

News on Equal Rights and Equal Pay Legislation

CONGRESSWOMAN Katharine St. George of New York, chief sponsor of the Equal Rights Amendment in the House, reintroduced the amendment in the 85th Congress as House Joint Resolution 127 on Saturday, January 5, 1957.

Mrs. St. George will name her co-sponsors in the House after she has completed a canvass of those members who will support her resolution. Senator Butler of Maryland will introduce the amendment in the Senate when he has completed his canvass of those who will co-sponsor it with him.

In response to questionnaires from BPW state legislative chairmen, 213 Congressmen and 36 Senators have promised support of an unqualified Constitutional amendment granting women equal legal rights with men.

On January 16, in his budget message to the Congress, President Eisenhower urged enactment of an amendment to the Constitution to provide equal rights for men and women, and also called for legislation which would grant equal pay for equal work. Federation National President Hazel Palmer wired the President congratulating him for these recommendations to the Congress and stated, "we have confidence in the fulfillment of these campaign pledges."

Miss Palmer was instrumental in obtaining planks in both the Democratic and Republican platforms supporting an amendment to the Constitution granting equal legal rights to men and women and for legislation for equal pay for equal work. Miss Palmer plans to give a great deal of time to persuading members

of Congress in both the House and the Senate that it is to the best interests of all citizens that women be granted full citizenship by enactment of an amendment granting them full equal legal rights.

Equal Pay

Several equal pay bills have been introduced in the 85th Congress, with more to follow. The Federation gave its support during the 84th Congress to a bi-partisan bill sponsored by Representative Edith Green, Democrat, of Oregon, and Representative Edith Nourse Rogers, Republican, of Massachusetts. Mrs. Green has already reintroduced this equal pay bill, and Mrs. Rogers plans to reintroduce it. Mrs. Green's bill is H.R. 651.

The National Federation works on equal pay legislation with the National Committee for Equal Pay which is composed of nongovernmental organizations working toward federal legislation to grant equal pay to women for equal work.

Mrs. Green is a member of the House Committee on Education and Labor to which the equal pay bills are referred. Congressman Graham A. Barden is Chairman of the House Committee. The Federation is hopeful that hearings will be called on the equal pay bills during the 85th Congress, and that we can obtain passage of an adequate federal equal pay law.

State Federation Action on State Equal Pay Bills

Twelve state federations have advised us that they have been and will continue to be very active in the current sessions of their state legislatures to create enactment of

new state equal pay laws. They are: Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio, Wisconsin and Texas.

The Wisconsin Federation had its equal pay bill introduced in February into both the Senate and the Assembly and is working very hard for its passage.

In Ohio, the Honorable Golda M. Edmonston, who is president of the Columbus Business and Professional Women's Club, was sworn in on January 7 as a member of the Ohio House of Representatives. This is her fifth term. Mrs. Edmonston has introduced an equal pay bill in the two previous terms and has reintroduced it in this session. In the past session of the Ohio legislature, this equal pay bill sponsored by Mrs. Edmonston passed the House and also the Labor Committee in the Senate but was stymied in the Senate Rules Committee.

State federations in New York and Pennsylvania are working toward enactment of revisions of existing equal pay laws, in order to obtain more adequate enforcement provisions and fuller coverage of types of employees.

BPW club members are urged to give their support to state equal pay bills being introduced in their own legislatures, and to cooperate with their state legislative chairmen in achieving enactment of equal pay bills.

Sixteen states and Alaska have enacted equal pay laws applicable to private employment. These states are as follows:

Arkansas	(1955)
California	(1949)
Colorado	(1955)
Connecticut	(1949)
Illinois	(1943)
Maine	(1949)
Massachusetts	(1945)
Michigan	(1919)
Montana	(1919)
New Hampshire	(1947)
New Jersey	(1952)
New York	(1944)
Oregon	(1955)
Pennsylvania	(1947)
Rhode Island	(1946)
Washington	(1943)
Alaska	(1949)