



TEXAS WOMEN'S POLITICAL CAUCUS

Newsletter



Volume 4, Number 1

September, 1975

** MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

I suppose the start of a new year is always filled with enthusiasm and hope, and this year is only an exception in the intensity of dedication, from Caucus women statewide, to increasing the participation of women in the political process at every level. The State's specific political plans were clearly set forth by resolution at the Convention in August, but the Convention adjourned with an unwritten resolution: Be It Resolved, that the Texas Women's Political Caucus will demonstrate as never before that it is a serious political force in this state which cannot be ignored.

In the month since the Convention women in all parts of the state have clearly demonstrated that their dedication to that resolution was not simply expressed in the height of Convention emotion, but that theirs is a sustaining commitment which has become an individual priority. Evidence of that is seen in our increasing membership; requests to begin new caucuses; requests for assistance with affirmative action, delegate selection, election strategies for upcoming elections; and offers of assistance with targeting and legislative planning.

As the new Chair I have been overwhelmed with the actual work I am seeing carried out by Caucus women around the state and with the potential of political growth as an organization and among our membership. There is much to do this year...certainly more than I or all of the officers combined can do without your continued support. That support, in many forms, is essential. The State Officers need information about political developments in your area. We need to know how we can help you with membership, finances, political action, legislation and communication. We need your financial support through fundraising and increased memberships. We need all of these in order to implement the mandates of the Convention.

All of the Officers are committed to sharing our time and skills in assisting locals to organize, grow and increase effectiveness because it is the effectiveness of individual Caucus members and locals which allow the TWPC to function as a statewide organization.

I wish you well with your individual activities this year and with those of your local caucus and as I and the other State Officers counsel and work together this year I trust it will be with your continued support and guidance.

Martha E. Smiley

** LOST MEMBERS

The following is a list of people for whom there are no addresses. The Membership Vice-Chair would appreciate any information leading to their whereabouts. Please send any information to the TWPC State Office. At-Large, Anita Lang; Dallas, Pam Mayo; San Antonio, Patricia Hillman; Corpus Christi, Kathy Tuohy, Mary LaMont, Jackie Jones, Christine Hunter, Janet Boles; El Paso, Patricia Preston; and Houston, Patty Ryan.

** CRIMINAL JUSTICE

At the TWPC Convention last month, it was resolved that "the TWPC join with the state chair of the National Organization for Women and Women's Equity Action League, based in Austin, in a coordinated effort, and that the TWPC appoint its own Criminal Justice Chair. By doing this, efforts can be concentrated in one direction, with a goal, in the field of Criminal Justice." If you are interested in serving as the Chair for Criminal Justice, please send the necessary information to the State Office.

** CHILD CARE

Also at the TWPC Convention last month there was a resolution on child care that states: "BE IT RESOLVED that the TWPC chairperson appoint two delegates to the Child Care '76 Legislative Task Force." If you are interested in serving on this task force, send the pertinent information to the State Office. You do not have to be an expert on child care, but you do have to be willing to help with strategy for getting child care legislation through the legislature next session.

** CHICANA CAUCUS

Maria Luisa Carreno, Chairperson of the Chicana Caucus, hopes that each local caucus will select a member to participate in Chicana Caucus meetings. The responsibilities of the delegate will be: 1) to work with membership chair to recruit Chicanas from the local caucus; 2) to organize a Chicana mailing list; 3) to encourage attendance, by Chicanas, at all Caucus and special meetings; 4) to report Chicana concerns to the Caucus; and 5) to identify and report problems of the Chicanas in local areas to the Chicana Caucus so that workshops or conferences may be set up to seek their solution. If you are interested in being a delegate, please contact your local caucus chair, or Maria Luisa Carreno, 1501 Rodolfo St., Alice, Tx. 78332.

** LESBIAN SPECIAL INTEREST CAUCUS

At the TWPC Convention, 10 women from 8 local caucuses formed the Lesbian Special Interest Caucus. This Caucus worked for the passage of a Convention resolution which establishes as a priority, TWPC efforts to repeal Section 21.06 of the Texas Penal Code, which defines certain private homosexual acts between consenting adults as Class C misdemeanors. Also a priority will be efforts towards the passage of H.R. 5452 (sponsored by Abzug, D-NY) which would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prohibit discrimination

based on sexual or affectional preference. In addition, the Lesbian Caucus has as goals: 1) internal education of TWPC members and external education of public officials concerning lesbianism; and 2) input on lesbian issues into the 1976 TWPC Convention. Janna Zumbrun of AWPC will serve as the Chair and Policy Council representative. Ann Cohn, 2024 Custer Pkwy., Richardson, Tx 75080, will serve as membership coordinator. All lesbian members of TWPC are invited to participate in the Lesbian Caucus. All membership information will be held in confidence by Ms. Cohn and Ms. Zumbrun.

H.R. 5452 has been referred to the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, chaired by Rep. Don Edwards, 407 House Office Bldg. Annes, Washington, D.C. 20515. As this bill is a major priority for TWPC, the Lesbian Special Interest Caucus is requesting each TWPC member to write to your Congressperson asking for support for the bill and support for efforts to conduct committee hearings on the bill before the end of the year. Letters requesting hearings should be sent to Rep. Don Edwards. Letters asking to consider sponsoring a similar bill in the Senate should be sent to Senators Bentsen and Tower, Senate Office Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20510. H.R. 5452 is likely to die in committee without hearings unless a large number of letters are received. The Lesbian Caucus suggests that each local caucus set aside some time at your next meeting to write letters or postcards.

*** * CORRECTION**

A correction needs to be made concerning the publisher of the booklet, "Chicana Educational Conference." This booklet was published by the Educational Research Corporation for the Advancement of Mexican American Women, not the TWPC Chicana Caucus. The newsletter editor regrets this error.

*** * ERA CONFERENCE IN AUSTIN, OCTOBER 18th**

Don't forget to attend the ERA Conference, "Social Change and the Law: The ERA--Its Effects on the Family, Education and the Economy," sponsored by Womanpower, Inc. It will be held at the Driskill Hotel in Austin, beginning at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, October 18. It is open to the public, free of charge. If you want more information, contact Terry Mason, P.O. Box 13062, Austin, Tx. 78711, 512-478-9726.

*** * The deadline for the October newsletter is October 10th. Please send your news to the State Office, 603 W. 13th, Suite 203, Austin, Tx. 78701. The newsletter would also appreciate receiving a newsletter from all the local caucuses, sent to the same address.**

*** * * 1975-76 OFFICERS * * ***

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