



Women's Council
· Wisconsin ·

Minutes of the Meeting of the Wisconsin Women's Council
Friday, August 25, 2023; 1:00-2:15 PM
Held virtually via MS Teams

Council Members Present:

x	Gabby Aranda-Pino		Rachel Fernandez		Carrie Richard
x	Dr. Jolene Bowman	ex.	Sen. Dianne Hesselbein	x	Lt. Gov. Sara Rodriguez
	Sen. Rachael Cabral-Guevara	x	Denise Gaumer-Hutchison, <i>Chair</i>		<i>Vacant</i>
x	Rep. Jodi Emerson	x	Amanda Medina-Roddy		<i>Vacant</i>
x	Dep. Sec. Patti Epstein	Ex.	Nerissa Nelson		<i>Vacant</i>

Guest: U.S. Representative Gwen Moore

Staff Present: Jenifer Cole, WWC Executive Director; Marissa Feller, Lt. Gov.'s Office; Richard Rydecki, DOA-DEO Deputy Administrator; Deon Canon, Congresswoman Gwen Moore's Office

Public Present: None

- 1) **Call to Order:** Chair Gaumer Hutchison called the meeting of the Wisconsin Women's Council to order at 1:03.
 - a) Chair Gaumer Hutchison took a moment to acknowledge the life and legacy of former Women's Council member, Ada Deer. The Council paused and held space for her memory, shared sadness in her passing last week, and spoke about the tremendous impact her work and leadership had for women, Native peoples, Wisconsin, and our country. R. Fernandez noted Ada Deer's hard work and lasting impact for the Menominee Tribe and fellow Indigenous women. Dr. Bowman reflected, "I am honored to walk in her footsteps and be able to create my own because of all she did."
- 2) **Congressional Update with Congresswoman Gwen Moore (4th CD):**

The Council was honored to have U.S. Congresswoman Gwen Moore attend the meeting and provide an update on some of the bills and issues she is working on to help the lives of women in Wisconsin and beyond. Rep. Moore is a former Women's Council member and took a moment to honor the Council's 40th Anniversary and reflect on her time on the Council. She spoke about women's labor and thanked the Council and women for all they do to move the work of equality forward. Topics of Rep. Moore's remarks and discussion with the Council included:

 - Women's economic security; wage gaps; uncompensated labor; labor force participation; need for good and fair pay in the women's workforce, especially as women are overwhelmingly the majority of "essential workers".
 - Elder care and aging issues; child care availability, affordability; and workers' wages. Government and private sector need to come together to support women in the workforce.
 - Issues of poverty, disparities, and equity concerns.
 - Worker Relief and Credit Reform Act – an overhaul of EITC to help vulnerable workers, care giving workers, and folks providing family care.

- Need for post-partum Medicare increase and other gender-based needs in budgets to reflect women's care and concerns like additional cancer screenings, tax relief for diapers and menstrual products.

3) Approval of Meeting Minutes:

- a) July 28, 2023 – Lt. Governor Rodriguez moved to approve; Seconded by A. Medina-Roddy; Approved unanimously.

4) Special Session Legislative Update – Rep. Jodi Emerson shared highlights about the four bills included in the Governor's call for a special session that impact the lives of women in Wisconsin and helps families:

- a) Childcare Counts & Partner Up to help keep childcare centers and providers from going out of business.
- b) Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance program to provide seed money from state to get employer/worker funded insurance program started.
- c) Higher Education funding to keep colleges and universities in the UW System stay afloat, help with student financial aid, and infusion in the tech college system.
- d) Workforce grants to help with healthcare and educator workforce innovations to address critical worker shortages.

5) Project Updates – J. Cole provided updates that she was still working on setting dates/location for the next exhibit of the Hmong women's' story cloth. J. Cole and G. Aranda-Pino reported that the Status of Women research project steering committee was meeting regularly and working on determining the scope of the research.

6) Discussion about Council Communications - J. Cole reported that Facebook had unpublished the Women's Council's page likely due to a malicious hack. Rep. Emerson assisting with connecting to Meta's Government Affairs team to work on re-publishing the page.

7) Closing Remarks and Adjournment – Chair Gaumer Hutchison noted that new Women's Council notecards were available. If members want some to send thank you notes and such, please contact J. Cole.

Meeting adjourned at 2:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jenifer Cole
Executive Director, Wisconsin Women's Council