



Maine Permanent Commission on  
**THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

**MePCSW Policy and Legislation Committee (PLC)**

**Meeting Minutes**

**October 29, 2025**

**9:30-10:30 A.M.**

**MePCSW Committee Members in Attendance:** Dania Bowie, Maulian Bryant, Chris Hastedt, Karen Keim, Jill Barkley Roy

**MePCSW Committee Members Absent:** Kate Elmes

**Staff and Guests:** Elinor Higgins (MePCSW ED)

--

**Facilitator:** Dania Bowie, PLC Chair

**Welcome**

**Old Business and Public Comment**

1. Any members of the public may introduce themselves and speak for 3 minutes
  - a. No members of the public present
2. Review, discuss and approve August PLC meeting minutes
  - a. Motion to approve: Karen
  - b. Second: Maulian
  - c. Vote: Unanimous vote to approve

**New Business**

1. Elinor provided brief review of recent activity
  - a. PRAMS issue brief – has been circulated widely, spoke about this issue on News Center Maine
  - b. Gender parity on corporate boards – 2025 report released, Elinor drafting a letter to go out with the report to the corporate entities
2. Reviewed draft of criteria and process for determining legislative priorities and making decisions about where to put resources for legislative advocacy
  - a. Need to think about opportunities to be most impactful – just giving testimony is not as impactful as more targeted lobbying
  - b. Maulian shared process used by the Wabanaki Alliance and lessons learned about working with/not getting out ahead of the tribal governments
  - c. Suggestion to use a tiered approach with different levels of engagement (e.g., written testimony, verbal testimony, lobbying) depending on how the bill fits with MePCSW priorities and its potential impact

- d. Noted the importance of finding out which bills may actually move or be going somewhere or where Commission engagement may actually impact outcomes
- e. Discussed the need to engage Commissioners in giving testimony – challenges due to widespread locations and competing jobs/priorities, but also opportunity for more capacity
  - i. Noted that it may also be important for Elinor to be present during testimony from Commissioners to ensure a common, known point of contact
- 3. Discussed relationship building with legislators
  - a. Suggestion to focus on building relationships with key committees and legislative leadership – possible to connect with committee chairs early on to tee up a brief presentation to Labor, HHS, SLG, Appropriations?
  - b. Karen emphasized interest in getting Commission materials in front of new legislators as part of onboarding
  - c. Keep the number of priority bills limited – 5 or so – and determine these by leveraging relationships with legislators and other partners
  - d. Could work on boiler plate language/templates for testimony to make it easier/faster
  - e. Consider op-eds as another way of reaching folks – one piece of the strategy
  - f. Consider how to leverage relationship with the Governor on key issues
  - g. Dania shared work on materials to support Commissioners in reaching out to make initial contact with legislators – more to come on that
- 4. Elinor shared that she will be creating a Google folder for PLC work

**Wrap-Up and Next Steps**

- 1. Scheduling next meeting
  - a. Next meeting scheduled for December 17<sup>th</sup>, after the December 8<sup>th</sup> full MePCSW meeting, where Commissioners will discuss delegating authority to the PLC
- 2. Other?