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Massachusetts Caucus of Women Legislators Announces Strategic & Legislative Priorities for 193rd Session

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Caucus of Women Legislators, a 63-member bipartisan and bicameral caucus, is pleased to announce its strategic and legislative priorities for the 193rd legislative session.

Following an extensive process that included significant input from members, the Women’s Caucus [Board of Directors](#) finalized a slate of 3 strategic priorities, 5 legislative priorities, and 20 pieces of endorsed legislation. This work was led by a Subcommittee comprised of Women’s Caucus Co-Chairs Sen. Joan B. Lovely (D-2nd Essex) and Rep. Hannah Kane (R-11th Worcester), as well as Rep. Jessica Ann Giannino (D-16th Suffolk), Rep. Vanna Howard (D-17th Middlesex), and Rep. Meghan Kilcoyne (D-12th Worcester), and the Women’s Caucus Executive Director Nora Bent.

The Women’s Caucus strategic priorities will guide the Caucus’ work this session to address issues that disproportionately impact women-identifying individuals across the Commonwealth. The MCWL’s strategic priorities for the 193rd session are: Elevating Women’s Economic Opportunity & Eliminating Barriers; Addressing Racial & Gender Disparities in Health Care; and Empowering Women in Government. More information on each of these priorities can be found [here](#). Throughout the 2023-2024 legislative session, the Caucus will support these priorities through legislative advocacy and a variety of other tools.

Related to those strategic priorities, the Caucus also selected 5 legislative priorities, which will receive support from the Women’s Caucus and its Executive Director to advance through the legislative process. The legislative priorities for the 193rd legislative session are, in no particular order:

1. An Act relative to a livable wage for human service workers ([H.191](#), Rep. Khan & [S.84](#), Sen. Friedman)
2. An Act relative to salary range transparency ([H.1849](#), Rep. Fluker Oakley and Rep. Culter, & [S.1191](#), Sen. Jehlen)
3. An Act to increase access to disposable menstrual products in prisons, homeless shelters, and public schools ([H.534](#), Rep. Barber and Rep. Livingstone & [S.1381](#), Sen. Jehlen)
4. An Act relative to postpartum depression screening ([H.2163](#), Rep. Fiola & [S.1375](#), Sen. Friedman)
5. An Act supporting parents running for public office ([H.669](#), Rep. Meschino and Rep. Connolly & [S.422](#), Sen. Jehlen)

The Caucus also endorsed 20 pieces of legislation, a [full list of which can be found here](#). Two of the endorsed pieces of legislation are Representative Kane's bills. *An Act to ensure legal parentage equality* which Representative Kane co-filed with Representative Peake, defines who can be a legally recognized parent and how legal parentage can be established. This bill is essential to ensuring that all Massachusetts children can access the benefits, rights, protections, and security of legal parentage, as well ensuring consistency and efficiency in our courts. Additionally, *An Act relative to accelerating improvements to the local and regional public health system to address disparities in the delivery of public health services*, co-filed with Representative Garlick, ensures minimum public health standards for every community, increases capacity and effectiveness by encouraging municipalities to share services, creates a uniform data collection and reporting system, and establishes a sustainable state funding mechanism to support local boards of health and health departments.

In addition to this legislative advocacy, the MCWL also continues the work of four [Task Forces](#): Birth Justice, Justice-Involved Women, Sexual Violence, and State Budget. The Caucus is also working to expand a series of non-legislative initiatives, such as mentorship opportunities for MCWL members, support for female-identifying staff, expanding external partnerships, and more.

“We are proud of the expansive yet focused work of the Women’s Caucus and are grateful to our colleagues for participating in this process to refine our priorities,” said **Women’s Caucus Co-Chairs Sen. Joan B. Lovely (D-2nd Essex) and Rep. Hannah Kane (R-11th Worcester)**. “The Caucus is a unique entity on Beacon Hill—representing over 31% of the full legislature, with a bipartisan and bicameral group of members, we are particularly poised to effectively tackle the issues facing women and girls in the Commonwealth. We are excited to work to advance our strategic and legislative priorities this session.”

“The strategic and legislative priorities of the Women’s Caucus reflect the strength and diversity of our 63 members,” said **Nora Bent, Executive Director of the Women’s Caucus**. “Our members have expertise in a wide range of policy areas and bring their districts and their own diversity to this work—we are grateful for their participation and are excited to see what this session brings as we seek to uplift our members and the women of the Commonwealth.”

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