



TEXAS WOMEN'S POLITICAL CAUCUS

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Newsletter

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ALERT *** ALERT *** ALERT *** ALERT *** ALERT *** ALERT *** ALERT *** ALERT *** ALERT

On Feb. 12, 1975 Rep. George Preston, Paris, introduced H.B. 666. The bill would place a non-binding referendum on rescision of the Equal Rights Amendment on the April 22nd special election ballot. The bill has been referred to the House State Affairs Committee; a hearing is scheduled for the last week in Feb. It is extremely important that locals already contacted by the State office circulate all the information sent to them and call or write those members of the Committee in their area. Members of the committee are: Uher, Bay City, Chmn.; Geiger, Dallas, Vice-Chmn.; Boone, Navasota; Brown, San Antonio; Cartlidge of Henrietta; Earle of Austin; Ezzell, Snyder; Green, Houston; Hale, Corpus Christi; Mayes, Granbury; McDonald, Hidalgo; Munson, Denison; Short, Tahoka; Simpson, Amarillo; Spurlock, Ft. Worth; Vale, San Antonio; and Wilson, La Grange. We would like to see this bill killed or stalled in committee but this will be difficult since this is a very conservative committee. Passage of this bill would be fruitless, expensive and foolish. A referendum on the question of rescision would have no legal effect on either the ERA or the Texas Equal Legal Rights Amendment. The Legislature, not the voters, have sole responsibility for ratification of amendments to the U.S. Constitution. The Texas Legislature has already decided this issue. It is extremely important that all members of TWPC contact their legislators voicing our opposition to this bill should it be reported out of committee. A vote for this bill is, in effect, a vote against ERA!

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

A reminder from Loretta Jo Shaw, Vice-Chair for Membership, that we are continuing our MEMBERSHIP DRIVE through March 31. We urge all of the locals to make every effort to increase the membership of the TWPC. Local membership chairs --- be sure to have a SIGNED membership card for each one of your members. This may be needed for certification of membership for credentialling at the National Convention in Boston next June.

DUES, DUES AND MORE DUES

Jane Macon, Chair, and Sharon Macha, TWPC Comptroller, urge all locals to make every effort to collect \$15.00 per member for state and national dues when membership is renewed and/or when new members are added. The report from the Jan. NWPC Steering Committee meeting held in Washington, D.C. (which Jane, Sharon and Cathy Bonner attended) is that at least \$5.00 per member must be sent to National for dues by April 1 with an amending list to be sent on May 1. Credentialling for the National Convention is dependent on these two reports. If the Convention votes in favor of the \$10.00 assessment set previously, then we will have to come up with the additional \$5.00 per member in the latter part of '75. So please --- try to collect the full \$15.00 now or work out a plan whereby it will eventually be collected. If you have any questions, contact J. Macon or S. Macha.

SPECIAL DATES

TWPC Policy Council meeting -- Sunday, March 2, 1975, 10 am, Lt Governor's Committee Room, State Capitol, Austin, TX. NOTE CHANGE FROM LAST NEWSLETTER.
TWPC Political Action Committee meeting -- March 2, 9 am, prior to Policy Council.

POLITICAL ACTION REPORT

Ernestine Glossbrenner, TWPC Vice-Chair for Political Action, requests that all locals who have not done so send her the name of each PAC Chair or Vice-Chair. Materials for Political Action Notebooks have been mailed to each caucus. The should be maintained in loose-leaf binders by the PAC Chairs. Ernie has requested that the State office mail copies of all legislative committees to each local. Be sure to duplicate these when you get them and distribute them to your membership.

▶ TEXANS FOR ERA

On Saturday, Feb. 8, more than 20 Texas organizations pledged an all-out fight to retain both the ELRA to the state constitution and the 1972 ratification of the ERA to the U.S. Constitution. The press conference, which included reps of the Texas Conference of Churches, Texas AFL-CIO, TCLU, AAUW, LWV, Women in Communications, B&PW, Texas Nurses ASSn., TWPC and the Young Democrats of Texas, was coordinated by Texans for ERA. The state office urges locals to maintain support of ERA in Texas and assist the effort in Alabama as well. In Texas, write your legislators; in Ala., write Gov. & Mrs. George (Cornelia) Wallace, P.O. Box 1972, Montgomery. Debra Danburg, formerly of Houston, has joined the staff of Texans for ERA. They are still located at the TWPC state office.

▶ CITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Reports are filtering in from all over the state of upcoming City Council Forums sponsored by the locals. The Austin, El Paso and Georgetown caucuses are among those who have scheduled these seminars for March. We urge all caucus members to get involved in their city council elections by working in campaigns, endorsing feminist candidates or --- as Ernie Glossbrenner, Sunny Butler and Lila Cockrell have done --- by filing for council seats yourselves. Ernie is running for a place on the Alice City Council; Sunny and Lila have filed for mayor of El Paso and San Antonio, respectively. Good luck to all three of you and other caucus members who have filed.

▶ PUBLIC RELATIONS AND THE TWPC

Dell Gibson of the Bexar Co. WPC has offered her expertise in handling public relations for TWPC and has been coordinating our efforts in this area for almost two months now. Dell, who was instrumental in coordinating the successful PR campaign for the state convention in San Antonio, will be issuing press releases and acting as PR coordinator for caucus events. As a service to the locals, she will compile a fact sheet on how to secure publicity. Be sure to send Dell a list of your local press contacts and the name(s) of the political writer in your area if you have not already done so. Dell's phone number is (512) 341-2979.

▶ DIAL-A-BILL

Texans who want to know the status of legislative bills can learn that information by calling this toll-free number: 1-800-292-9693. Both House and Senate employees will be used to call up computer answers on committee hearing dates, name of the author and other information on any bill.

▶ NEW OFFICE HOURS

Our new office hours are: 3 - 5 pm, M-W-F; 6:30 - 7:30 pm, Tues.; 3 - 4 pm, Thurs. Our telephone number is (512) 474-1798.

▶ CHAIR VISITS CAUCUSES

Jane Macon is maintaining a hectic pace as Chair of TWPC. On Jan. 7, she visited the El Paso WPC. The reception was well attended by caucus members, area legislators, and the general public and received considerable press coverage. She also gave speeches in Hondo, Seguin and San Antonio and was interviewed by SA's Channels 12, 4 and 5. The Channel 4 interview was in regard to the TWPC stand of Women in Housing and Jane's testimony on behalf of TWPC at the Women in Housing Hearings. On Feb. 10, Jane participated with Rep. Sarah Weddington on the KLRN Ask a Lawyer Program at the request of the State Bar of Texas. On Feb. 24, Jane will visit with the Wichita County WPC. Please let Jane know if you would like for her to visit your local.

▶ APPOINTMENTS

New Civil District Courts will be created by local bills in this legislative session. We need to push for the appointment of women to these courts. The Corpus Christi WPC has recommended the appointment of Mrs. Mumford to the State Prison Board.

▶ INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR

That proclamation Gov. Briscoe issued on Jan 10, designates the whole year as IWY. We had previously been advised that the Gov does not set aside a whole year for any special interest and thought the Gov would designate only one day. We must be a force to reckon with if we can change the Gov's mind! Seriously, we do thank the Gov and his staff and hope we get the same type of cooperation on the more substantive issues.



LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Since the state convention, Olga De Leon, TWPC Vice-Chair for Legislation, has worked on the following things: 1) setting up legislative priorities as per state convention resolutions; 2) writing position papers on legislative priorities; 3) attempting to set up a state-wide coalition of women's organizations to work on mutual legislative priorities; and 4) coordinating the TWPC lobby effort. All of this encompasses a great deal of work. Olga has worked hard for the TWPC and has contacted all of you on various occasions requesting much needed information. In December, Olga was injured in an automobile accident and her recovery has been slow. Pauline Martinez, immediate past Vice-Chair for Legislation, has been assisting Olga during the past few months in coordinating our legislative effort. Increasing job responsibilities make it difficult for Pauline to be as active in this effort as she would like. We appreciate the dedicated efforts of these two outstanding members; without them we would not be as far along in our legislative effort as we are today. Although her activity has been restricted by her slow recovery and her physician's orders, Olga maintains her dedication to the TWPC and her position. In an effort to assist Olga and Gretchen Raatz, our lobbyist, in the day to day details of lobbying, Angie Flores has agreed to act as legislative coordinator for the duration or until Olga can resume her efforts more actively. If you have any question concerning our legislative priorities, contact Olga at (512) 926-9193 or Angie at (512) 475-6507 (8-5) or (512) 476-3735 (all other times).

Below please find analyses of bills already introduced on Rape Reform and the Commission on the Status of Women. These were prepared by Gretchen. For information concerning committees to which these bills have been referred, contact your local chairperson or Angie Flores. Complete reports are available from them.

RAPE REFORM LEGISLATION

Senate Bill 63 (Andujar, Ogg, Gammage)
House Bill 284 (Weddington, Bailey and 84 others)

	<u>EXISTING LAW</u>	<u>PROPOSED LAW</u>
21.01	No definition of consent	Adds a definition of consent
21.02 (b) (2)	Compels by threat	Compels by any express or implied threat communicated by action or words
21.02 (b) (2)	Would prevent resistance by a woman of ordinary resolution	Because of reasonable fear of harm, prevents her resistance
21.03 (a) (1) (2)	Rape of a child is Aggravated Rape	Rape or attempted rape of a child is Aggravated Rape
21.04 (b)	Sexual Abuse compelled by threat	Sexual Abuse compelled by any express or implied threat
21.04 (b)	Would prevent resistance by a person of ordinary resolution	Because of a reasonable fear of harm, prevents the other person's resistance
21.05 (a) (2)	Sexual Abuse of a child is Aggravated Sexual Abuse	Sexual Abuse or attempted sexual abuse of a child is Aggravated Sexual Abuse
21.13	Does not exist at present	Application and pre-trial hearing in advance of trial to introduce evidence of previous sexual conduct of victim. Only relevant previous sexual conduct with defendant or within one year of offense
12.01 C.C.P.	One year statute of limitations on rape	Three year statute of limitations on rape
38.07 C.C.P.	Does not exist at present	Uncorroborated testimony can convict. No corroboration goes only to weight

RAPE REFORM LEGISLATION CONT'D.

<u>EXISTING LAW</u>		<u>PROPOSED LAW</u>
36.025 C.C.P.	Does not exist at present	Court can exclude curious bystanders during trial, except officers of Court, defendant, actual participants and the press
16.055 C.C.P.	Does not exist at present	Magistrate can exclude curious bystanders during examining trial, except officers of Court, accused actual participants, and the press
Chap. 49	Does not exist at present	Prohibits publishing identity of victim without the victim's consent or Court order
Art 1914a V.A.T.S.	Does not exist at present	District Court can order publication of victim's name

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Senate Bill 125 (Andujar)
House Bill 350 (Miller and others)

Sec. 1 Purpose	Source of information and assistance to women; collect and distribute information; study subjects relating to opportunities, needs, problems and contributions of women.
Sec. 2 Membership	Total of 15 9 appointed by Governor; 3 appointed by Lt. Governor; 3 appointed by Speaker of House
Sec. 3 Terms	6 years; staggered
Sec. 4 Vacancies	same as Sec. 2
Sec. 5 Compensation	none; actual and necessary expenses only
Sec. 6 Organization	elect officers; hire a director and necessary staff
Sec. 7 Powers and Duties	(a) collect and distribute information; (b) charge for distribution of materials; (c) fact finding hearings; administer oaths and take testimony; (d) quarterly meetings; (e) accept donations, gifts and endorsements; (f) biennial report to Governor and Legislature; (g) appoint advisory panel; no fixed number; meets twice annually
Sec. 8 Agency Cooperation	Commission shall cooperate with state agencies; state agencies shall cooperate with Commission

If any of the members need information regarding the status of these bills, please call Angie Flores. We will make every attempt to keep you as up to date as possible.

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