

2017 Policy Recommendations

1) Increase the state child care assistance initial income eligibility limit from 145% of the federal poverty level to at least 175%.

Iowa has one of the lowest income eligibility limits for state child care assistance in the nation, at 145%. When low wage earning parents have an opportunity to get a pay raise, work more hours, or a get better job, it can place them just over the income limit for state child care assistance, creating disincentives for low-income families to earn more money. This loss, on average, is nearly \$5,000 annually for a single parent and nearly \$9,000 for a married couple, resulting in those working families actually being worse off financially. Passage of HF51 would mitigate the “cliff effect” and aid in the transition from poverty to self-sufficiency.

2) Support additional protections for pregnant workers under the Iowa Civil Rights Act.

Under the Iowa Civil Rights Commission’s guidance since 2013, employers in Iowa were required to provide reasonable accommodation for pregnant workers. In 2015, the Iowa Supreme Court, in the case of *McQuiston v. City of Clinton*, overturned the Iowa Civil Rights Commission’s interpretation. Passage of SF66 would provide additional protections for pregnant workers in the Iowa Code.

3) Increase the budget for the Iowa Department of Human Rights’ Division of Community Advocacy and Services (CAS). See SF130/HF118.

The CAS division carries out the important work of building resourcefulness among Iowans by:

- Building capacity for people to become agents of change in their communities.
- Helping with navigation for those who need access to services.
- Creating resourcefulness and improving systems for youth through a focus on developing non-traditional leaders.
- Elevating issues, ideas, cultures and contributions to improve connection among all Iowans.

The ICSW relies on CAS staff to carry out much of the work identified by the Commission. Increasing the CAS budget would preserve programs and services that benefit our most vulnerable populations.

The Iowa Commission on the Status of Women is a governor-appointed Commission comprised of public members who:

Study opportunities and changing needs of women and girls;

Serve as a liaison between the Department and the public;

Recommend legislative and executive action to the General Assembly and Governor;

Establish advisory committees, work groups of other coalitions to achieve goals.

2017 Commission Members

Phyllis Peters, Chair
Ames, Iowa

Elizabeth Coonan, Vice Chair
Des Moines, Iowa

Sean Bagniewski
Des Moines, Iowa

Tom Carnahan
Davenport, Iowa

David Gudenkauf
Cascade, Iowa

Rachelle Hunt Russian
Des Moines, Iowa

Sherill Whisenand
Des Moines, Iowa

San Wong, Director
Iowa Department of Human Rights
Ex-Officio