

111TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 1887

To establish a Presidential Commission on Women, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 2, 2009

Ms. SPEIER (for herself, Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. CLARKE, Mrs. DAHLKEMPER, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland, Mrs. HALVORSON, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. KILROY, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mrs. LOWEY, Ms. MARKEY of Colorado, Ms. WATERS, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Ms. RICHARDSON, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Ms. TITUS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. WOOLSEY, and Ms. ESHOO) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

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# A BILL

To establish a Presidential Commission on Women, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-  
2       tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**3       SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Presidential Commis-  
5       sion on Women Act of 2009”.

1 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT.**

2       There is established a commission to be known as the  
3    “Presidential Commission on Women” (hereinafter in this  
4    Act referred to as the “Commission”).

5 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS AND POLICY.**

6       Congress makes the following findings and statement  
7    of policy:

8               (1) It is the role of Government to examine the  
9    circumstances that contribute to discrimination, in-  
10   equality, and economic hardship faced by women  
11   throughout the country.

12              (2) It is the role of Government to establish ini-  
13    tiatives and programs that promote equality for  
14    women, and protect against discrimination of  
15    women, in all areas of public and private life.

16              (3) Women in our country continue to face in-  
17    equalities and discrimination in many areas of public  
18    and private life, including but not limited to these  
19    examples:

20               (A) The United States ranks 71st in the  
21    world in the number of women in elected office.  
22        In 2009, women make up 17 percent of Con-  
23    gress and 24 percent of State legislative office-  
24    holders. Women of color make up 4 percent of  
25    Congress and 2 percent of State legislative of-  
26    fice-holders.

1 (B) Women earn 77 cents on the dollar  
2 compared to men. African-American women  
3 earn 69 cents on the dollar compared to men.  
4 Latinas earn 59 cents compared to men.

5 (C) Of workers earning minimum wage, 68  
6 percent are women. Of workers earning less  
7 than the minimum wage, 69 percent are  
8 women. Nineteen percent of women, as com-  
9 pared to 10 percent of men, have annual family  
10 incomes of less than \$19,000. Of Fortune 500  
11 CEOs, 2 percent are women.

12 (D) With only 76 percent of women in the  
13 labor force, the United States ranks sixth from  
14 the bottom among industrialized nations.  
15 Among college-educated women, the United  
16 States ranks last among industrialized nations.

17 (E) While 57 percent of men are employed  
18 full-time, only 38 percent of women are em-  
19 ployed full-time. Eight out of ten single-parent  
20 families are headed by women; 28 percent of  
21 people living in female-headed households are  
22 living below the poverty line.

23 (F) There is a continuing decline in moth-  
24 ers' employment largely due to a lack of sup-  
25 port for working parents, such as sufficient

1           paid time off, subsidized child care, or flexible  
2           working arrangements. There is also discrimi-  
3           nation in the labor market specifically against  
4           mothers as well as weakness on the demand  
5           side of the labor market in areas that have tra-  
6           ditionally employed large numbers of women.

7           (G) One in every four women will experi-  
8           ence domestic violence in her lifetime. Eighty-  
9           five percent of domestic violence victims are  
10           women. The cost of intimate partner violence  
11           exceeds \$5.8 billion each year, \$4.1 billion of  
12           which is for direct medical and mental health  
13           services.

14           (H) Eighteen percent of women in the  
15           United States do not have health insurance; 36  
16           percent of American Indian/Native Alaskan  
17           women are uninsured; 38 percent of Hispanic  
18           women do not have health insurance.

19           (I) Women of color are disproportionately  
20           affected by the inequalities women face.

21           (J) Gender bias and discrimination remain  
22           pervasive in almost all aspects of our culture,  
23           including but not limited to the media, family  
24           life, the workplace, sports, education, health

1                   care, the military, entertainment, and financial  
2                   matters.

3 **SEC. 4. DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION.**

4                   (a) REVIEW REQUIRED.—The Commission shall hold  
5                   meetings and hearings to—

6                   (1) review the status of women nationwide, and  
7                   the progress made since the establishment of the  
8                   President's Commission on the Status of Women in  
9                   1961;

10                  (2) review the role of the Federal Government  
11                  in aid to, and the promotion of women; and

12                  (3) review data collection procedures with re-  
13                  gard to women Federal initiatives and procurement,  
14                  with a view toward recommending improvements.

15                  (b) CONFERENCE.—The Commission shall, in coordi-  
16                  nation with the White House Council on Women and  
17                  Girls, hold a conference (hereinafter in this Act referred  
18                  to as the Conference) to assist in the review required by  
19                  subsection (a).

20                  (c) RECOMMENDATIONS REQUIRED.—Based on the  
21                  review required by subsection (a), the Commission shall  
22                  make recommendations to the President and Congress and  
23                  conduct oversight of implementation.

1 **SEC. 5. MEMBERSHIP.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall be com-  
3 posed of 15 members appointed as follows:

4 (1) Four members appointed by the President.

5 (2) Three members appointed by the Speaker of  
6 the House of Representatives and two members ap-  
7 pointed by the minority leader.

8 (3) Three members appointed by the majority  
9 leader of the Senate and two members appointed by  
10 the minority leader.

11 (4) The director of the White House Council on  
12 Women and Girls, who shall serve ex officio.

13 (b) QUALIFICATIONS.—Appointments under sub-  
14 section paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (a) shall  
15 be made from individuals who are specially qualified to  
16 serve on the Commission by virtue of their education,  
17 training, or experience, and who are not officers or em-  
18 ployees of the Government or Members of Congress.

19 (c) REQUIREMENT FOR APPOINTMENT OF YOUNG  
20 WOMEN.—Of the individuals appointed by President  
21 under paragraph (1), the Speaker of the House of Rep-  
22 resentatives under paragraph (2), and the majority leader  
23 of the Senate under paragraph (3) of subsection (a), at  
24 least one member appointed under each paragraph shall  
25 be a young woman between the ages of 18–24.

1       (d) GEOGRAPHICAL BALANCE.—In making the ap-  
2 pointments under subsection (a), the appointing authori-  
3 ties should give consideration to achieving a geographical  
4 balance.

5       (e) TERM.—Members shall be appointed for 5 years  
6 of the Commission, except that, if any member of the  
7 Commission becomes an officer or employee of the Federal  
8 Government or a Member of Congress, such individual  
9 may continue as a member of the Commission for not  
10 longer than the 30-day period beginning on the date such  
11 individual becomes such an officer or employee or Member  
12 of Congress.

13       (f) VACANCIES.—A vacancy in the Commission shall  
14 be filled in the manner in which the original appointment  
15 was made.

16       (g) PAY.—Members of the Commission shall serve  
17 without pay, except members of the Commission shall be  
18 entitled to reimbursement for travel, subsistence, and  
19 other necessary expenses incurred by them in carrying out  
20 the functions of the Commission, in the same manner as  
21 persons employed intermittently in the Federal Govern-  
22 ment are allowed expenses under section 5703 of title 5,  
23 United States Code.

1       (h) QUORUM.—Eight members of the Commission  
2 shall constitute a quorum but a lesser number may hold  
3 hearings.

4       (i) CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON.—The  
5 Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Commission  
6 shall be designated by the President. The term of office  
7 of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall be 5 years  
8 of the Commission.

9       (j) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet not less  
10 than 4 times nor more than 6 times each year. Meetings  
11 shall be at the call of a majority of its members.

12 **SEC. 6. DIRECTOR AND STAFF OF THE COMMISSION.**

13       (a) DIRECTOR AND STAFF.—(1) The Commission  
14 shall have a Director who shall be appointed by the Com-  
15 mission. The Commission, with the recommendation of the  
16 Director, may appoint and fix the pay of 4 additional per-  
17 sonnel.

18       (2) The Director and staff of the Commission may  
19 be appointed without regard to section 5311(b) of title 5,  
20 United States Code, and without regard to the provisions  
21 of such title governing appointments in the competitive  
22 service, and may be paid without regard to the provisions  
23 of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of such  
24 title relating to classification and General Schedule pay  
25 rates, except that no individual so appointed may receive

1 pay in excess of the annual rate of basic pay payable for  
2 GS-18 of the General Schedule.

3 (b) SERVICES.—The Commission may procure tem-  
4 porary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of  
5 title 5 of the United States Code, but at rates for individ-  
6 uals not to exceed the daily equivalent of the maximum  
7 annual rate of basic pay payable for GS-18 of the General  
8 Schedule.

9 (c) DETAILS.—Upon request of the Commission, the  
10 head of any department or agency may detail, on a reim-  
11 bursable basis, any of the personnel of such agency to the  
12 Commission to assist the Commission in carrying out its  
13 duties under this Act.

**14 SEC. 7. POWERS OF THE COMMISSION.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission may, for the  
16 purpose of carrying out this Act, hold such hearings, sit  
17 and act at such times and places, take such testimony,  
18 and receive such evidence, as the Commission considers  
19 appropriate.

20 (b) DELEGATION.—Any member or agent of the  
21 Commission may, if so authorized by the Commission,  
22 take any action which the Commission is authorized to  
23 take by this section.

24 (c) ACCESS TO INFORMATION.—The Commission  
25 may secure directly from any department or agency of the

1 United States information necessary to enable it to carry  
2 out this Act. Upon request of the Chairperson of the Com-  
3 mission, the head of such department or agency shall fur-  
4 nish such information to the Commission.

5 (d) USE OF MAI LS.—The Commission may use the  
6 United States mails in the same manner and under the  
7 same conditions as other departments and agencies of the  
8 United States.

9 (e) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.—The Administrator  
10 of General Services shall provide to the Commission on  
11 a reimbursable basis such administrative support services  
12 as the Commission may request.

13 **SEC. 8. CONFERENCE AND CONFERENCE DELEGATES.**

14 The Commission in coordination with the White  
15 House Council on Women and Girls shall convene a con-  
16 ference of delegates invited by the Commission, who shall  
17 be fairly balanced and diverse in terms of geography and  
18 ethnicity without regard to political affiliation or past par-  
19 tisan activity, who shall include—

20 (1) the directors of commissions for women of  
21 the States and local levels of government;

22 (2) elected officials of State and local govern-  
23 ments;

24 (3) advocates for women at colleges and univer-  
25 sities; and

1 (4) representatives of nonprofit organizations  
2 and community-based organizations.

### 3 SEC. 9. CONFERENCE ADMINISTRATION.

4 (a) ADMINISTRATION.—In conducting and planning  
5 the Conference, the Commission and the White House  
6 Council on Women and Girls shall—

10 (2) prepare and make available appropriate  
11 background materials for the use of delegates to the  
12 Conference;

20 (4) ensure that the proposed agenda for the  
21 Conference is—

22 (A) published in the Federal Register not  
23 less than 180 days before the Conference is  
24 convened; and

1 (B) made available for public comment for  
2 a period of not less than 60 days;

11 (6) ensure that the personnel employed are fair-  
12 ly balanced in terms of their points of view with re-  
13 spect to women and are appointed without regard to  
14 political affiliation or past partisan activity;

22 (A) current and adequate statistical data  
23 (including decennial census data) and other in-  
24 formation on the well-being of Women in the  
25 United States; and

## 8 SEC. 10. REPORTS.

9        The Commission shall transmit to the President and  
10 to Congress a first report no later than 2 years after the  
11 date of the Commission's first meeting. That report shall  
12 include a statement of the Commission's objectives and  
13 goals for the remainder of the Commission's work. There-  
14 after the Commission shall report annually. Each of those  
15 annual reports shall contain a statement of any findings  
16 and conclusions of the Commission, together with its rec-  
17 ommendations for such legislation and administrative ac-  
18 tions as it considers appropriate.

## 19 SEC. 11. DEFINITION.

20        In this Act, the term “State” means any of the sev-  
21 eral States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth  
22 of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the United  
23 States Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the  
24 Northern Mariana Islands.

1 **SEC. 12. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appro-  
3 priated \$2,000,000.00 to carry out this Act in each of fis-  
4 cal years 2011 through 2015.

5 (b) LIMITATION ON APPROPRIATIONS.—Authority  
6 provided in this Act to make expenditures or to enter into  
7 contracts under which the United States is obligated to  
8 make outlays shall be effective only to the extent that  
9 amounts are provided, and only to the extent of the  
10 amounts provided, in advance in appropriations Acts.

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