



League of Women Voters Urges Release of HB 4 Creating a Department of Human Resources

The League of Women Voters strongly supports HB 4 and would like to take this opportunity to thank Representative Longhurst and her staff for their dedicated efforts to develop the provisions of paragraph 9009D establishing the Office of Women's Advancement and Advocacy.

First, we think that separating the HR functions out of OMB will enable the leadership of OMB to focus on critical issues of our long range budget issues and for human resources management to face the challenges of ensuring our state government staffing is administered with care to meeting all legal requirements. This includes implementation of appropriate recommendations in the "Ivy Report" that came out of a contract entered into by Governor Markell to investigate claims of serious bias in personnel functions of state government.

Our primary concern is ensuring the continuation of the important work of the Commission for Women with the improved legislative directives included in 9009D. Rep. Longhurst has met with groups representing the current Commission for Women, the AAUW and the League, along with other concerned groups. She has listened and she has responded, addressing every detail brought up during the drafting of this legislation. These meetings have made clear the incredible work and attention to detail that went into the drafting of 9009D. We applaud her efforts to go beyond typical practice in her commitment to securing consensus among all concerned.

This legislation will enable the Office to involve an expanded number of members of the public to participate in the work currently undertaken by the Commission for Women. It will give focus to that work. Even more specifically, it establishes a new Delaware Women's Workforce Council to identify needed improvements in gender equality in every workplace in the First State and to ensure that every person, regardless of gender, has an equal opportunity for advancement in the workplace. Placing this function in the new Human Resources Department will give the work of the Office more direct and immediate access to other offices that can work toward implementation of relevant recommendations developed through this work.

Most significantly, there is no fiscal note on this bill. Current staffing can be transferred from their current agency to the new Department and expanded involvement of committed volunteers will make this possible.

Please release this bill and work for its enactment. Thank you.