



# RHODE ISLAND COMMISSION ON WOMEN

## FULL COMMISSION MEETING

Monday, April 9, 2007

5:00 PM

One Capitol Hill, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Conference Room B  
Providence, RI 02908

### MINUTES

#### Commissioners

Linda H. Newton, *Chair*  
Corinne Calise Russo, *1st Vice Chair*  
Carol Gibbons, Ph.D., *2nd Vice Chair*

Joanne M. Hill, *Treasurer*

Jan Torres, *Secretary*

Jane M. Anthony

Denise A. Barge

Carrie Bridges, MPH

Representative Joanne Giannini

Catherine Graziano, Ph.D.

Victoria Johnson

Jacqueline B. Laguerre

Helene Martin, RNC, CAGS, NCC

Lela Morgan, M.A.

Representative Carol A. Mumford

Representative Eileen S. Naughton

Adelita Orefice

Sarah H. Rockett, M.A.

Neena Savage, Esquire

Marilyn Coccozza Trillo

Beverly Turner

#### Staff

Shanna Wells, M.Ed., *Director*

**Present:** Denise Barge, Carol Gibbons, Catherine Graziano, Joanne Hill, Victoria Johnson, Jacqueline Laguerre, Representative Carol Mumford, Linda Newton, Corinne Calise Russo, Neena Savage, Jan Torres, Marilyn Coccozza Trillo, Beverly Turner.

**Absent, Excused:** Carrie Bridges, Representative Joanne Giannini, Helene Martin, Lela Morgan, Adelita Orefice.

**Absent, Unexcused:** Jane M. Anthony, Representative Eileen Naughton.

#### *Call to Order*

Chair Linda Newton called the meeting to order at 5:04 PM.

#### *Consent Agenda*

Corinne Calise Russo made a motion to accept the consent agenda. Sarah Rockett seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

#### *Chair's Report*

Chair Linda Newton reported that, as per the charge at the meeting of March 12, 2007, a letter was drafted and sent to the Governor's office regarding the addressing error which was brought to RICW's attention by Senator Perry.

Chair Linda Newton is still awaiting an appointment to meet with the governor to review RICW's operational plan.

Chair Linda Newton reviewed the letter requesting fund for the URI Research Project. She re-drafted it into two letters – one for non-profits and one for for-profits. These were sent to prospective funders, and Director Shanna Wells will be following up with telephone calls next week.

#### *Director's Report*

**Human Trafficking:** I attended Justice Department training on Human Trafficking at the US Attorney's office for the District of RI tomorrow. The training mostly focused on outreach campaigns.

**Senator Perry Response Letter:** Attached please find a copy of the letter sent to the Governor's Office in response to Senator Perry's request.

**Job Performance Objectives:** Attached please find a first draft of the Director's Performance Management Plan for Commissioner review. As per the March 12, 2007 Commission meeting, the goal is to have the objectives completed and approved by June 2007, with commissioner input.

**Web Updates:** The Operational Plan and nomination forms for Women of the Year and the Goldman Award have all been posted to the RICW website. The website has been averaging 500 hits per month.

**Gender Responsiveness in ACI:** Attached please find information on Gender Responsiveness at the Women's Prison.

#### *Committee Reports*

**Legislative Committee:** Neena Savage, Chair of the Legislative Committee presented bills for the Full Commission's vote. Please see attached results.

**Girls Non-Traditional Trade Expo Sub-Committee:** Carol Gibbons, Chair of the Girls Non-Traditional Trades Expo Sub-Committee (GNTT) reported that the committee met for the first time on March 28<sup>th</sup>. Twelve people were in attendance, including representatives from Big Sisters of RI, Community College of Rhode Island, RI Department of Education, National Association of Women in Construction and the RI Tradeswomen's Network. The full committee broke out into three smaller work-groups: Program development; Marketing, and; Fundraising.

**Goldman Education Awards Selection Committee:** Due to a change in federal regulations (IRS), all donor-regulated funds must be advised by a Committee that has a majority of its members from outside the donor group. Therefore, RICW must change the make-up of the Goldman Education Award Selection Committee. Non-Commissioners Nancy Carriuolo, Board of Higher Education, Carol Malysz, Center for Women and Enterprise and Toby Ayers, RI for Community and Justice were asked to participate in the selection Committee and all have accepted. Education Committee Chair, Sarah Rockett and Commissioner Victoria Johnson will represent RICW on this committee. The Committee will meet to select the recipients in late June-early July.

**Women of the Year Award Selection Committee:** Co-Chair Marilyn Coccozza Trillo stated that this committee, which is currently comprised of herself and Commissioners Denise Barge and Joanne Hill. Marilyn Trillo asked for additional volunteers. Linda Newton and Corinne Russo volunteered. Additionally, three non-commissioners will be invited to participate. The selection committee will meet on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 3:00 PM, One Capitol Hill, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Conference Room B.

#### *Old Business*

The final draft of the revised bylaws were distributed. Commissioners were advised by Chair Linda Newton that they will be asked to vote upon ratification of the bylaws at the next full commission meeting on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

#### *New Business*

Secretary Jan Torres reminded the group that some departmentally-appointed Commissioner terms will expire July 1<sup>st</sup>, and a determination of which departments should be invited to send a representative should be reviewed at the May 14<sup>th</sup> Full Commission Meeting.

Catherine Graziano announced that a forum on the History of Labor will be held at the University of Rhode Island on May 12<sup>th</sup> and Operation Clean Government is hosting a breakfast forum on corruption in RI. She will forward on the detailed information to Director Shanna Wells, who will disseminate it to the commissioners.

Secretary Jan Torres requested that Director Shanna Wells provide recommendations at the May 14th Commission meeting for RICW's next steps on the issue of Human Trafficking.

#### *Adjournment*

Catherine Graziano made a motion to adjourn. Carol Mumford seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:53 PM.

Next Meeting: Monday, May 14, 2007, 5:00 PM, One Capitol Hill, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Conference Room B.

Approved on \_\_\_\_\_

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Jan Torres, Secretary

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2007 LEGISLATION UNDER REVIEW

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**BILLS RICW SUPPORTS**

Child Support	<a href="#">S. 0024</a>	Relating to Criminal Offenses - Failure to Pay Child Support	(S) Tassoni, Goodwin, Jabour, McBurney	(S) 1/9	(S)3/13	(S) Senate Judiciary recommended holding for further study	This act would decrease the amount of child support arrearage constituting a felony.	RICW supported this bill last year in both 2005 and 2006.	Legislative Committee recommends supporting this bill. They question why it hasn't moved, since it has been introduced twice previously.	Neena Savage made a motion to support Senate Bill 0024. Catherine Graziano seconded the motion. <b>Ayes:</b> Barge, Gibbons, Graziano, Hill Johnson, Laguerre, Newton, Rockett, Russo, Savage, Torres, Turner. <b>Nays:</b> Mumford, Trillo. <b>Motion passed to support.</b>
Recognition on Women	<a href="#">H. 5077</a>	Relating to Renaming the new Sakonnet Bridge	(H) Rice, Gallison	(H) 1/16	(H) 4/4	(H) House Municipal Govt. recommended holding for further study	This act would name the new Sakonnet Bridge as the Anne Hutchinson Bridge	RICW supported this bill in 2006	Letter of support sent to House Judiciary Committee on 2/2/07. See attached information about Anne Hutchinson.	Neena Savage made a motion to support House Bill 5077. Victoria Johnson seconded the motion. <b>Ayes:</b> Barge, Gibbons, Hill, Johnson, Laguerre, Newton, Savage, Trillo, Turner. <b>Nays:</b> Graziano, Mumford, Rockett, Russo, Torres. <b>Motion passed to support.</b>

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Affirmative Action	<a href="#">H. 5294</a>	Relating to Labor and Labor Relations - Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action	(H) Almeida, Fox, Mattiello, Giannini, Diaz	(H) 2/1	(H) 4/11	(H) House Labor Committee scheduled for consideration	This act would delete references in the RI general laws which exempt the legislative branch of state government from compliance with provisions of equal opportunity and affirmative action.	RICW supported this bill in 2005 and 2006. Passed the House in 2006, but died in Senate Judiciary Committee	Legislative Committee recommends supporting this bill.	Neena Savage made a motion to support House Bill 5294. Beverly Turner seconded the motion. <b>Ayes:</b> Barge, Gibbons, Graziano, Hill, Johnson, Laguerre, Mumford, Newton, Rockett, Russo, Savage, Torres, Turner. <b>Nays:</b> Trillo. <b>Motion passed to support.</b>
Criminal Offenses	<a href="#">S. 0205</a>	Relating to Criminal Offenses - Sexual Assault	(S) Perry, Pichardo, Metts, Sosnowski, McCaffrey	(S) 1/31	(S) 4/3	(S) Senate Judiciary recommended holding for further study	This act would provide (4) exceptions to be considered by the judge in allowing evidence of complainant's sexual conduct or communication prior or subsequent to an offense of sexual assault.	RICW supported this bill in 2005 and 2006.	Legislative Committee recommends supporting this bill.	Neena Savage made a motion to support Senate Bill 0205. Catherine Graziano seconded the motion. <b>Motion passed unanimously to support.</b>
Criminal Offenses	<a href="#">H. 5423</a> <a href="#">S. 0692</a>	Relating to Criminal Offenses - Trafficking in Persons	(H) Giannini, E. Coderre, Gemma, Rice, Ucci (S) Perry, Pichardo, Paiva Weed, Miller, Goodwin	(H) 2/13 (S) 2/15	(H) 4/4 (S) 3/29	(H) House Judiciary recommended holding for further study (S) Senate Judiciary recommended holding for further study	This act would prohibit trafficking in persons		Legislative Committee supports the principals of the bill, but are concerned with the definitions.	Neena Savage made a motion to support House Bill 5423/Senate Bill 0692 on principal and assist in passage of Human Trafficking Legislation. Corinne Russo seconded the motion. <b>Motion passed unanimously to support in principal.</b>

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Criminal Offenses	<a href="#">H. 5355</a>	Relating to criminal Offenses - Prostitution and Lewdness	(H) Giannini, Fox, Gallison, Melo, Kilmartin	(H) 2/7	(H) 4/4	(H) House Judiciary recommended holding for further study	This act would define the crime of prostitution to include any location, would create punishments for individuals who would attempt to procure the services of a prostitute, and would define the crime of permitting prostitution within a premise.		Legislative Committee recommends support.	Neena Savage made a motion to support House Bill 5355 on principal and assist in passage of Human Trafficking Legislation. Corinne Russo seconded the motion. <b>Motion passed unanimously to support in principal.</b>
Criminal Offenses	<a href="#">H. 5126</a>	Relating to Criminal Offenses - Human Trafficking	(H) Giannini, Williams, Gemma, Rice, Schadone	(H) 1/18	(H) 4/4	(H) House Judiciary recommended holding for further study	This act would prohibit the practice of human sex trafficking of minors for the purpose of sexual activity and/or prostitution. It would also prohibit the practice of human trafficking for the purposes of forced labor and/or prostitution.		RICW has identified this as their top priority. The Legislative Committee recommends taking no position.	Neena Savage made a motion to support House Bill 5126 on principal and assist in passage of Human Trafficking Legislation. Corinne Russo seconded the motion. <b>Motion passed unanimously to support in principal.</b>
Protection of Commissioners	<a href="#">H. 5290</a>	Relating to Courts and Civil Procedure - Procedure Generally Governmental Tort Liability - Dept. of Atty. Gen.	(H) Mumford, Ehrhardt, Singleton, Loughlin, Savage	(H) 2/1	(H) 3/7	(H) House Judiciary held for further study	This act would require that the RI attorney general provide a legal defense to members of the state boards and commissions when sued for acts performed within the scope of state service.		Legislative Committee recommends support.	Neena Savage made a motion to support House Bill 5290. Carol Mumford seconded the motion. <b>Motion passed unanimously to support the bill.</b> If the bill does not pass, the Commission is advised to obtain insurance immediately.

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Child Care	<a href="#">S.0360</a>	Amending the Joint Resolution Creating a Permanent Legislative Commission on Child Care in RI	(S) Gibbs, Bates, Perry	(S) 2/13	(S) 4/4	(S) Senate Constitutional & Regulatory Issues Committee recommends passage	This resolution would amend said commission by staggering membership terms, establishing a percentage for the composition of said commission, establishing a maximum of 35 members, the number of members necessary to form a quorum and make provisions for the commission to adopt bylaws.	I currently represent RICW on the Child Care Commission. This group worked long and hard to amend their structure, and are now submitting this legislation to codify those changes.	This is a resolution, not a bill. Legislative Committee recommends support.	Neena Savage made a motion to support Joint Resolution S. 0360. Jan Torres seconded the motion. <b>Motion passed unanimously to support the joint resolution.</b>

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**FEDERAL BILLS**

Women's Health	<a href="#">H.R. 20</a>	Melanie Blocker-Stokes Postpartum Depression Research and Care Act	(H) Rep. Rush (IL-1)	(H) 1/4	(H) 2/2	Referred to House Sub-Committee on Health	This act would provide for research on, and service for individuals with, postpartum depression and psychosis.	Neither Kennedy nor Langevin are co-sponsors. Currently there are 20 co-sponsors	Legislative Committee recommends asking Kennedy to support as part of MH issues.	Refer to RICW Health Committee for recommendations
Women's Health	<a href="#">H.R. 88</a>	Eating Disorders Awareness, Prevention and Education Act of 2007	(H) Rep. Biggert (IL-13)	(H) 1/4	(H) 2/2	Referred to House Sub-Committee on Health	This act would raise awareness of eating disorders and create educational programs concerning the same, and for other purposes.	Neither Kennedy nor Langevin are co-sponsors. Currently there are no co-sponsors	Legislative Committee recommends asking Kennedy to support as part of MH issues.	Refer to RICW Health Committee for recommendations
Women's Health	<a href="#">H.R. 113</a>	Women's Health and Cancer Rights Conforming Amendments of 2007	(H) Rep. Davis (VA-1)	(H) 1/4	(H) 1/4	Referred to House Committee on Ways and Means	This act would require group health plans to provide coverage for reconstructive surgery following mastectomy.	Neither Kennedy nor Langevin are co-sponsors. Currently there are no co-sponsors	This bill is a Federal version that mirrors state laws already in place. Legislative Committee Recommends Support.	Refer to RICW Health Committee for recommendations
Domestic Violence	<a href="#">H.R. 203</a>	Domestic Violence Victim Protection Act	(H) Rep. Rothman (NJ-9)	(H) 1/4	(H) 2/2	Referred to House Committee on Judiciary. Referred to sub-committee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security.	To amend federal crime grant programs relating to domestic violence to encourage States and localities to implement gun confiscation policies, reform stalking laws, create integrated domestic violence courts, and hire additional personnel for entering protection orders, and for other purposes.	Neither Kennedy nor Langevin are co-sponsors. Currently there are no co-sponsors	Requested more information about this bill from RICADV. They are not currently supporting this bill. They are, however, looking for support around VAWA Appropriations. (See attached)	Review attachments prior to next meeting.
Women's Health	<a href="#">H.R. 283</a>	Women's Obstetrician and Gynecologist Access Now Act	(H) Rep. Davis (CA-53)	(H) 1/5	(H) 1/18	Referred to House Committee on Ways and Means. Referred to sub-committee on Health.	Would require group and individual health insurance coverage and group health plans to permit enrollees direct access to services of obstetrical and gynecological physician services directly and without referral.	Neither Kennedy nor Langevin are co-sponsors. Currently there are no co-sponsors	This bill is a Federal version that mirrors state laws already in place. Legislative Committee Recommends Support.	Refer to RICW Health Committee for recommendations
Recognition of Women	<a href="#">H.R. 406</a>	Alice Paul Congressional Gold Medal Act	(H) Rep. Baca (CA-43)	(H) 1/11	1/11	(H) Referred to House Committee on Financial Services	This act would posthumously award a Congressional Gold Medal to Alice Paul in recognition of her role in the women's suffrage movement and in advancing equal rights for women.	Neither Kennedy nor Langevin are co-sponsors. Currently there are 65 co-sponsors	For more information about Alice Paul, see attached	Review attachments prior to next meeting.
Women and Work	<a href="#">H.R. 669</a>	Establish a Center for the Study of Women and Workplace Policy	(H) Rep. Dingell (MI-15)	(H) 1/24	(H) 1/24	(H) Referred to House Committee on Education and Labor	This act would direct the Secretary of Labor to make a grant to a public university to establish the Center for the Study of Women and Workplace Policy.	Neither Kennedy nor Langevin are co-sponsors. Currently there is 1 co-sponsor	Currently a few Universities are studying Women and Work, most notably Rutgers University.	Review prior to next meeting.

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**TAKE NO ACTION**

Women's Health	<a href="#">H. 5061</a>	Relating to Insurance - Cervical Cancer Vaccine	(H) Gemma, Giannaitt, Naughton, Serpa, Williams	(H) 1/16	(H) 4/10	(H) House Corporations Committee scheduled for consideration.	This act would require insurance coverage for the cervical cancer vaccine.	The HPV Vaccine and its ready availability to women in the general public is a priority of the RICW Health Committee.	Legislative Committee does not support this bill, because it does not go far enough. It should cover men and boys as well as women and girls, as men are carriers of HPV. It also does not apply to enough types of HPV. The feel any one inoculated would have a false sense of security, and still be at risk.	
Family Health	<a href="#">S. 0030</a> <a href="#">H. 5295</a>	Relating to Labor and Labor Relations - Family and Medical Leave	(S) Tassoni, Moura, Maselli, Lanzi (H) Almedia, Mattiello, Slater. Ajello, Handy	(S) 1/9 (H) 2/1	(S) 3/21 (H) 3/14	(S) Senate Labor Committee continued. (H) House Labor recommended holding for further study	this act would allow employees of covered employers time out of work to take their minor children and elderly relatives to medical appointments.		Women are overwhelmingly the caretakers of small children and elderly relatives. Legislative Committee recommends taking no position.	
FMLA	<a href="#">S. 80</a>	Family Leave Act	(S) Sen. Stevens (AK)	(S) 1/4	(S) 1/4	(S) Referred to Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs	If enacted, would provide for 8 weeks of paid leave for Federal employees giving birth and for other purposes.	Neither Kennedy nor Langevin are co-sponsors. Currently there are 4 co-sponsors	Currently this is a hot topic for National Association of Commissions on Women. Legislative Committee recommends we take no action.	
Elderly Women	<a href="#">H. 5047</a>	Relating to Taxation- Providence Freeze of Certain Tax	(H) Giannini, Williams, McCauley, Diaz, Desimone	(H) 1/10	(H) 3/27	(H) House Finance transferred to House Veterans Affairs who transferred it back to House Finance	This act would freeze the taxes on owner occupied residential real estate for persons 65 years of age or older, disabled or veterans of the armed services of the US, having not more than \$25,000 household income for 2007 and each year thereafter.		Legislative Committee requested more information regarding the percentage of Providence homeowners who are female and over 65 years old. Awaiting the information requested.	Neena Savage made a motion to take no position on this bill until we get the information requested. Catherine Graziano seconded the motion. <b>Motion passed unanimously to take no action until additional information has been received.</b>

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Child Care	<a href="#">H. 5379</a>	Relating to Human Services - The Family Independence Act	(H) Naughton, Handy	(H) 2/8	(H) 4/25	(H) House Finance scheduled for hearing and/or consideration	This act would allow a parent to receive childcare assistance if they work at paid employment or attend an educational or training program and work at least 25 hours per week.		Discuss with Full Commission	Carol Mumford made a motion to take no action on H. 5379, due to the budgetary constraints of this and the next fiscal years. Catherine Graziano seconded the motion. <b>Ayes:</b> Barge, Gibbons, Graziano, Hill Johnson, Laguerre, Mumford, Newton, Rockett, Russo, Torres, Trillo. <b>Nays:</b> Savage, Turner. <b>Motion to take no action passd.</b>

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Women's Health	<a href="#">S. 0166</a> <a href="#">H. 5350</a>	Relating to Health and Safety - Breast Cancer Act	(S) Pichardo, Tassoni, Gallo, Perry (H) Naughton, McNamara, Church, Slater, Malik	(S) 1/31 (H) 2/7	(S) 1/31 (H) 2/7	(S) Referred to Senate Finance (H) Referred to House Finance	This act would provide additional funding for mammographies for women age 40-49 who are eligible to use the RI Cancer Screening Program.		According to the Director of The Women's Cancer Screening Program (WCSP), WCSP received \$75K from the RI Legislature during the first year of funding. WCSP has subsequently received \$65K annually including the current fiscal year. This is not a new request for funding, rather a request for an increase in the annual funding, to cover the cost of services for women 40-49 as required by the Breast Cancer Act 2000. Annually, insufficient funds are provided to cover these mandated women. Insufficient State funds have required the program to cover the cost by using CDC funds, which negatively impacts program performance and jeopardizes Federal funds. An estimated \$250K is needed to cover services to this population. Currently WCSP is not meeting CDC performance standards set by the Breast Cancer Act 2000.	Neena Savage made a motion to take no position on Senate Bill 0166/House Bill 5350. Corinne Russo seconded the motion. <b>Motion passed unanimously</b> given the fiscal situation of the state.
Child Support Enforcement	<a href="#">S. 0048</a>	Relating to Domestic Relations - Child Support Enforcement	(S) Bates, Cote, McCaffrey, Walaska, Blais	(S) 1/12	(S) 3/21	(S) Senate read and passed. Referred to House Judiciary Committee.	This act would allow the Family Court to order child support if the child has severe physical or mental impairment, beyond the child's emancipation event. The onset of the disability must have occurred prior to the emancipation event.			
Child Support Enforcement	<a href="#">H. 5125</a>	Relating to Parole - Child Support	(H) Gallison, Gablinske, Brien, Baldelli-Hunt, Kilmartin	(H) 1/18	(H) 3/27	(H) House Judiciary recommended holding for further study	This act would ensure that obligations under child support orders would continue despite the parole or probation of the obligor.		Legislative Committee feels this bill does not support due process issues. Take no position.	

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Minimum Wage	<a href="#">S. 0052</a> <a href="#">H. 5332</a>	Relating to Labor and Labor Relations - Minimum Wages	(S) Raptakis, DaPonte, Connors, Ciccone, Ruggiero (H) Lima, Diaz, E. Coderre, Ajello, Gianninini	(S) 1/12 (H) 2/6	(S) 3/21 (H) 3/6	(S) Senate Labor Committee continued. (H) House Labor recommended holding for further study	This act would adjust the minimum wage annually using the consumer price index.			
Affirmative Action	<a href="#">H. 5904</a>	Relating to Labor and Labor Relations - Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action	(H) Almeida, Segal, Slater	(H) 3/1	(H) 3/29	(H) House Separation of Powers Committee held for further study	This act would require that of minorities appointed by the governor and general assembly that consideration be made to recommendations by the RI Affirmative Action Professionals and that annually a utilization analysis of appointments shall occur. The analysis shall be given to the commission for human rights as a public record to determine if any violation of the equal opportunity and affirmative action law has occurred.		This bill is supported by the Civil Rights Roundtable.	Neena Savage made a motion to take no action on H. 5904, because it does not include women. Sarah Rockett seconded the motion. <b>Motion passed unanimously to take no action.</b>
Health and Safety	<a href="#">H. 6166</a>	Relating to Education - Health and Safety of Pupils	(H) Naughton, Fellela, Serpa, Kilmartin, San Bento	(H) 3/20	(H) 4/10	(H) Referred to House Health, Education and Welfare Committee. Scheduled for hearing and/or consideration.	This act would require school districts to implement dating violence procedures. This act would also require school districts to incorporate an age-appropriate dating violence education program for grades 7 through 12 into the district's health education curriculum.			Neena Savage made a motion to take no action on H. 6166, because curriculae already exist, without having been legislated. Victoria Johnson seconded the motion. <b>Motion passed unanimously to take no action.</b>