



National Coalition For Men (NCFM)

Since 1977 – the oldest men's rights organization in America

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Terie Norelli
Speaker of the House
107 North Main Street
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Approximately 42 percent of the more than 58,000 men whose names appear on the Vietnam War memorial in D.C. were not old enough to vote when they died serving our country. Many men from New Hampshire were among those dead. Men and boys are not disposable.

Dear Speaker Norelli,

Thank you for the time you took last week to talk with me by telephone. As you suggested I emailed committee members this letter though absent this paragraph and individual salutations.

NCFM appreciates that New Hampshire demonstrated its commitment to gender fairness and equal treatment by establishing the Commission on the Status of Men (NHCSM), the first such commission in America. We look forward to other states following New Hampshire's lead.

The New Hampshire Legislative Committee to Study Boards and Commissions Committee on Committees (NHCOC) is contemplating letting the historic NHCSM, the Commission on the Status of Women, as well as other designated commissions, terminate in 2011, ostensibly to reduce costs and encourage commissions to establish working relationships with like community based organizations.

However a plethora of women based organizations exist in New Hampshire with which the Commission on the Status of Women might be warmly received. There are no similar organizations in New Hampshire for men. Consequently, not recommending the continuation of the NHCSM is tantamount to killing it.

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Another reason numerous New Hampshire state commissions and committees are being repealed or scheduled to end in 2011 is the burden placed on legislators to sort through committee member applications and nominate members. Fifty-six statutory commissions and committees have already been slated for repeal thereby significantly reducing the work load of legislators.

NCFM strongly supports the continuation of NHCSM. It costs the state nothing relying entirely on volunteers and public participation.

Closing the commission is contrary to the best interests of the people of New Hampshire. Please consider:

1. The New Hampshire Commission on the Status of Men is the only state agency that looks specifically at all issues impacting Men. The current budget crisis and the economy are having a considerable disparate impact on men and their families (80% of jobs lost were those of working men), making the work of the Commission even more important especially with its mandate to relieve father absence and, by deduction, associated costs to the taxpayer.
2. The Commission serves men, families, and the women who love them by seeking their input through public hearings across the state. What the Commission learns shapes the Commission's public policy agenda and provides the mechanism through which the government and elected officials gain related information for the public good.
3. The Commission addresses many serious, if not life threatening, concerns about the well-being of men and boys, like, but not limited to:
 - ♂ Males being 80-99% of the following: homeless adults, occupational deaths, work injuries, combat deaths/injuries, school dropouts, suicide deaths, and special education students.
 - ♂ Males have higher mortality rates for twelve of fifteen leading causes of death; men die on average six years earlier than women (African-American men seventeen years earlier than white women), and suffer no less than a 76% homicide rate.
 - ♂ Males are disparately and adversely impacted in parenting rights, child custody, crime victim policies, criminal sentencing, forced labor, military conscription, genital cutting, education, and many health programs and policies.

- ♂ Our educational institutions have devalued boys who are increasingly falling by the wayside in education and modern life, e.g., boys are a year and a half behind girls in reading and writing skills and lag behind in almost all academic disciplines except perhaps math and science.
 - ♂ Boys suffer the lion's share of Attention Deficit Disorder and Aspersers Syndrome.
 - ♂ Fatherlessness has been directly linked to a host of problems such as teen parenting, dropping out of school, illicit drug use, gangs, crime, and incarceration.
 - ♂ Furthermore, men and boys have access to few affordable services to help overcome whatever obstacles they face.
 - ♂ Most nights, 35% of America's children go to bed in a home absent their biological father.
 - ♂ There are no local, state, or national governmental offices or departments for men's health, except in Georgia. Similarly, there are few men's studies programs that honestly examine the well-being of men and boys or the systematic discrimination they face.
4. The Commission is an independent and often the only voice within State Government for the men of New Hampshire, monitoring legislation and helping develop good public policy.
 5. The Commission serves as an important link between many communities and the State Government. These include but are not limited to the working poor and their families, the under and unemployed; the disenfranchised, homeless, men with health issues, men in crisis, and others with the least access to State Government and public and private services.
 6. The Commission plays an important role in the legislative process by providing Legislators, advocates, the Governor and other state agencies with gender analysis on proposed bills and actions, identifying how they would impact men and boys in the state.
 7. Those who oppose our efforts to achieve equitable treatment are trying to leverage away our ability to work on behalf of issues impacting men and their families.
 8. The Commission is needed more than ever. Unfortunately, men's organizations, unlike women's organizations, have little or no resources. The NHCSM is the only viable men's advocacy organization within the state government. Increasingly, the

9. Commission serves as the primary advocate for men with the Legislature and the primary conduit to New Hampshire men with information on legislation and issues impacting New Hampshire men.

In the United States of America there are over 250 commissions for women at local, county, state, and federal levels. There are arguably four for men and boys, just four. New Hampshire demonstrated progressive leadership in establishing the NHCSM. How will it be viewed for regressively eliminating a commission that costs New Hampshire not one cent of public money yet conceivably has the potential for saving lives, increasing the productivity and economic well-being of the state, and improving the quality of life for literally all the State's residents?

Please support keeping the NHCSM; in fact, since the NHCSM is so important, please recommend it be funded too.

Respectfully,



Harry A. Crouch
President, NCFM