

LEGISLATION TO BE INTRODUCED IN 97th CONGRESS.

During the 96th Congress Senator Durenberger introduced legislation aimed at women's issues that was presented as a comprehensive bill that covered a wide range of issues. The bill had a lot of generally accepted ideas, however, the nature of the bill (the numbers of items included) made action impossible.

Staff members for Senators Hatfield, Packwood and Durenberger are planning a different strategy for similar legislation to be introduced in the 97th Congress. They are planning to introduce a number of individual bills that, together, would comprise a package of bills that are aimed at correcting inequities that effect women, mainly in an economic context. The various bills would be sponsored by many different Senators. The bills would all be introduced on one day, preferably within the first two weeks of the session.

NATURE OF THE LEGISLATION

While there is still a lot of room for additions to the suggestions for legislation, a few of them are already in the final stages of preparation. These include a measure by Senator Hatfield that would be similar to the Fair Employment Resolution for Federal Employees he introduced in the 96th. Packwood plans to introduce several measure that deal with tax incentives. Some of those are:

- Changing the deduction for Head of Household
- Marriage Penalty legislation
- Extending employer tax credit to include displaced homemakers
- Increase day care credit on tax returns.
- Tax incentive for flex-time jobs
- Lowering the age for participation in pension plans
- Individual Retirement accts. for housewives
- S.S. disability coverage for housewives.

Senator Durenberger plans to introduce legislation based on The Civil Rights Act of 1964, probably a new title, and to eliminate sex discrimination from the tax codes and certain military codes. These would be introduced as separate bills.

As is evident from most of these issues, the main thrust of this plan is to concentrate on economic issues and try to avoid the term "feminist" when referring to this legislation. One approach might be to play up the fact that women want to play a part in the revitalization of the economy.

It is inevitable that not every Sponsoring Senator will agree with each of the provisions that comprise the package -- this is thought to be an advantage of this type of approach. A Senator is free to chose which bills he can sponsor, co-sponsor or even merely support, and also those he does not agree with.

SUPPORTING GROUPS

The following groups are serving as a coalition to help draft the specific bills that will comprise the package. They will also support this effort.

Business and Professional Women (BPW)
League of Women Voters
National Professional Women's Caucus (NPWC)
National Education Association (NEA)
American Assoc. of University Women (AAUW)
National Organization of Women (NOW)
National Council of Jewish Women
Women's Legal Defense Fund