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"Status of the States," 1982 Year End Report
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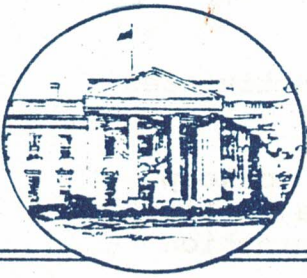
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WHITE HOUSE FACT SHEET

PRESIDENT REAGAN'S 50 STATES PROJECT

February 1983

The 50 States Project implements President Reagan's campaign commitment with the 50 governors to help assist in identifying and correcting state laws which discriminate against women. Judy Peachee was appointed Director of the Project in May of 1981, at which time the groundwork for the program was laid with a Presidential letter to the governors requesting that they appoint a representative from their office to coordinate efforts with the White House. By September 1981, all the governors had appointed such a representative.

In October 1981, the governors' representatives met at the White House to discuss the 50 States Project, exchange information, and promote cooperation between the states. During this conference, the representatives attended workshops to discuss such issues as "Research and Review of State Statutes", "Legislative Support for Corrective Legislation", and "Creating Positive Perceptions and Community Support". The highlight of the conference was a luncheon hosted by the President and Mrs. Reagan, at which the President re-affirmed his commitment to the Project.

Upon the resignation of Judy Peachee, responsibility for the Project was transferred in July 1982 to Thelma Duggin who was appointed Special Assistant to the President and Director of the 50 States Project. The Honorable Catherine Bedell was named as a consultant, and Mary Elizabeth Quint as Deputy Special Assistant to the President to assist with the Project.

This transfer of responsibility did not alter the goals and objectives of the program which are to:

- Collect and make available various information on the nature and status of specific corrective legislation in the 50 states.
- Assist the states in the development of strategies designed to meet their individual needs.
- Maintain an information clearinghouse.

STATUS OF THE 50 STATES PROJECT

The following items in regard to the 50 States Project have been completed by OPL:

- The 50 States Project staff, assisted by the Women's Bureau at the Department of Labor, has surveyed the states on their efforts in identifying and correcting discriminatory state laws based on sex.
- The "Status of the States" Report, a 1982 Year-End Report, based on the above mentioned survey, has been mailed to the governors, governor's representatives, leadership of the state legislatures, and Chairs of the Women's Commissions. (See attached.)
- Letters from President Reagan have been mailed to the new governors briefing them on the Project and requesting their participation by appointing a representative to the Project. The "Status of the States" Report was enclosed.
- A 50 States Project fact sheet has been developed for circulation. (See Attached.)
- Specific action which has resulted from the Project includes:
 - Former Governor Busbee (D-Ga), in response to the 50 States Project, directed that a statute search be undertaken in his state. This was completed in 1982.
 - Governor Ed Herschler (D-Wy), in his message to the 47th Wyoming Legislature, credited the President's initiative as fostering an effort which produced a bill to eliminate gender-based terminology in his state's statutes. This bill was passed, with minor changes, by the House.
 - North Dakota recently passed a gender-based terminology bill in the Senate (30-20). Since there are some controversial aspects to the bill, a tough fight is expected in the House, where a vote is scheduled for Tuesday (3/8/82).
 - The Pennsylvania Commission For Women has pledged its support to the Project.
 - The Iowa Commission For Women has included the 50 States Project as one of its priorities for 1983.

The 50 States Project staff is moving forward rapidly in addressing problems in the areas of child support enforcement and day care (with emphasis on state licensing procedures and regulations which hamper private sector involvement). These areas are not necessarily discriminatory, but do have a disproportionate impact on women.

- Preliminary planning is ongoing to encourage women's groups to adopt resolutions in support of strong child support enforcement. The General Federation of Women's Clubs has drafted such a resolution which will go before its Board later on this year.

- The 50 States Project staff is working with HHS and the National Conference of State Legislators to identify state by state statutes dealing with child support enforcement.
- The staff is also working with HHS and The Women's Bureau to identify those barriers to private sector participation in the area of child day care. The governors and state legislators will be encouraged to do self-analysis in state and local licensing offices to determine if they have missed opportunities for providing needed protection on the one hand, while creating formidable barriers to operators on the other.

Additionally, the Women's Bureau is developing a pamphlet on sex discrimination in state statutes. The 50 States Project will be mentioned as an initiative of the Administration in tackling these problems.



**PRESIDENT REAGAN'S
50 STATES PROJECT
"STATUS OF THE STATES"**



1982 Year-End Report

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