

City of Fairfax Commission for Women Legislative Priorities

Mission Statement: The Commission for Women identifies and addresses the needs of women in the City of Fairfax, Virginia. The Commission advises City officials on legislative and policy issues relating to women and advocates for programs and resources. They also promote programs to increase awareness amongst City residents on issues affecting women's lives.

To ensure the health, safety and economic security of women and girls living in the City of Fairfax, the City's Commission for Women supports the following legislative and budgetary priorities:

➤ **Increase Access to Quality, Affordable Childcare**

A family's financial independence is jeopardized when affordable childcare is unavailable or unattainable. Childcare and early childhood education programs support school readiness in young children.

➤ **Increase Access to Affordable Housing Options**

Housing is a fundamental right. Stable and safe housing is necessary for family stability and healthy development of children. Families should be able to afford housing in communities near where they work. Development and preservation of affordable housing options is most critical for families and seniors.

➤ **Support Economic Equity and Equal Pay for Women**

"Women in the US who work full time are paid only 82 cents for every dollar paid to men and for women of color, the wage gap is even larger. It is past time to address this gap." (National Women's Law Center: www.nwlc.org)

"Wage disparities during a woman's employment years will continue to impact her financial security in retirement. A woman's retirement 'well-being' is further complicated by the fact that women are more likely to take time out of the workforce, scale back hours or postpone advancement opportunities to care for their children, thus decreasing their overall retirement savings. Women also tend to live longer than men placing them at greater risk of outliving their retirement income." (American Association of University Women: www.aauw.org).

➤ **Support Women's Health and Access to Quality Healthcare**

"Because women represent the cornerstone of a family's overall health, ensuring they have access to quality care also can lead to improved health for children and families." (National Conference of State Legislatures: ncsl.org).

Healthcare access should include access to healthcare services that support reproductive health.

➤ **Increase Funding for Programs Developed to Prevent and Eliminate Violence Towards Women**

"Research shows that domestic and sexual violence are major public health problems with serious long-term physical and mental health consequences, as well as significant social and public health costs." (Fairfax County Human Services Issue Paper, 2021)