

June 1, 2023



CELEBRATING
25
YEARS
— 1998 - 2023 —

Annual Report FY23

MASSACHUSETTS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (MCSW)

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Remarks from FY2023 Chair

In so many ways, the past year has been incredibly transformative for your Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women. Like so many of you, we have come together to rebuild what the Commission is and will be after the lasting effects of the COVID-19 pandemic – and I am so proud to say that we have emerged on the other side stronger than ever, and ready to tackle whatever comes our way on behalf of the women in this great Commonwealth.

In 2022, we hired MCSW Executive Director, Shaitia Spruell. A former Commissioner herself, a young mother, and a Woman of Color, Shaitia has charted uncertain waters with the grace and ease of a leader that was born for this work.

For 25 years, the MCSW operated on a shoestring budget, committed to changing the lives for women and girls across the Commonwealth with often only one paid staff member and a fleet of interns and commissioners committed to the mission. However, after receiving a historic budget supplement from outgoing Governor Charlie Baker, the Commission was adequately funded for the first time since our inception in 1998.

It brings me great joy to see the many ways in which the MCSW team has grown. In a short period of time, Executive Director Spruell has overhauled the Commission's infrastructure, rising to meet the challenge and empowering a new generation of leaders with the professional and business skills required to catapult the Commission into the next 25 years. Fully staffed, with 6 new full-time staff members for the first time – and fully seated, with 19 State Commissioners for the first time since the pandemic began – we are ready for the opportunities that lay ahead. This growth has enabled us to reach deeper into our communities, host additional events, launch exciting programming to further elevate women and girls through real impact, and much, much more.

I am so proud to be the Chairwoman of the MCSW at this pivotal moment in time. Kicking off our first in-person public hearing in more than two years in Provincetown, we hosted two more public hearings across the Commonwealth, from one end of the State to the other, in addition to a variety of other events including Community Conversations, advocacy, and Girls Empowerment Leadership Initiative. The incredible testimonies at these hearings only further underscored the crucial work of our regional commissions.

Furthermore, we couldn't be prouder to continue our work to advance the lives of women and girls through policy change, especially given the historic nature of representation now in the corner office. The election of Governor Maura Healey, Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll, and Andrea Campbell elected as the first Black Attorney General in the Commonwealth made Massachusetts the first state in the nation to have so many women in the corner office. Our policy work continues to be at the heart of everything we do, and the launch of our [2023 Legislative Priorities](#) at the

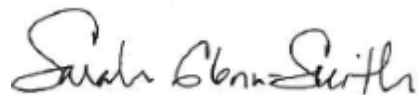


beginning of the 193rd Legislative Session reflect our commitment to change. More than 200 women attended our first in-person Advocacy Day in more than three years – we're working together to make change for all women and girls across the Commonwealth. We look forward to working with alongside all of our appointing authorities: the Governor, the Senate President, the Speaker of the House, and the Caucus of Women Legislators to move the needle on policy that can change our lives for the better.

And finally, as a proud lesbian woman and mother, I would be remiss if I didn't highlight the many ways this Commission is working to represent the myriad of facets that comprise our lives. The launch of our brand-new website intentionally incorporated aspects of accessibility on par with the White House. We're committed to not only principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion among our staff and regional commissioners, but also as a commitment we hold to the public in making our work accessible and welcoming to all. My wife and daughter are Deaf, and I am so appreciative that the MCSW has made a commitment to ensure that all our public hearings and events are accessible in American Sign Language and other language accommodations. We're committed to translating our materials into the top 10 languages of the Commonwealth and incorporate whatever accommodations that may be needed to ensure women and children thrive. I am proud to be a part of an organization that champions inclusion.

As the Chairwoman of the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women, it brings me great joy to celebrate such a momentous year alongside all of you. While there is still much uncertainty, inequity, and discrimination in the world, I draw hope from my Sister Commissioners and our collective work as a community to change the lives of women and girls in the Commonwealth for the better.

In solidarity and gratitude,



Dr. Sarah Glenn-Smith
Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women (MCSW) Chairwoman



Commissioners, Staff, and Interns



MCSW State Commissioners and Officers

Dr. Sarah Glenn-Smith, Holliston – *MCSW Chairwoman*

Dr. Aisha Miller, Mattapan – *MCSW Vice-Chair*

Christine Monska, Auburndale – *MCSW Secretary & GELI Subcommittee Chair*

Nina Liang, Quincy – *MCSW Treasurer & Finance Committee Chair*

Denella Clark, Hyde Park – *Immediate Past Chairwoman & 25th Anniversary Committee Chair*

Carol Campbell, Amherst

Divya Chaturvedi, Wilmington

Tanisha Arena, Springfield

Rebecca Bact, Auburndale – *Program & Planning Committee Chair*

Guimel DeCarvalho, Natick – *Legislative & Public Policy Committee Vice-Chair*

Marianne Fleckner, Westford – *Finance Committee Vice-Chair*

Jean Fox, Freetown – *Program and Planning Committee Vice-Chair*

Liz Friedman, Northampton – *Program & Planning Committee Secretary*

Allison Goldberg, Marblehead

Audrey Hall, Framingham – *Finance Committee Secretary*

Leslie-Ann McGee, Kingston – *Legislative & Public Policy Committee Secretary*

Sonia Shah, Natick

Kim Shea, Wilmington

Mary-dith Tuitt, Boston – *Legislative & Public Policy Committee Chair*

MCSW Staff

Shaitia Spruell, Lancaster

Executive Director

Marjorie C. Bernadeau-Alexandre, Roslindale

Administration & Finance Director

Tina Games, Harwich

Regional Commissions Director

Ellen Moorhouse, Springfield

Communications and Marketing Director

Shalaya West, Boston

Program and Research Director

Darlene Kelter, Lynnfield

Administrative Assistant

Raven Harris, Springfield

MCSW Clerk & Executive Assistant



MCSW Interns

The MCSW's internship program provides students with an opportunity to gain hands-on experience in public policy, research, communications, and community outreach related to women's issues. Interns work closely with the commission staff to support ongoing projects and initiatives, as well as to develop new projects and programs. We welcomed 12 paid interns this year from a variety of educational institutions.

Elli Cho, Tufts University

Campbell Devlin, Tufts University

Camier Hall, Boston College

Yanli Lu, Boston College

Jada Okoye, New York University

Amelia Oliver, Tufts University

Julia Steiner, Tufts University

Jaylene Tiscareno, Boston College



Jada Alexander, Brandeis University

Madison Rodriguez, Western New England University

Jaden Wong, Boston University

Nawal Khan, Tufts University

A Brief History of the MCSW: Our Mission, Charges of the Commission

The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women (MCSW) is an independent state agency legislatively created in 1998 to provide a permanent and effective voice for women and girls. The Commission's enacting legislation was inspired by the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women, held in September 1995 in Beijing, China. Massachusetts' delegates to the Conference, including then Massachusetts First Lady Susan Roosevelt Weld, returned determined that the Commonwealth would have its own Women's Commission. This passion and commitment led to the creation of a coalition of dedicated women and brought this dream to fruition.

MCSW is comprised of 19 volunteer state commissioners, 11 regional bodies, dedicated staff members, and seasonal interns. MCSW state commissioners are appointed by one of four appointing authorities: the Governor, the Senate President, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Caucus of Women Legislators. Commissioners serve in a volunteer capacity, and meet monthly, September through June. In addition, each commissioner is a member of at least one standing committee that generally meets monthly.

The standing committees include:

- Legislative and Public Policy
- Program and Planning
- Finance Committee
- Executive Committee

For more than 25 years now, the Commission and our regional bodies have worked to advance the rights and opportunities of all women and girls across Massachusetts, regardless of age, race, color, creed, abilities, language, socio-economic status, immigration status, sexual orientation, or gender assigned at birth.

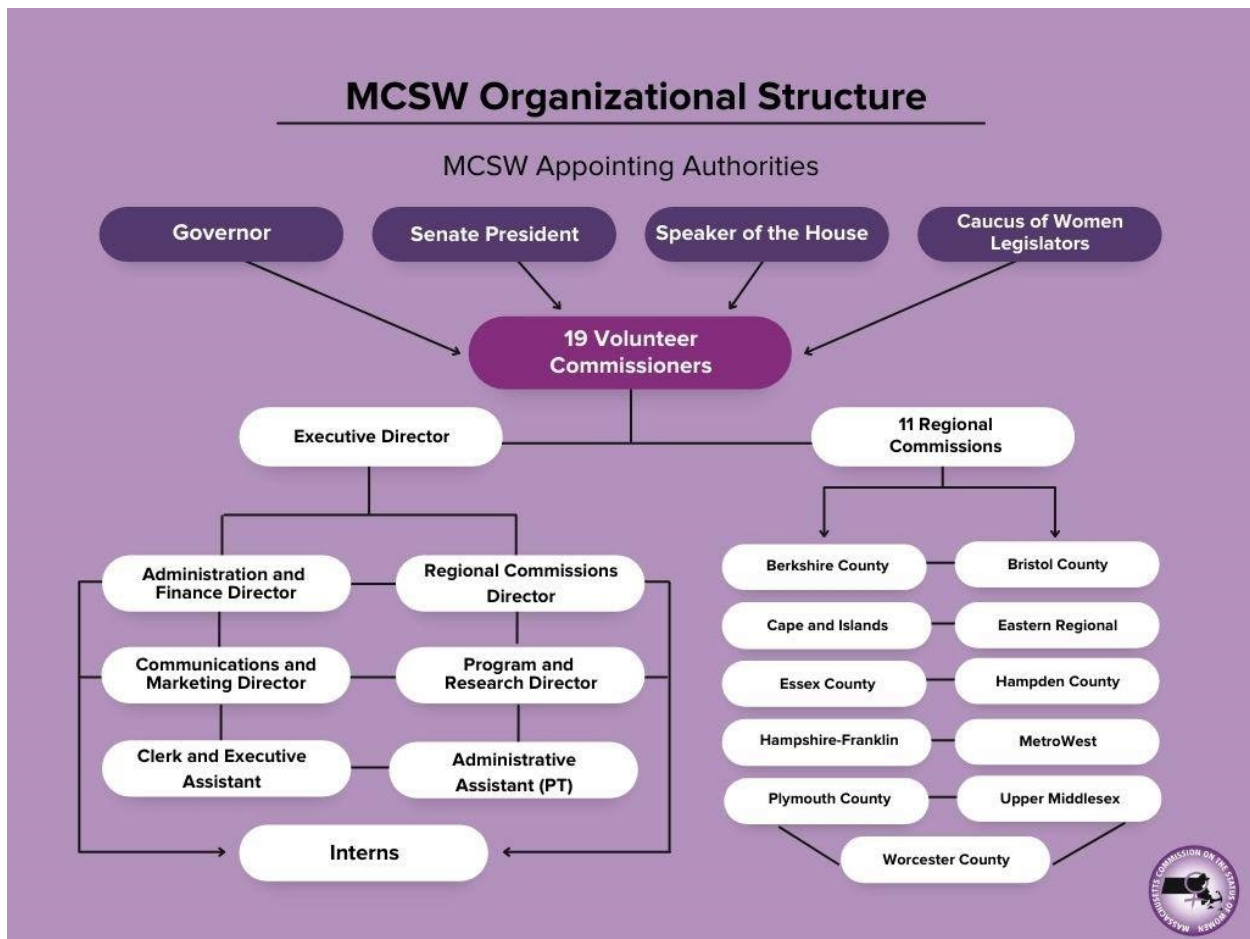
The mission of the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women (MCSW) is to provide a permanent, effective voice for women and girls across Massachusetts and to advocate for the achievement of a happier, healthier, and more equitable life for the women of the Commonwealth as essential members of our community.

MCSW is Empowered to:

- Serve as a liaison between government and private interest groups concerned with issues affecting women,
- Analyze and report on the status of women in the Commonwealth,
- Counsel executive and legislative bodies on the effect of proposed legislation on women,
- Provide referrals and serve as a resource of information on issues pertaining to women for women and leaders in business, education, healthcare, media, and state and local government,
- Endorse and facilitate collaboration among local women's commissions and among women's organizations in the state.

At the end of 2022, the MCSW welcomed three new commissioners; Carol Campbell, Divya Chaturvedi, and Kimberly Shea.

Organizational Chart



MCSW Regional Commissions

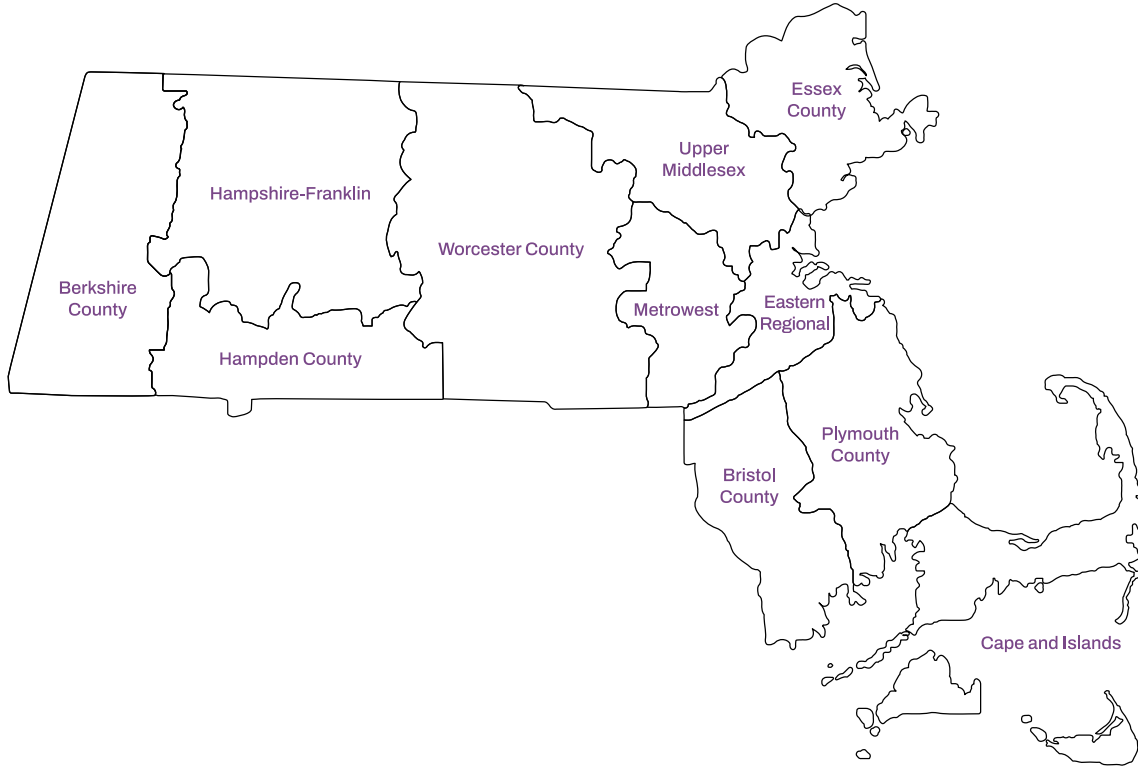
The MCSW's 11 Regional Commissions expand the reach of its mission across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Modeled after the MCSW, the 11 county and regional women's commissions were legislatively created to study and report on the status of women and girls in their geographical areas, and to provide permanent and effective voices for women and girls. Each county and regional commission reports its findings and activities annually to MCSW.

Regional Commissions are comprised of 9-13 volunteer members who have had prior experience working towards the improvement of the status of women, and exist to provide a positive and effective voice for women and girls in their respective regions. Commissioners are drawn from diverse racial, ethnic, religious, age, sexual orientation, gender identification, and socio-economic backgrounds throughout the state.

MCSW's Regional Commissions:

- Berkshire County
- Bristol County
- Cape and Islands
- Eastern Regional
- Essex County
- Hampden County
- Hampshire-Franklin
- MetroWest
- Plymouth County
- Upper Middlesex
- Worcester County

Regional Commissions on the Status of Women



Regional Commissions are comprised of 9-13 volunteer members who have had prior experience working towards the improvement of the status of women, and exist to provide a positive and effective voice for women and girls in their respective regions. Commissioners are drawn from diverse racial, ethnic, religious, age, sexual orientation, gender identification, and socio-economic backgrounds throughout the state.

Regional Commission's duties include studying, reviewing and reporting on the status of women in the county; promoting and facilitating collaboration among local women's organizations; recommending policies that benefit women to agencies, officers of the state, and local government; and holding fact-finding hearings and other public forums as it may deem necessary.





Berkshire County Commission on the Status of Women

State Liaison: Christine Monska

Regional Commissioners: Andrea Wadsworth, Chair (Lee); Sarah Gillooly, Vice Chair (Pittsfield); Marissa Dubecky Meehan, Secretary (Richmond); Laura Cabrera (Pittsfield); Carly Garofano (Pittsfield); Shela Levante (Pittsfield); Barbara Rosenthal (Williamstown)

Regional Area: The Berkshire County Commission on the Status of Women represents all cities and towns in Berkshire County including Adams, Alford, Becket, Cheshire, Clarksburg, Dalton, Egremont, Florida, Great Barrington, Hancock, Hinsdale, Lanesborough, Lee, Lenox, Mount Washington, New Ashford, New Marlborough, North Adams, Otis, Peru, Pittsfield, Richmond, Sandisfield, Savoy, Stockbridge, West Stockbridge, Williamstown, and Windsor.

Highlights and Accomplishments for FY23

- Reestablished our commission and our presence in the community
- Attended the November MCSW Public Hearing in Pittsfield where several of our BCCSW commissioners spoke
- Contacted community partners with the intention of expanding our visibility and to invite them to commission meetings for conversations regarding strategic partnerships.
- Held a commission retreat for the purpose of team-building, getting to know each other, setting goals, and planning our first legislative event as a new group
- Attended the April GELI event hosted by MCSW in Worcester
- Attended the May 31st Advocacy Day hosted by MCSW in Boston

Goals for Next Fiscal Year

- Host a legislative event in the fall to discuss our regional priorities
- Host a public hearing or listening session in early winter or early spring
- Continue to invite community partners to our meetings to discuss strategic partnerships
- Plan a forum on a topic of importance to women and girls in Berkshire County



Bristol County Commission on the Status of Women

State Liaison: Jean Fox

Regional Commissioners: Tanya Lobo, Taunton (Chair); Donna Criscuolo, New Bedford (Vice Chair); Esther Rogers, Taunton (Co-Secretary); Rose Costa, Fall River (Co-Secretary), Colleen Peters Hussey, Mansfield (Treasurer); Werlaine Badio, Fall River; Vivian Smith-Barnes, Fall River; Maria Gonzalez, Taunton; Millie Sanchez, Taunton



Regional Area: The Bristol County Commission on the Status of Women represents all towns in Bristol County including Easton, Raynham, Mansfield, Norton, Attleboro, North Attleborough, Seekonk, Rehoboth, Swansea, Somerset, Dighton, Fall River, Westport, Dartmouth, New Bedford, Acushnet, Fairhaven, Freetown, Berkley, and Taunton.

Highlights and Accomplishments for FY23

- We hosted a series of listening sessions across Bristol County that have attracted 40+ attendees at each one. Our findings are guiding our regional priorities and decisions regarding what resources to advocate for and what our communities are needed as it relates to resources.
- We hosted two very successful community networking events where state legislators, local leaders, and community organizations gathered for intimate conversations on the needs of women in our communities and how best to support them.
- Launched our youth advisory council and will be seeking applications over the summer.
- Co-sponsored and event hosted by Girls, Inc. in Taunton and promoted the launch of our girls council.



Goals for Next Fiscal Year

- Host a retreat for team-building and strategic planning
- Strengthen outreach and branding
- Advocate and support commissioner stipends



Cape Cod and Islands Commission on the Status of Women

Regional Commissioners: Linda Cebula (Chair), Harwich; Lynne Barbee (Vice Chair), Mashpee; Donna Rivers (Secretary), Dennis; Sue Mynttinen (Treasurer), Nantucket; Janell Burley Hoffman, Sandwich; Katia Dacunha, Hyannis; Rachel Devine, Nantucket; Anna Dunphy, Falmouth; Natalia Frois, Hyannis; Mary Kate Gallagher, Yarmouth; Joanna McCarthy, Martha's Vineyard; Amy Peters, Mashpee; Mary Waygan, Mashpee.

Regional Area: The Cape Cod and Islands Commission on the Status of Women represents towns in all of Barnstable, Dukes, and Nantucket Counties including Bourne, Falmouth, Sandwich, Mashpee, Barnstable, Dennis, Yarmouth, Harwich, Chatham, Brewster, Orleans, Eastham, Wellfleet, Truro, Provincetown, Nantucket, and Martha's Vineyard (Edgartown, Oak Bluffs, Aquinnah, Chilmark, Vineyard Haven, West Tisbury).

Highlights and Accomplishments for FY23

- Outreach – We continue to emphasize our social media presence, share information and resources with our communities, and have ordered CCICSW branded items like pens and notepads for promotional use.
- Listening Circle in Orleans (September 2022) – This event was co-sponsored with NAMI Cape Cod and the Islands and titled Children and Mental Wellness. Participants heard from Jackie Lane, Executive Director of NAMI Cape Cod on the resources available to residents of our region - and from Cindy Horgan, Executive Director of Cape Cod Children's Place about raising children to have sustainable mental wellness. Topics covered included the negative impacts of social media and the overall lack of investment in early childhood development, including the low pay scales within the industry. Lane spoke to NAMI's youth initiatives, and the training of first responders to be able to divert a mental health crisis from the criminal system.
- Legislative Activities – We hosted a remote brunch event, offering constituents the opportunity to meet and interact with our state legislators. Additionally, we invited newly elected state representative Chris Flanagan to one of our meetings, giving all an opportunity to become acquainted with current issues and concerns.

Goals for Next Fiscal Year

- We plan to hold a fall listening circle on the lower Cape, focusing on the women who live in those towns – with a guest speaker on a relevant topic in that region followed by a hearing.
- We'll be starting our own monthly newsletter and expanding our social media presence.
- To expand awareness of the Commission, we'll be attending meetings of other municipal and community organizations and presenting who we are, what we do, and our focus on current issues – and taking questions and concerns back to our full commission meetings.



Eastern Regional Commission on the Status of Women

Regional Commissioners: Amanda Crabb, Quincy (Chair); Soumia Aitelhaj, Revere; (Co-Chair); Tamisha Lucien Civil, Stoughton (Secretary); Margaret Adams, Dedham; Kerry Akashian, Boston; Linda Champion, Milton; Manya Chylinski, Boston; Schuyler Daum, Jamaica Plain; Toby Kamens Rodman, Brookline.

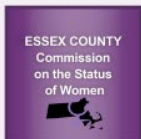
Regional Area: Eastern Regional Commission on the Status of Women includes the towns of Avon, Brookline, Canton, Cohasset, Dedham, Foxborough, Holbrook, Milton, Plainville, Randolph, Sharon, Stoughton, and Westwood, and the cities of Boston, Braintree, Chelsea, Quincy, Revere, Weymouth, and Winthrop.

Highlights and Accomplishments for FY23

- Maintained a consistent presence at MCSW Regional Chairs meetings and Regional Convenings – and attended various meetings in the community, representing ERCSW.
- We prepared a toolkit, using the GELI toolkit from the state as a guide, and ran three virtual listening sessions via Zoom. Two were focused on open topics, addressing concerns of women in our region - and one was focused exclusively on Spanish-speaking women and their needs and concerns.
- We held a commission retreat in October 2022 for the purpose of getting to know each other better and to establish our goals for the year.

Goals for Next Fiscal Year

- We plan to have another commission retreat where we will discuss revisions to our bylaws and goals for FY24.
- We are working on a visibility plan to introduce ourselves to our regional communities and to gather information regarding the needs and concerns of women in our region.



Essex County Commission on the Status of Women

State Liaison: Penny Blaisdell, Commissioner Emerita

Regional Commissioners: Ogor Okoye, Chair (Saugus); Sandy Almonte, Vice Chair (Methuen); Geetha Rao Ramani, Secretary (Andover); Brianna Sullivan, Treasurer (Newburyport); Kirsten Alexander (Wenham), Chelsea Kamuene (North Andover); Nicole McClain (Lynn); Sara Stanley (Rowley); Amy Smith (Salem); Sefatia Romero Theken (Gloucester).

Regional Area: The Essex County Commission on the Status of Women represents all towns in Essex County including Saugus, Lynnfield, Lynn, Peabody, Swampscott, Salem, Marblehead, Danvers, Beverly, Middleton, Topsfield, Wenham, Hamilton, Manchester-by-the-sea, Essex, Gloucester, Rockport, Ipswich, Rowley, Newbury, Newburyport, Salisbury, Amesbury, Merrimac, West Newbury, Haverhill, Groveland, Georgetown, North Andover, Andover, Methuen, and Lawrence.

Highlights and Accomplishments for FY23

- **The Ginsburg Initiative** - During the fall 2022, ECCSW, through their first ever (paid) intern, launched its Ginsburg Initiative, a young women's council, created to give voice to young women in Essex County. We recruited 10 young women between the ages of 14 and 21, representing diverse municipalities across Essex County to meet monthly. They identified their core topic for this year - mental health support - and are working on a survey on what young women feel are the best ways to seek support for mental health challenges in their daily lives.
- **Women's Health Advocacy** - On women's health policy, in the wake of the Supreme Court reversal of Roe vs Wade, we held an information session to discuss the Commonwealth's response - both in providing clear, unfettered access to women's reproductive services and protection to any medical professionals who provided women's health services.
- **Domestic Violence Awareness Month: Know Your Rights** - Sara Stanley, ECCSW Commissioner and Executive Director of HAWC, and Julie Bakoian, HAWC Manager of Legal Services, shared steps that victims of domestic abuse can take to receive aid when exiting an abusive relationship.
- **Listening Circle in Lynn, MA** - ECCSW supported and attended MSCW's public hearing in Lynn, MA at the North Shore Community College to hear from 50+ Essex County residents.
- **International Women's Day Breakfast** - ECCSW was one of the hosts for the 25th International Women's Day Annual celebration on March 8th at Simmons College.

Goals for Next Fiscal Year

- Continue strengthening and expanding our Ginsburg Initiative
- Hire a new intern to continue the good work of our previous intern who is graduating
- Continue building community connections and work ahead to build a pipeline of activities and events to deliver more information on services and organizations in and around Essex County to the women and young girls
- Continue to identify key legislative priorities consistent with the primary needs in the county



Hampden County Commission on the Status of Women

State Liaison: Carol Campbell

Regional Commissioners: Jacqueline Velez (Chair), Springfield; Shanique Spaulding (Vice Chair), Springfield; Tara Marshall (Secretary), Agawam; Gabrielle Jackson, Springfield; Kimberley Lee, Wilbraham; Alina Carcea, Longmeadow; Daisy Pereria-Tosado, Agawam; Izzy Ortiz, Springfield; Nicole Coakley, Springfield.

Regional Area: The Hampden County Commission on the Status of Women represents all cities and towns in Hampden County including Agawam, Blandford, Brimfield, Chester, Chicopee, East Longmeadow, Granville, Hampden, Holland, Holyoke, Longmeadow, Ludlow, Monson, Montgomery, Palmer, Russell, Southwick, Springfield, Tolland, Wales, West Springfield, Westfield, and Wilbraham.

Highlights and Accomplishments for FY23

- **Community Events Domestic Violence Guest Speaker Updates** (Fall 2022)
- **Women Who Tell Our Stories** (March 2023) – Panel Discussion with community leaders

- **GELI Conference** (April 2023) – Commissioner Shanique Spaulding facilitated two workshops that focused on civic engagement for young leaders and activists.
- **MCSW Advocacy Day** (May 2023) – Commissioners will be in attendance to advocate on our regional priorities as well as the state commission’s priorities.
- **Legislative Breakfast** (June 2023) – Hosting a conversation with our state legislators and regional community leaders on topics of importance to women and girls in our region
- **Regional Public Hearing** (June 2023) – Holding a public hearing for women in Hampden County to share their needs and concerns and what impacts their daily lives
- HCCSWG Commissioners also invited a series of women who lead in our community to serve as featured guests and present important information to our constituents during our monthly public meetings on a quarterly basis.

Goals for Next Fiscal Year

- Rebuild our commission by adding five new commissioners
- Continue to advocate on our regional priorities
- Continue to engage with our state legislators and community leaders
- Host events that highlight and support the needs of women in our communities



Hampshire-Franklin County Commission on the Status of Women

State Liaison: Liz Friedman

Regional Commissioners: Marcia Plant Jackson (Chair), Leverett; Laura Sylvester (Vice Chair), Shutesbury; Victoria Cliche (Clerk), Leverett; Jennifer Ortiz (Treasurer), South Hadley; Patricia Crosby, Gill; Marie McCourt, Granby; Bonnie MacCracken, Amherst.

Regional Area: The Hampshire-Franklin Commission on the Status of Women represents all cities and towns in Hampshire and Franklin Counties including Amherst, Ashfield, Belchertown, Bernardston, Buckland, Charlemont, Chesterfield, Colrain, Conway, Cummington, Deerfield, Easthampton, Erving, Gill, Goshen, Granby, Greenfield, Hadley, Hatfield, Hawley, Heath, Huntington, Leverett, Leyden, Middlefield, Monroe, Montague, New Salem, Northampton, Northfield, Orange, Pelham, Plainfield, Rowe, Shelburne, Shutesbury, South Hadley, Southampton, Sunderland, Ware, Warwick, Wendell, Westhampton, Whately, Williamsburg and Worthington.

Highlights and Accomplishments for FY23

- Hosted a table at the Smith College Jandon Opportunity Fair in September to secure an intern for the Fall, distribute the Resource Guide, and expand community connections.
- Attended Lindsey Sadosa’s Bill Signing in February
- Participated in the Menstrual Equity Summit run by the Massachusetts Equity Coalition and signed up as a partner in March
- Participated in Domestic Violence March organized by students at Ware HS.
- Attended planning meeting for Northampton Youth Commission Hearing on Female and Female Identifying Youth to be held in the Fall
- Hosted a table at the Five Colleges Queer and Gender and Sexuality Conference held at Hampshire College and administered a survey for the local LGBTQIA+ Community as developed with the MCSW

- Planned and supported two listening sessions for the LGBTQIA+ community with representatives of the MCSW
- Worked with a Smith College intern to establish a database contact list of all organizations and resources compiled in the Resource Guide for our region which will be distributed in June

Goals for Next Fiscal Year

- Recruit new commissioners, increase our social media presence by establishing a social media internship, continue to build the relationship with Smith College and identify one additional partnership, build even stronger partnership with state legislators.



MetroWest Commission on the Status of Women

State Liaison: Audrey Hall

Regional Commissioners: Lisa MacDonald (Chair), Natick; Julie Watt Faqir (Vice Chair), Holliston; Stephanie Deeley, Framingham; Heather Panahi, Wellesley; Nasiba Mannan, Hopkinton, Odessa Sanchez, Wellesley; Amie Rotundi, Medway; Michele Fronk Schuckle, Weston; Rachel Niemiec, Ashland.

Regional Area: The MetroWest Commission on the Status of Women represents the towns of Ashland, Bellingham, Dover, Framingham, Franklin, Holliston, Hopkinton, Hudson, Maynard, Medfield, Medway, Millis, Natick, Needham, Norfolk, Northborough, Norwood, Sherborn, Southborough, Stow, Sudbury, Walpole, Wayland, Wellesley, Westborough, Weston and Wrentham, and the city of Marlborough.

Highlights and Accomplishments for FY23

- **Purple Passion Walk** – MWCSW participated in the annual Purple Passion Walk, hosted by Voices Against Violence in Framingham. The walk is scheduled again for September. Commissioners and Athena Council planning to take an active role in this year's event.
- **Redefining Feminism** – In February, our Athena Council hosted a virtual event called, *Redefining Feminism*, featuring three local panelists from nearby schools and colleges. The discussion focused on trends and challenges as it pertains to the notion of feminism, its stereotypes, and redefining what it means in today's society. We were pleased to welcome more than 30 guests in attendance for the event, which included staff from Senate President Karen Spilka's office, Rep. Robyn Kennedy, and Rep. Priscilla Sousa.
- **Who Cares? Assessing the State of Caregiving in MetroWest and Greater Boston** – In March at Holliston Town Hall, more than 20 people attended an in-person event focused on the various supports, resources, and proposed ideas for intergenerational care in Massachusetts. Senate President Karen Spilka was our featured speaker, along with Jessica Constantino, director of Advocacy for AARP Massachusetts. State legislators Rep. Jack Lewis and Rep. James Arena DeRosa were in attendance along with several State Commissioners. We are interested in continuing to support this topic and the notion of intergenerational care.
- **Youth Advisory Council Day** – In April, our Athena Council was invited to participate in Senate President Karen Spilka's Youth Advisory Council Day. All nine Athena Council members were in attendance, providing a presentation on their priorities and work to date, including their survey on mental health, a recap of the *Redefining Feminism* program, and their commitment to menstrual equity. They will share these highlights at MCSW's Advocacy Day.

Goals for Next Fiscal Year

- Creating and maintaining partnerships with increased visibility
- Review of Processes and Procedures
- Hire an intern to work directly with the Athena Council



Plymouth County Commission on the Status of Women

Regional Commissioners: Carolyn Riley (Chair), Plymouth; Elisabeth Arruda (Vice Chair), Marion; Laura Buckley (Treasurer), Plymouth; Tracey Weeden (Secretary), Bridgewater; Karen Canfield, Scituate; Phyllis Ellis, Brockton; Dawn Sibor, Scituate.

Regional Area: The Plymouth County Commission on the Status of Women represents all the towns and cities in Plymouth County including Abington, Bridgewater, Brockton, Carver, Duxbury, East Bridgewater, Halifax, Hanover, Hanson, Hingham, Hull, Kingston, Lakeville, Marion, Marshfield, Mattapoisett, Middleborough, Norwell, Pembroke, Plymouth, Plympton, Rochester, Rockland, Scituate, Wareham, West Bridgewater, and Whitman.

Highlights and Accomplishments for FY23

- In its fifth year, the PCCSW focused on its legislative priorities – and the resource guide that was created last year was distributed to our constituents and supporters in Plymouth County. A planned public hearing and discussion planned for spring was rescheduled to the fall and we did contract a person to assist us with marketing that event to ensure strong attendance from Plymouth County.
- The PCCSW has maintained its website so that it has a more effective means of sharing information about its meetings, events, legislative priorities, and goals, and hosting its resource guide. PCCSW has a strong presence on Facebook and Instagram pages – and established a general Gmail account to better manage the business of the commission.
- PCCSW maintained a continued presence at MCSW Regional Chairs meetings and Regional Convenings – and will be attending the MCSW Advocacy Day to advocate on our regional priorities.

Goals for Next Fiscal Year

- Resume our annual Legislative Coffee
- Consider holding a resource fair open to all
- Provide education and training related to jobs and salary negotiation.
- Continue to explore grant opportunities and work to help break down barriers for women and girls who want to attend PCCSW events.
- Hold a public hearing/discussion targeting constituents of all ages in the fall of 2023
- Improve recruitment efforts



Upper Middlesex Commission on the Status of Women

Regional Commissioners: Connie Chow (Chair), Newton; Michelle Mullet (Vice Chair), North Reading; Christina Li (Secretary), Lexington; Corrinne Corso, Ayer; Jennifer Roecklein-Canfield, Littleton; Rebecca Neale, Bedford; Kristina Racek-Pachulis, Melrose; Anna Tse, Malden.

Regional Area: The Upper Middlesex Commission on the Status of Women includes the towns of Acton, Arlington, Ashby, Ayer, Bedford, Belmont, Billerica, Boxborough, Burlington, Carlisle, Chelmsford, Concord, Dracut, Dunstable, Groton, Lexington, Lincoln, Littleton, North Reading, Pepperell, Reading, Shirley, Stoneham, Tewksbury, Townsend, Tyngsborough, Wakefield, Westford, Wilmington, Winchester, and the cities of Cambridge, Everett, Lowell, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Newton, Somerville, Waltham, Watertown, and Woburn.

Highlights and Accomplishments for FY23

- Establishment of the Athena (youth) Council. We recruited and inducted six younger women's advocates and activists in the Upper Middlesex region to the Athena Council.
- The goal of the group is to identify, discuss and amplify the issues that they believe are most important to teen girls in their own communities. Council members studied international feminist movements, and conducted research on menstrual equity, advocating for inclusion of this issue in the Commission's legislative priorities.
- Survey on eldercare preparedness. To continue to inform ourselves on the commission's legislative priorities, to understand community-based actions already in place that address issues of concern, and to build relationships with the community and assess how the commission might leverage our role to advance their work. We invited Dr. Julie Norstrand, a practitioner and a member of the board of the Newton Council, to our open meeting and collaborated with her to modify and disseminate a survey on eldercare to better understand related needs. The results will be shared at our virtual townhall and disseminated in 2023.
- Virtual Townhall. Eldercare: What to expect and what you need to know. The June panel will share personal testimony about the challenges of caring for aging family member; current legislation (including our priority bill S.764/ H.2932) addressing eldercare; access to services; advocacy with employers to include eldercare as a workplace benefit; and aspects of elder law.

Goals for Next Fiscal Year

- Enact a succession plan that also promotes civic participation.
- Continue to expand our community and network in the region with specific focus on elder care issues which includes compiling a regional guide on elder care.
- Revisit Equity Audit collaboration with UMass Boston.



Worcester County Commission on the Status of Women

State Liaison: Mary-dith Tuitt

Regional Commissioners: Chantel Bethea (Chair), Worcester; Jill Kasten (Vice Chair), Worcester; Michelle Quinones (Secretary), Worcester; Cinamon Blair, Clinton; Marcia Chong Rosado, Milford; Kyanna James, Worcester; Carlee Mills, Gardner; Amanda Molina Dumas, Millbury; Jacqueline Martino, Shrewsbury; Stephanie Teixeira, Grafton.

Regional Area: The Worcester County Commission on the Status of Women represents all towns and cities in Worcester County including: Ashburnham, Athol, Auburn, Barre, Blackstone, Bolton, Boylston, Brookfield, Charlton, Clinton, Dana, Douglas, Dudley, Fitchburg, Gardner, Grafton, Greenwich, Hardwick, Harvard, Holden, Hubbardston, Lancaster, Leicester, Leominster, Lunenburg, Mendon, Milford, Millbury, New Braintree, Northboro, Northbridge, North Brookfield, Oakham, Oxford, Paxton, Petersham, Phillipston, Prescott, Princeton, Shrewsbury, Southboro, Southbridge, Spencer, Sterling, Sturbridge, Sutton, Templeton, Upton, Uxbridge, Warren, Webster, Westboro, West Boylston, West Brookfield, Westminster, Winchendon, Worcester.

Highlights and Accomplishments for FY23

- We continue to explore opportunities to contribute to the following areas of concern which have been identified as critical by the women in Worcester County:
- Mobilize Community Health Services
- Organize community health information campaign
- Implement trainings on patient-centered care and communication
- Develop workforce strategies for health and human service sector
- Work on Worcester Sex Education
- Zero Fare for Worcester County Residents
- Food Security

Goals for Next Fiscal Year

- Conduct our Legislative Breakfast for September 2023
- Have more community input sessions to see how the women and girls in Worcester County are transitioning out of the pandemic



Eastern Regional Commissioner Manya Chylinski took part in a roundtable event in Dorchester with Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley on February 21st to celebrate the passage of the Post Disaster Mental Health Response Act.

[WCVB Article Announcing Post Disaster Mental Health Response Act](#)

[Ayanna Pressley Announcing Post Disaster Mental Health Response Act has been signed into law](#)

FY2023 Financial Statement



L to R: MCSW Treasurer Nina Liang, Chairwoman Dr. Sarah Glenn-Smith, and Executive Director Shaitia Spruell

For FY2023, the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women started with an operating budget of over \$1.2 Million dollars, thanks to a prior appropriation continuation of \$486,010.22 from the supplemental funding awarded at the end of FY2022 of \$500,000. That supplemental money along with an increased line item from the MA Legislature allowed the Commission to expand outreach, data collection capabilities, and language access and expand the staff team to allow the MCSW to sustain the work built through the COVID-19 Pandemic.

State Allocation:	\$719,699.00
Supplemental:	\$486,010.22
Total Budget:.....	\$1,205,709.22
Regular employee salaries:.....	\$674,000.00
Special employee salaries:	\$120,500.00
Operation Expense:	\$411,209.22

Thank you to MCSW Chairwoman Dr. Sarah Glenn-Smith, Treasurer Nina Liang, and Executive Director Shaitia Spruell (pictured above) for representing the MCSW at the Ways and Means FY24 Budget Hearing on Economic Development, Housing, and Labor. The MCSW is grateful to the committee and members for their continued support of women and girls across the Commonwealth.

Programs and Impact

The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women implemented the following programming in fiscal year 2023: 3 Public Hearings, the Girls Empowerment Leadership Initiative (GELI) Summit, Advocacy Day, the MCSW's 25th Anniversary Celebration and the 20th Annual Commonwealth Heroines.

The commission's programs provide opportunities for convening, collaborating with and hearing from women and girls of the commonwealth. This allows the MCSW to elevate women and their stories to impact policy change and fulfill its mission. It is through programming the commission can gather testimony and partner will other women and girl servings groups and individuals to ensure women have a permanent effective voice at the table. The

commission's programs and initiatives also create educational opportunities and space to share solutions to challenges women and girls face.

Public Hearings

Public Hearings are key to the MCSW's mandate to study and report on the status of women and girls in the Commonwealth. The Commission holds several public hearings every year.

Throughout FY23 the MCSW committed to bringing programming back that could not only engage constituents in-person, but also to model hybrid options that would allow any and all interested residents to share their story and challenges women face. The MCSW is further committed not only to diversity in terms of representation but also in terms of the towns and locations visit. As a result, the MCSW held a series of 3 hybrid public hearings all across the state, in Provincetown, Pittsfield and Lynn, soliciting testimony from women of these regions, specifically interested to hear about topics dedicated to women, members of the LGBTQIA+ community and those at the intersection.

Provincetown Hearing Summary

The flyer is a vertical rectangular graphic with a teal background. On the left side, the words "PUBLIC HEARING" are written in large, bold, white, sans-serif capital letters. Below this, in smaller white text, it says "JOIN MCSW FOR OUR FIRST IN-PERSON PUBLIC HEARING IN MORE THAN TWO YEARS. REGISTER TO JOIN IN PERSON OR REMOTE." At the bottom left, the URL "BIT.LY/MCSWP TOWN" is displayed in white. On the right side, the date "SEPTEMBER 29, 2022" is written in purple, followed by "PROVINCETOWN TOWN HALL" in teal. Below that, the address "260 COMMERCIAL ST. PROVINCETOWN, MA 02657" is in purple, and the time "5:00 – 7:00PM EST" is in purple. At the bottom right, there is a circular logo for the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women, featuring a woman's silhouette and the text "MASSACHUSETTS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN".

In September 2022, the MCSW hosted its first public hearing of FY2023– the first in-person public hearing MCSW has held in more than two years – in Provincetown, MA. The Commission is grateful for the many advocates and elected officials who participated to make their voices heard.

The Commission heard from several ER nurses advocating for more funding and training to provide care and support for survivors of sexual assault in-person on the Cape, and not via telehealth. There are only 8 SANE (sexual assault nurse examiners) on the entire Cape, and with no supporting reproductive health organizations like Planned Parenthood on the Cape or Islands, women's health care is extremely limited; investments are needed to support training and staffing, not further budget cuts.

Additionally, the Commission heard a wide array of issues raised from residents, including concerns about an LGBTQ+ populating aging into poverty, combatting racism and discrimination, and much more.

State Representative Steve Xiarhos

State Representative Sarah Peake

State Representative David Vieira

Representatives from the offices of U.S. Senators Elizabeth Warren, Ed Markey, and U.S. Representative Bill Keating.

Location: Provincetown Town Hall-260 Commercial St, Provincetown, MA 02657

of attendees: Facebook Live stream reached 373 people and had a total of 326 views. There were 73 people who registered for the hearing

of Testimonies received: 20 people testified during the hearing with 2 written testimonies, 12 people testified virtually and 6 people testified in-person.



Topics heard

- Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners
- Racism
- Childcare- Common start
- Lack of Sidewalks which leads to women being abducted and injured children
- Domestic Violence
- Teen Pregnancy- HYA
- Lack of affordable housing
- Sexism
- Ageism
- Racism
- Injustice to black women
- Closure of the birthing center at Falmouth Hospital
- Closure of Planned Parenthood Hyannis
- Professional MBTA ride share sexual violence incidents
- Lack of cultural and equity training for providers
- Indigenous women

Pittsfield Hearing Summary

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Pittsfield Public Hearing

HOSTED BY THE MASSACHUSETTS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Thursday, November 17, 2022
5:00-7:00 PM EST
Pittsfield Public Library
One Wendell Ave, Pittsfield MA

Register at bit.ly/MCSWpittsfield by November 14

QUEREMOS ESCUCHAR SU OPINIÓN!

Pittsfield Audiencia Pública

Organizado por la Comisión de la Condición Jurídica y Social de la Mujer de Massachusetts

Jueves, 17 de Noviembre de 2022
5:00-7:00 PM EST
Biblioteca Pública de Pittsfield
One Wendell Ave, Pittsfield MA

Register at bit.ly/MCSWpittsfield by November 14

The MCSW is Incredibly grateful to the incredible partners and allies in The Berkshires who attended the Pittsfield Public Hearing at the Berkshire Athenaeum, Pittsfield's Public Library. The commission heard powerful testimony on school bullying from the girls of Girls Inc. of the Berkshires, the need for business and language supports for immigrants from Latinas413 and heard about key issues relating to housing insecurity, equal pay, sexual harassment, and more. A special thank you to Berkshire State Representative Tricia Farley-Bouvier for attending and supporting.



Location: Berkshire Athenaeum, Pittsfield's Public Library, 1 Wendell Ave, Pittsfield, MA 01201

of attendees: Facebook Live stream reached 95 people and the total views are not available because analytics are captured after 100 people view a video. There were 61 people who registered for the hearing.

of Testimonies received: 22 people testified during the hearing with 1 written testimony, 17 people testified virtually and 6 people testified in-person.

Topics Heard:

- Bullying
- Discrimination in the Workplace/Harassment
- Immigration support

- Childcare
- Economic Stability
- Job Security
- Healthcare
- Housing
- Education
- Gender-based violence

Lynn Hearing Summary

ANOTE LA FECHA
ANOTE LA FECHA
ANOTE LA FECHA
ANOTE LA FECHA

AUDIENCIA PÚBLICA
NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE: CAMPUS DE LYNN
300 BROAD ST, LYNN, MA 01901

**JUEVES, 19 DE ENERO
DE 2023 5:30-7:30 PM**
INSCRÍBASE A MÁS TARDAR PARA EL
16 DE ENERO: MASS.GOV/WOMEN

Alojado por la Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women

SAVE THE DATE
SAVE THE DATE
SAVE THE DATE
SAVE THE DATE

PUBLIC HEARING
NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE: LYNN CAMPUS
300 BROAD ST, LYNN, MA 01901

**JANUARY 19, 2023
5:30-7:30 PM**
REGISTER NOW: MASS.GOV/WOMEN

Hosted by the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women

Thank you to the many Essex county residents, public servants, MCSW Regional Commissioners from Essex County Commission on the Status of Women, and State Commissioners from all across the Commonwealth who braved the winter weather to the MCSW Lynn Public Hearing at North Shore Community College. We heard powerful testimony on the need for affordable housing and for care supports for aging and disabled populations, strategies for uplifting diverse language speaking folks into the halls of government, and how resources are needed to support those facing crisis after sexual assault. A special thank you to Senate Co-Chair of the Massachusetts Caucus of Women Legislators Senator Joan B. Lovely for joining us in person and to representatives of Senator Brendan Crighton for coming out to engage on key community issues. Together, we can tackle anything.

Location: North Shore Community College - Lynn Campus Gymnasium - 300 Broad St, Lynn, MA 01901

of attendees: Facebook Live stream reached 250 people. There were 94 people who registered for the hearing.

of Testimonies received: 15 people testified during the hearing with 2 written testimonies, 8 people testified virtually and 7 people testified in-person.



We heard powerful testimony on the need for affordable housing and for care supports for aging and disabled populations, strategies for uplifting diverse language speaking folks into the halls of government, and how resources are needed to support those facing crisis after sexual assault.

Topics Heard

- Single mom support
- Childcare supports
- Disabilities
- Workforce supports
- Special ability needs
- Technical support (education/ access)
- Existing service learning
- Domestic violence
- Prevention education for youth mothers
- Gender discrimination
- Affordability of house/transgender's needs
- Visibility of taking care of disabled family members
- Sense of existence
- Language access
- Immigrant needs
- Early educator's career path
- Girls of color's education
- Prevention education of sexism

ICYMI: Check out this recap from Lynn Community Television of our recent Public Hearing hosted in Lynn at the North Shore Community College. Lynn Public Hearing TV Reel Recap: [LCTV News | MCSW Public Hearing \(January 19, 2023\)](#)



Girls Empowerment Leadership Initiative (GELI)

Welcome to the MCSW's Girls Empowerment Leadership Initiative – also known as GELI! GELI seeks to empower youth across the Commonwealth to advocate for themselves and their communities. This initiative focuses on developing leadership and civic engagement skills through educational workshops, skill-building opportunities, and the opportunity to connect with peers across the state. The tools participants learned during GELI were then exercised at the commissions Advocacy Day in May.



The Girls Empowerment Leadership Initiative is an annual MCSW program that provides legislative advocacy and leadership training for girls aged 14-22 years old within the Commonwealth. Participants gained confidence building, leadership, and legislative advocacy skills by attending a full day of activities that included a welcome breakfast, break-out sessions led by Commissioners and girls programming experts, a networking lunch to engage with their peers and build community, participate in a series of evaluation survey's as well as an end of day celebration.

Over 100 young women participated in this year's GELI Summit. Thank you so much to all of the youth and volunteers who joined us for an incredible day of leadership programming over April vacation. This was the commission's FIRST In-Person MCSW Girls Empowerment Leadership Initiative (GELI) Summit! The Commission was able to provide transportation to girls from the Berkshires to Boston. Workshops were presented by the following:



- [Guimel DeCarvalho - Leading Change – How to People Manage The Ups and Downs](#) (Leg& PP Vice Chair)
- [Amy Smith - Public Speaking 101](#)
- [Shanique Spalding – Civics 101: For the future Activist in You](#) (Hampden County CSW Vice Chair)
- [IGNITE National - Building Leaders for Today to Be the Voice of Tomorrow](#)
- [Lisa MacDonald – Confidence in Conflict](#) (MetroWest CSW Chair)
- Christine Monska, Keyanna Jones, High School Student Elena Monteiro, High School Students - [Fundamentals of Finding Your Voice](#) (MCSW Secretary & GELI Chair)
- [Mary-dith Tuitt - Advocacy at MCSW- Advocacy Day Training](#) (MCSW Legislative & Public Policy Chair)
- [Allison Goldberg – Investing in Ourselves \(Economic Empowerment\)](#) (MCSW State Commissioner)

 [ALL GELI PHOTOS HERE](#)

MCSW Community Conversations

In FY2022, the MCSW began conducting a series of Community Conversations to gather personal testimony from communities that historically are unseen and unheard. This year, the Commission wanted to expand on that program to learn more about the experiences of LGBTQ+ Women. This testimony informs a report, that is slated to be released Fall 2023.

Community conversations are a way for the commission to connect with the community on a more personal and trusting level, on issues that matter most to them by providing a listening ear and elevating those experiences in our research and reports.

Qualitative Data collected from community conversations will be analyzed to include in our annual reporting and program summary's. This data will allow our team to strategize recommendations that will directly support all women and girls. These recommendations will be presented to legislators and government agencies across the state.

MCI Framingham

On March 13th, 2023, the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women held a community conversation with women at MCI Framingham for the first time in its 25-year history.

The purpose of this community conversation was to listen to the women living inside the walls of MCI Framingham to learn about their concerns and priorities. This report is a summary of the information gathered at that event.

This report will be distributed to the State Legislature and the Governor. The Commission appreciates the input provided through this conversation and will utilize the information gathered to advocate for positive changes for the women of MCI Framingham and other incarcerated women and girls of the Commonwealth.

Massachusetts Parentage Act (MPA) Community Conversation

"The Massachusetts Parentage Act (MPA) updates Massachusetts statutes to clarify who can be a parent and how to establish parentage. This bill is critical to ensuring that all children can access the security of legal parentage, regardless of the circumstances of their birth (<https://www.glad.org/massparentage/>)". Commissioners convened a virtual community conversation on Monday, February 6, 2023. 15 participants of the MA Parentage Group shared their stories and concerns about establishing parentage in Massachusetts with 4 commissioners and 2 staff in attendance.

Themes that generated during the conversation include:

- De facto parenting
- Parents need to carry passports along everywhere they go and have significant challenges traveling out of state and the country

Commissioners presented follow up questions below:

- Are there potential impacts to creating these legal relationships that then will impact that child's ability to care for their parent later in life?
- How would this law limit or expand the number of legal parents a child could have at one time?

- Will this bill also include some funding to provide education and awareness once passed to hospitals, schools, judges, etc.?
- What are the rights of a child who has same sex parents who couldn't benefit from current laws/cases, will they be able to benefit as an adult if this bill is passed?

As a result of this conversation, we adopted the MA Parentage Act as a Legislative Priority and will join their coalition to support the passing of the bill.

Smith College Community Conversation

On June 7, 2023, the MCSW held a community conversation alongside the Jandon Center for Community Engagement at Smith College. Testimony was received from residents, Rainbow Elders, and others interested in amplifying issues concerning LGBTQIA+ women in the Commonwealth.



Advocacy Day 2023

Advocacy Day is an event held annually by the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women (MCSW) to rally for legislation that advances the rights and opportunities of women and girls across the Commonwealth. The purpose is to educate constituents and legislators about the importance of the impact of proposed legislation on women and girls of the commonwealth.

This year, the MCSW had the privilege to return to the statehouse in person for the first time since 2019. There was an estimated 250 constituents, commissioners, and key partners and advocates attend and speak directly with their legislation about our priorities.

Thank you to everyone who joined MCSW for [Advocacy Day 2023](#)! Staff and Commissioners were honored to have so many young people, elected officials, regional and state commissioners, and coalition partners from across the state gather to raise our voices, to be represented, and to advocate for our communities. While the issues we face are multiple, together, we can tackle anything. We believe in the power of women to not only overcome these barriers, but to bring them down altogether.



Celebrating the MCSW's 25th Anniversary

This year, the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women turned 25. To honor this momentous milestone, the commission will bring together state and regional commissioners, community partners, and friends to reflect and celebrate 25 years of elevating women and girls. The event honored the past, present, and future of our organization committed to ensuring that all women and girls in the Commonwealth can thrive.

Commonwealth Heroines 2023

The MCSW recognizes the accomplishments of women from across Massachusetts through the annual Commonwealth Heroines Awards. Each year the Commission partners with state legislators to identify women who make outstanding contributions to their organizations and communities. Each legislator is encouraged to submit one woman from their constituency as a means of recognizing their invaluable community efforts. Commonwealth Heroines are women who don't always make the news, but truly make a difference in their communities, businesses, or volunteer endeavors.

This year, the celebration is going back to the Statehouse, where it was hosted for most of the event's history. On June 23rd, 2023 the MCSW will honor over 120 women in the Great Hall of Flags at the Massachusetts State House.

COMMONWEALTH Heroines CLASS OF 2023

Melinda Alexander Amy Barrett Paulina Bastidas Yale Kenya Patrice Beaman Rosa Bentley Anne Bergen Karen Blais Loretta (Lee) Blake Mary Boyd Lara Brait Julie Brennan Debora Bridges Francesca Brown Karen Burk Anne Marie Burns Roberta Cameron Maritza Cedeno Becky Coletta Gay Corey Stephanie Crawford Mary Cringan Maribel Cruz Bridget Curley Kristie Dean Norieliz DeJesus Justine DeOliveira Mary Dionne Kathleen DiPasqua-Egan Kathleen Dunn Terri Evans Julie Fenn	Maria Ferreira-Bedard Donna Flannery Joyce Flynn Erin Forbush Tracy Fuller Sandra Giroux Anabela Gomes Barbara M Govoni Kavita Goyal Amanda Grow Rev. Myrlande Guillaume-DesRosiers Heather Hamilton Jeannie Hebert Karen Hinds Lisa Howard Janet Jameson Shantell Jeter Dr. Jacqueline Johnson Kimberlee Johnson Robin Jorgensen Kaye Kelly Stella Ko Kathleen Kreatz Vedna Lacombe-Heywood Lori LaFrance Erin LeBlanc Diane Legg Helen Lemoine Anika Lopes Enilda Lovz Katie Macdonald	Stephanie Marchetti Lynn Margherio Jenn Martin Eileen Haley Mathieu Shawna McCloskey Joan Medeiros Christine Menard Kristin Michel Wendy Mickel Robin Joyce Miller Sherri Minch Lili Mitchell Janice Mitchell Carla Monteiro Vivien Morris Julia Murphy Beth Murray Juliet Najumba Karen Nascembenti Heidi Nortonsmith Ellen Gibson Carolyn Panofsky Maria E Partida Michelle Pateras Lilliana Patino Debra Peczka DiGiulio Carolyn Perkins Domenica Perrone Sharon Porter Suzanne Ranieri Mary Redington	Patti Rego Karen Riani April Ricci Susan Riccio Kecia Rideout Kria Rodolico Anne Rousseau Karen Rousseau, PhD, RN Sue Rusfirth Liz Sandemann Patricia Sanon Lori Scales Fran Schofield Amy Less Jan Singer Lura Smith Christina St. Onge Mary Steele Kennedy Steiner Chartis Langmadi-Tebbetts Emily Teller Alanna Thompson Stacey Thompson Susan Trotta Clark Erin Truex Cynthia Villanueva Marissa Walsh Susan Webb Heather White Jeanne Widmer Susann Wilkinson Alma Elizabeth Wright
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We look forward to celebrating you on June 23rd at our annual event!

SAVE the DATE

**MASSACHUSETTS STATEHOUSE
GREAT HALL OF FLAGS**

06 . 23 . 23

Speaker's Bureau & Leadership

Chairwoman Sarah Glenn-Smith was a keynote speaker at the Junior League of Boston (JLB) Solutions Summit: Women in the Workplace on March 11, 2023. Longtime MCSW leader Jill Ashton among many other incredible leaders also spoke at this event.



Aisha Miller
Vice president of permitting, community and corporate engagement at Related Deal

Vice Chair Aisha Miller was honored by the Boston Business Journal as a “[Top 50 Movement Maker](#).” (above).

On April 29, 2023, MCSW Secretary Christine Monska was a featured speaker at an event titled: “Leadership in 2023 & Beyond.”

Commissioner Liz Friedman penned op-ed Supporting of Peer Mental Health: In a featured piece for Commonwealth Magazine, MSCW Commissioner Friedman writes that Peer-led group support offers a way out of our mental health crisis, making the case that a group approach is effective and addresses cost and provider shortage issues. [Read the Full Op-ed](#).

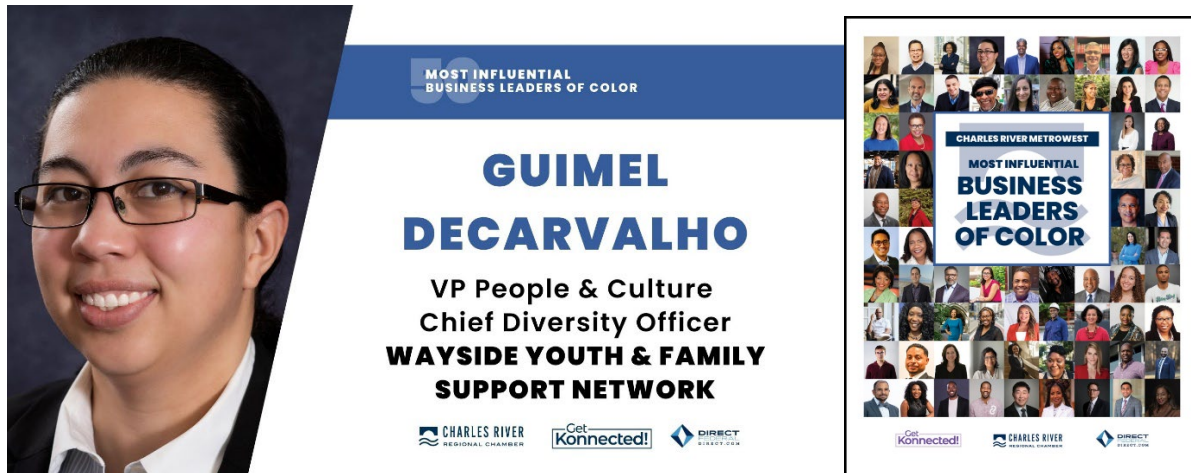
MCSW Treasurer Nina Liang was named “[Most Influential](#)”: by the Asian American Pacific Islanders Commission in Boston. She was also honored with the Founders Award from the Massachusetts Women’s Political Caucus.



MCSW Commissioner Denella Clark, the immediate past Chairwoman of the MCSW, and the first Black woman to serve in that capacity, was a guest speaker at “[Women in Business](#),” an event hosted by the Cambridge Trust. The distinguished panel included other female leaders who offered their insights on what it takes to succeed in their respective industries.

MCSW Commissioner Guimel DeCarvalho has been recognized as one of the region’s [Most Influential Business Leaders of Color](#). The list was produced by the Charles River Regional Chamber in collaboration with Colette Phillips

and Get Konnected!, and aims to shine a light on the remarkable, but too often unnoticed and overlooked, business people of color and the companies that are making a difference in Greater Boston's Western Suburbs.



MCSW Commissioner Audrey Hall hosted Heather Helt Panahi and Stephanie Deeley, Co-Chairs of the MetroWest Commission on the Status of Women, to talk about the signs of Domestic Abuse and the information, resources, and assistance available to victims on [The Audrey Hall Show](#). Commissioner Audrey Hall also hosted [MA Auditor Diana DiZoglio on her show](#). The "Watchdog on Beacon Hill" announced her plans to audit taxpayer funded non-disclosure agreements and to create a permanent MBTA Commuter Rail Audit unit in her office to consistently monitor MBTA safety and she highlights the upcoming audits in her "Social Justice and Equity Audit Plan."



MCSW Commissioner Leslie-Ann McGee not only attended the United Nations Climate Change Conference, or COP27, held in November 2022 in Egypt, but she also managed the conference's first ever Ocean Pavilion so participants could explore how the ocean will be impacted by climate change. The story made [Smithsonian's Top 8 Ocean Stories of 2022](#).

Newly appointed MCSW State Commissioner Kim Shea is pictured here with Massachusetts Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll. As the Dean of Nursing at Mount Wachusett Community College, she proudly represented her institution and the Commission at the MWCC Leominster campus reopening!



Commissioner Mary-dith Tuitt participated in many Speakers Bureau's events over the year. She was a keynote Speaker at the Investing in Girls Alliance (IIGA) on October 6, 2022. She was also the featured Women's Equality Day Speaker Event hosted by Suffrage 100MA, and a featured panelist on [Veterans Day Radio](#). As a part of special Veterans Day coverage, WBUR Radio Boston spoke with veterans about why they chose to serve, how their experiences enriched their lives, and what their service cost them. Commissioner Mary-dith Tuitt, former Navy aviation mechanic and the veterans center program manager for Harvard Street Neighborhood Health Center.



YWCA of Central MA Panel - Reproductive Equity: Part II (February 1, 2023) This conversation explored the overturning of Roe v. Wade and what reproductive equity means in black, brown, transgender, and gender diverse communities and what we can do about it. Panelists include Dr. Laurie Nsiah-Jefferson, PhD, MPH, MA, UMass Boston; Nandini Sangarasivam Choudhury, LCSW, MPH, Fenway Health; and MCSW Commissioner Mary-dith Tuitt, Veterans Outreach Center of Harvard Street Neighborhood Health Center.

MCSW Executive Director Shaitia Spruell and fellow State Commissioners were honored to join Governor Maura Healey and Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll in support of the 1st Annual Black Women's Health & Wellness Legislative Advocacy Day. Thank you to all of the participants and sponsors who made this powerful event a reality.



In order of left to right: MCSW Commissioner Dr. Aisha Miller, Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll, MCSW ED Shaitia Spruell, MCSW Commissioner Mary-dith Tuitt, Governor Maura Healey, MCSW Commissioner Tanisha Arena

Throughout the early part of 2023, MCSW State and Regional Commissions were represented on several transition teams for the new women constitutional officers. Dr. Aisha Miller (MCSW Vice-Chair and Shanique Spaulding (MCSW Regional Commissioner, Hampden County) were recently appointed to Governor Healey's Advisory Council on Black Empowerment. [Read the Release.](#) (Group photo below).



Women's Rights History Trail Taskforce

As the Executive Director of the MCSW, Shaitia was appointed to the newly formed [Women's Rights History Trail Taskforce](#). Also appointed was Regional Commissioner Worcester Regional Commission Amanda Molina-Dumas.

The work of this Task Force shall include:

1. Researching, soliciting public input and making recommendations for the sites, properties and attractions to be included in the women's rights history trail program.
2. Sites to be considered should be:
 - (i) historically and thematically associated with the fight for women's rights and women's suffrage, including the contributions of women veterans;
 - (ii) geographically diverse; and
 - (iii) commemorate individuals who reflect racial, ethnic, cultural and economic diversity
3. Submitting its findings and recommendations to the clerks of the senate and house of representatives, the executive director of the office of travel and tourism, the secretary of transportation and the art commission for the state house not later than March 1, 2023.

HISTORY

Women's Rights History Trail to include key Worcester-area suffrage sites



Veer Mudambi
Telegram & Gazette

Published 5:39 a.m. ET Aug. 22, 2022 | Updated 7:42 p.m. ET Aug. 22, 2022

[View Comments](#)

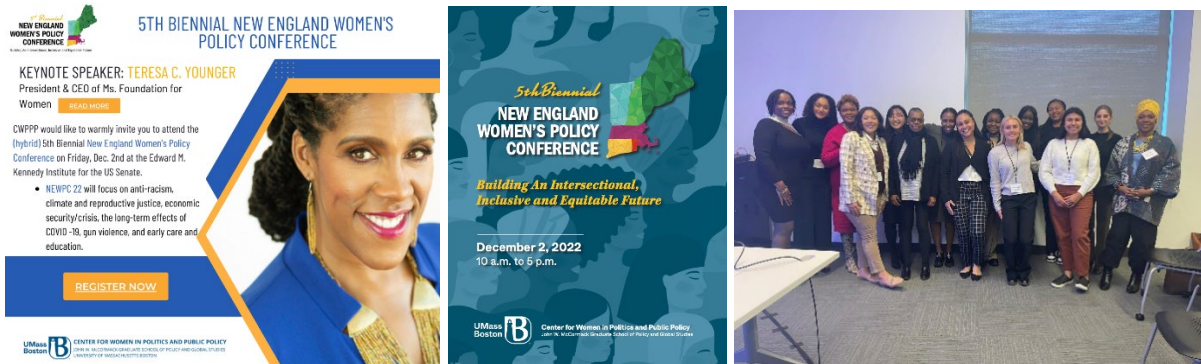


Gov. Charlie Baker signs H. 4555, An Act relative to the creation of a Women's Rights History Trail, during a ceremonial bill signing Thursday at Mechanics Hall, Commonwealth Of Massachusetts



New England Women's Policy Conference

The MCSW was honored to attend the fifth annual New England Women's Policy Conference hosted on December 2, 2022 at the Edward M. Kennedy Center. What an honor it was to be in community with elected officials, community leaders, and leading organizations tackling our most pressing issues. MCSW staff and interns represented in full force, and MCSW Program and Research Director Shalaya West led the [New England Women's Policy Conference: Emerging Leaders Track December 2022](#) youth track alongside program leaders from Ignite National. Teresa Younger of the Ms. Foundation for Women gave the Keynote address.



Greater Boston Area's International Women's Day

The Greater Boston Area's International Women's Day Breakfast was held on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, and the MCSW is proud to support this event since its inception in 1998. Essex County Regional Commissioner Ogor Okoye served as a tri-chair of 2023 the Planning Committee.



MCSW marked Women's History Month 2023 with many exciting events and was honored to support the 25th Annual Boston Area International Women's Day celebration on March 8, 2023 at Simmons University celebration uplifting women and girls across the Commonwealth.



L to R: MCSW Intern Yanli Lu, MCSW Executive Director Shaitia Spruell, MCSW Vice Chair Dr. Aisha Miller, Commissioner Kimberly Shea, Marie Curley (Founding mother of the Boston Area International Women's Day Breakfast), MCSW Commissioner Mary-dith Tuitt, Eastern Regional Commissioner Tamisha Civil, Essex Regional Chair Ogor Okoye, MCSW Commissioner Audrey Hall, MCSW Administrative and Finance Director Marjorie C. Bernadeau-Alexandre

Signing the BWWC Compact

The Boston Women's Workforce Council's (BWWC) 2021 Wage Gap analysis points to April 20th as Boston Equal Pay Day, the day in the calendar year when Greater Boston women will finally earn the same as men the previous year. In recognition of Boston Equal Pay Day, BWWC and the Mayor's Office of Women's Advancement (MOWA) will bring together Greater Boston employers, City partners, and community members to discuss recruiting/ retaining underrepresented candidates.

The Boston Women's Workforce Council (BWWC) leads a unique public-private partnership between the Boston Mayor and Greater Boston employers dedicated to eliminating gender and racial wage gaps. Their mission is to raise awareness among and strengthen the commitment of Greater Boston employers to close gender and racial wage gaps in their organizations.

In a city where women make up more than half of the residents and half of the workforce, pay equity is not only the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do. In partnership with the Mayor of Boston, the BWWC implements the [100% Talent Compact](#), a first-in-the-nation approach to reaching pay equity for working women.

To this day, over 250 Boston-area employers have signed the Compact. The MCSW is proud to be the latest organization signing on to the 100% Talent Compact to close the gender and racial wage gaps across the Commonwealth, signed by Executive Director Shaitia Spruell. [Watch the Video here!](#)



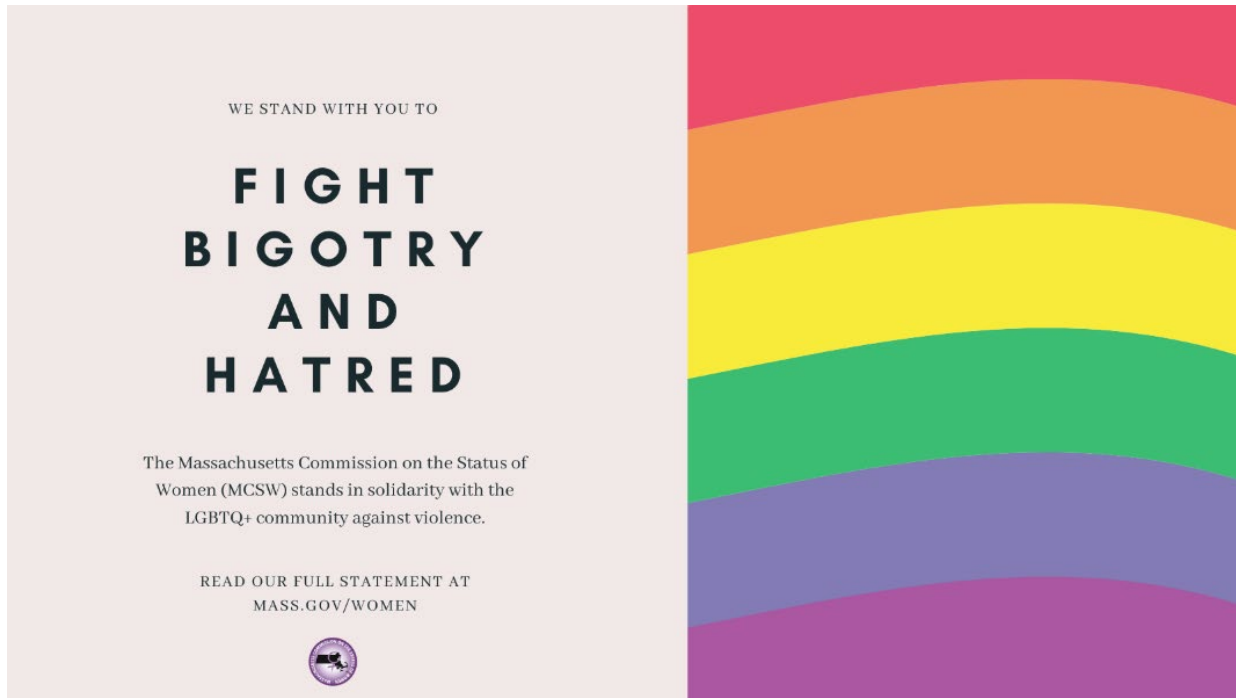
SANE Nurses: Standing in Solidarity

Access to reproductive care on the Cape and Islands is already extremely limited. The MCSW is very concerned about the decision made by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) to drastically reduce coverage of the Cape regional Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) program, and during some periods, switch to TeleHealth services entirely. There are just some things that can't be done virtually, and we stand together with the delegation of Cape Cod Elected Officials, the Massachusetts Nurses Association, the Cape Cod and Islands Commission on the Status of Women, and many others when we call on DPH to work with all of us to find a solution that supports the rights of survivors, nurses, and the community at large. Thank you to the following members of the Cape Cod delegation for standing with us and adding their own voices in solidarity:

- Senator Julian Cyr
- State Senator Susan Moran
- State Representative Kip Diggs
- Representative Dylan Fernandes
- Representative Sarah Peake
- State Representative Steve Xiarhos
- Representative David T. Vieira
- Representative Tim Whelan



LGBTQ Statement of Solidarity




WE STAND WITH YOU TO

FIGHT BIGOTRY AND HATRED

The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women (MCSW) stands in solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community against violence.

READ OUR FULL STATEMENT AT
[MASS.GOV/WOMEN](https://www.mass.gov/women)



The MCSW stands in solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community against violence. We offer this message of support to the diverse LGBTQ+ communities, both in Colorado Springs and across the Commonwealth. As an organization whose purpose is to advance women and girls toward full equity in all areas of life, our hearts are with the families and loved ones of those impacted by yet another devastating and deliberate attack on the LGBTQ+ community. [Read the full statement from MCSW Chairwoman Sarah Glenn-Smith.](#)



“
The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women (MCSW) stands in solidarity against all acts of violence. Our hearts are with the families and loved ones of those impacted by yet another devastating attack on the LGBTQ+ community.
”



DR. SARAH GLENN-SMITH
MCSW Chairwoman



2023-2024 Legislative Priorities



As a part of its mission to provide an effective voice and advocate for women of Massachusetts, the MCSW identifies priority bills as at the center of MCSW's Legislative focus and action. For the 193rd Legislative Session, the MCSW focused on addressing the fallout of COVID-19 on women and girls of color, incarcerated and justice involved women, housing and climate justice, birthing justice, healthcare, veteran women, and improving access to the things women need.

The legislative session occurs every two years beginning on odd numbered years (ex. 2023 in Massachusetts). MCSW selects a number of priority bills to advocate for on their journey through the State House. These bills speak to our mission and purpose, while also address what we've discovered are some of Commonwealth's greatest challenges at our four annual regional public hearings.

MCSW announced our legislative priorities for the 193rd session in coordination with the Legislative and Public Policy Committee, who endorses and tracks legislation to achieve the commission's collective goals. In addition, the commission meets with legislators and submits written and verbal testimony in support of priority legislation at legislative hearings.

The Commission recognizes the need for women and girls to gain not only an equal share, but become equal participants in all areas that impact our lives.

[Learn more about our legislative priorities this year, and on-going priorities from previous legislative sessions.](#)

Resolutions recognizing the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on women and girls, especially women of color in the Commonwealth (H.3305)

Lead Sponsor: Representative Brandy Fluker Oakley

Status: Referred to the Committee on House Rules

This resolution urges the Governor to (1) uphold the rights of crisis-affected and forcibly displaced populations further affected by COVID-19.(2) to place mental healthcare as a priority in the Commonwealth, (3) to ask all of the 351 cities and towns to also support this resolution.

An Act relative to birthing justice in the Commonwealth (S.1415)

Lead Sponsor: Senator Liz Miranda

Status: Referred to Joint Committee on Public Health

This bill introduces a framework to improve maternal health outcomes and advance recommendations from the Special Commission on Racial Inequities in Maternal Health, including better integrating midwifery care into our maternal health care system to improve access to out-of-hospital birthing options and reducing financial and administrative barriers to the creation of free-standing birth centers.

An Act providing reproductive health care to incarcerated individuals (H.2371)

Lead Sponsors: Representative Jay Livingstone & Representative Kay Khan

Status: Referred to Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security

This bill would require access to contraceptive services, counseling, and abortion care for incarcerated people.

An Act relative to rehabilitation, re-entry, and human rights for incarcerated persons (H.2325/S.1493)

Lead Sponsors: Senator Cynthia Stone Creem and Representative Brandy Fluker Oakley

Status: Referred to Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security

This bill will establish universal baseline standards for every person incarcerated in Massachusetts state prisons, county jails, and the house of Corrections. Instead of focusing on a culture of punishment, this bill seeks to shift correctional priorities to rehabilitation and re-entry.

An Act Supporting Parents Running for Public Office (S.348/H.590)

Lead Sponsors: Senator Patricia Jehlen and Representatives Mike Connolly and Joan Meschino

Status: Referred to the Joint Committee on Election Laws

This bill would allow candidates running for public office can use their campaign funds for their childcare needs, regardless of gender or family status.

An Act to increase access to disposable menstrual products (S.1381/H.534)

Lead Sponsors: Representatives Jay D. Livingstone, Christine P. Barber & Senator Jehlen

Status: Referred to Joint Committee on Public Health

Also known as the I AM Bill, this bill would provide access to free menstrual products to all menstruating individuals in schools, shelters & prisons.

An Act to ensure legal parentage equality (S.947/H.1713)

Lead Sponsors: Senator Julian Cyr and Representatives Sarah K. Peake and Hannah Kane

Status: Referred to the Joint Committee on the Judiciary

This bill would ensure that all children can access the security of legal parentage, regardless of the circumstances of their birth, helping to protect diverse forms of families.

An Act providing for climate change adaptation infrastructure and affordable housing investments in the Commonwealth (H.2890)

Lead Sponsors: Senator Jaime Eldridge

Status: Referred to Joint Committee on Revenue

This bill seeks to increase the amount of funding for Governor Baker's initial proposal. The new funding would be implemented in the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program and the MA Climate Clearinghouse.

An Act establishing Medicare for all in Massachusetts (S.744/H.1239)

Lead Sponsors: Representatives Lindsay Sabadosa, Denise C. Garlick & Senator James B. Eldridge

Status: Referred to Joint Committee on Health Care Financing

This bill would guarantee health care access to all residents without regard to citizenship status, incarceration, financial or employment status, ethnicity, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, previous health problems, or geographic location.

Study women veterans and long-term effects of combat on motherhood (H.3710)

Lead Sponsors: Representative Shirley Arriaga

Status: Referred to Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs

This resolve would establish a special legislative commission to examine female veterans who have experienced combat and whether that experience has either short or long-term impacts on motherhood.

The Common Start Bill

Lead Sponsors: Sen. Jason Lewis & Sen. Susan Moran; Rep. Ken Gordon & Rep. Adrian Madaro

An Act Providing Affordable and Accessible High-Quality Early education and Care to Promote Child Development and Well-being and Support the Economy in the Commonwealth (S.301 / H.489). The Common

Start bills would strengthen our commonwealth's child care and early education infrastructure through a combination of direct-to-provider operational funding and family financial assistance to reduce costs to families while compensating providers for the true cost of providing quality care. The bills also include measures to incentivize the provision of care during nonstandard hours, build cultural competency training into the workforce development system, and better provide accommodations for students with disabilities. Learn more about the Common Start Bill and take action [via Progressive Mass](#).

The Healthy Youth Act

Lead Sponsors: Senator Sal DiDomenico and Representatives Jim O'Day and Vanna Howard

An Act Relative to Healthy Youth (S.268/H.544). The Healthy Youth Act will ensure that Massachusetts schools that offer sex ed courses teach a scientifically accurate curriculum that features age-appropriate information about gender identity and sexual orientation. These opt-out sexual education courses must include affirmative recognition that people have different sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions, and provide information about LGBTQ resources for students. Further, health class teachers must teach their students relationship and communication skills that would let them make healthy decisions and form respectful relationships free of violence, coercion, and intimidation. This act was first proposed almost a decade ago; now, it's time for lawmakers to step up and finally guarantee equitable access to important educational content for all students. Learn more about the Healthy Youth Act and all of the supporting coalition partners.

The PRO Bill

Lead Sponsors: Sen. Patricia Jehlen and Reps. Mike Connolly and Joan Meschino, Coalition: Campaign Funds for Child Care Coalition – led by MCSW.

An Act supporting Parents Running for Public Office (S.422). Many working parents are discouraged from running for public office because of financial reasons. This bill would clarify that child care expenses for times while campaigning are not considered personal expenses.

The IAM Bill

Lead Sponsors: Senator Jehlen, Representative Livingstone and Representative Barber

An Act to Increase Access to Disposable Menstrual Products in Prisons, Homeless Shelters and Public Schools (H.2354/S.2730). Public Policy does not address the needs of menstruating people. Massachusetts has the opportunity to change that. The I AM bill was voted favorably out of the Joint Committee on Public Health in December 2019. This legislation would ensure access to free menstrual products to all menstruating individuals in prisons, homeless shelters, and public schools. The bill also contains language to ensure the products are truly accessible without stigmatizing the individual seeking them. Learn more about the IAM bill via the [Massachusetts Menstrual Equity Coalition](#).

Parity On Board

Lead Sponsors: Senator Liz Miranda

An Act to promote gender and racial diversity on public boards and commissions. (H.3095/S.2029). Massachusetts leads the nation in human talent, yet data shows a lack of representation of women and people of color on state boards and commissions. An Act to Promote Diversity on Public Boards and Commissions (H.3095/S.2029) would work to promote diversity in leadership and governance that broadly reflects the demographics of our Commonwealth. Learn more via the [Parity on Board](#) coalition.

An Act Relative to Salary Range Transparency

Lead Sponsors: Representatives Josh S. Cutler and Brandy Fluker Oakley

[Via Trusiatic](#): As of February 2023, several pay equity bills are pending in the Massachusetts legislature. One such bill, An Act Relative to Pay Equity (Bill S.2721), seeks to advance racial and gender wage equity by requiring employers to report wage information publicly. In addition, the Massachusetts House of Representatives is considering another pay reporting act, titled An Act Relative to Salary Range Transparency (HD 2814). If passed, this act will require any employer with fifteen or more employees in Massachusetts to disclose the pay range for any position they post, as well as promotions or transfers.

These new state transparency laws are meant to build upon [Massachusetts Equal Pay Act](#) (MEPA), a historic pay equity bill passed in 2018, designed to foment equal pay and opportunities for all Massachusetts workers. Notably, the MEPA was the first U.S. bill to ban employers from asking prospective employees about prior compensation.



Community Partner Thank You

Thank you to our many community partners who remain committed to supporting the advancement of women and girls across the Commonwealth.

1. 18 Degrees
2. Asian American & Pacific Islander Commission
3. Berkshire Athenaeum
4. Berkshire Community Action Council
5. Boston Women's Fund
6. Boston Women's Workforce Council
7. Coalition for Social Justice
8. Commission on LGBTQ+ Youth
9. Families for Justice as Healing
10. Girls Inc of the Berkshires
11. Girls Inc of Worcester
12. Girls Inc of the Valley

13. Global Learning Charter School
14. IGNITE National
15. James M. & Cathleen D. Stone Foundation
16. Latinas413
17. LIFT Worcester
18. MA Girls in Trade
19. MassNOW
20. NAMI Berkshire County
21. North Shore Community College
22. Racial Fairness Berkshires
23. Related Beal
24. Rites of Passage and Empowerment Program
25. Robins Kaplan LLP
26. Martin Richard Foundation
27. Montague Catholic Social Ministries Starlight Girls Group
28. The Clubhouse Network
29. The Learning Center for the Deaf
30. The National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls
31. Town of Provincetown
32. Upper Cape Women's Coalition
33. Wayside Youth & Family Support Network
34. Women's Fund of SouthCoast
35. Women's Fund of Western MA
36. YW Boston
37. YWCA Central MA
38. YWCA Southeastern MA
39. YWCA of Western MA





Thank you. We could not do this work without all of you.

Stay connected: mcsw@mass.gov

Learn more: mass.gov/women

