB 215. This bill is being sponsored by the Delaware Coalition for Domestic Violence. This bill would create privilege for domestic violence advocates. Advocates should have certain protections when dealing with victims of domestic violence where they are not required to disclose information that could harm the victim. The OWAA Director will follow-up with Attorney General Jennings to see where her office stands on the bill. There is a fact sheet attached to the bill.

The group discussed any other potential legislation the Coalition should be aware of. It was suggested to look out for bills from the Department of Justice that are related to women. It was also suggested to invite Commissioner Claire DeMatteis to a coalition meeting to discuss the bills that the Department of Correction is working on. OWAA will monitor the progress of the tipped minimum wage bill.

Meeting adjourned at 1:00pm all in favor and none opposed.