

Annual Report on the Status of Women in Florida

Your Voice Matters: A Conversation with Florida Women and Families

by Commissioner Patti Hamilton, Annual Report Committee Chair



In the spirit of our mission to be focused on the status of Florida's women and families, the 2014 Annual Report is one that reports on the most up to date and current issues women are experiencing in their communities. Members of the Commission along with the assistance of women's commissions and organizations in communities across Florida hosted open and informational conversations with women throughout the fall and winter. Women throughout the state shared their experiences, opinions, and suggestions on challenges and solutions important to Florida families.

Information gathered from these forums and through the surveys has been summarized in our 2014 Annual Report entitled, Your Voice Matters: A Conversation With Florida Women and Families. This report was created to raise awareness about the specific needs of Florida's women and families and truly represents the "Status of Women in Florida."

The responses overwhelmingly centered on economics and finances. While overall economic conditions have improved across the country over the last few years, the following challenges were reported most frequently:

- Safe and affordable housing
- Childcare and eldercare costs
- Low wages
- Educational costs including college tuition
- Healthcare costs
- Fewer full-time jobs with benefits such as insurance and retirement

Additionally, other challenges reported included violence against women, human trafficking and work-life balance.

It is clear that women and families throughout Florida share common concerns and challenges. There is a real need for coordinated efforts among government and service organizations, and to educate women on how to best access these resources.

It is our desire that the information provided in this written report impacts the girls and women we serve and acts as a catalyst to ensure the challenges and needs of Florida families are met. Your Voice Matters will soon be available on the Commission website

at www.fcsw.net.