

1 AN ACT concerning State government.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the  
5 Illinois Council on Women and Girls Act.

6 Section 5. Findings and declaration of policy. The General  
7 Assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares the following:

8 (1) the number of women and girls, of all ages in  
9 Illinois as of 2013, was close to half of the State's  
10 population, at 6,560,187;

11 (2) approximately 13% of the total population of the  
12 women are immigrants;

13 (3) Illinois women who work full-time, year-round,  
14 earn 80 cents on the dollar compared with similarly  
15 employed men;

16 (4) approximately 28.2% of those working in science,  
17 technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields in  
18 Illinois are women, compared with 28.8% nationwide;

19 (5) approximately 32.7% of women in Illinois have a  
20 bachelor's degree or higher, which is an increase of about  
21 8 percentage points since the 2000;

22 (6) women in Illinois who are unionized earn \$122 more  
23 per week, on average, than those who are not represented by

1 a union;

2 (7) approximately 61% of women in Illinois are part of  
3 the labor force, and 27.2% of businesses in Illinois are  
4 owned by women;

5 (8) heart disease is the biggest killer of women in the  
6 United States, and Illinois ranks 29 of 51 with a mortality  
7 rate of 136.9 per 100,000 women, specifically, 133.8 for  
8 Caucasian women, 79.8 Hispanic women, 186.1 for African  
9 American women, 70.5 for Pacific Islander women, and 72.1  
10 for Native American women;

11 (9) the female lung cancer mortality rates for women,  
12 per 100,000, in 2011-2013, was 42.0 for Caucasian women,  
13 11.6 for Hispanic women; 44.2 for African American women;  
14 and 15.8 for Pacific Islander women;

15 (10) the female breast cancer mortality rates for  
16 women, per 100,000, in 2011-2013, was 22.8 for Caucasian  
17 women, 10.6 for Hispanic women, 32.6 for African American  
18 women, and 11.5 for Pacific Islander women; and

19 (11) wide racial and ethnic disparities exist in  
20 Illinois pregnancy-related mortality rates, which in 2013,  
21 in deaths per 100,000 births, were 8.1 for Caucasian women  
22 and 28.9 for African American women, and the severe  
23 maternal morbidity rate for Illinois between 2011-2013 was  
24 higher than the national rate;

25 (12) teen pregnancy is often unintended and can have  
26 long-term negative health effects on future physical,

1 behavioral, educational, and economic development of  
2 mothers and children, and teen birth rates in Illinois are  
3 significantly higher for African American and Hispanic  
4 teens than for Caucasian teens;

5 (13) women who are transgender experience high rates of  
6 discrimination, harassment, and violence in every aspect  
7 of their lives, including health care settings, other  
8 public accommodations, housing, and employment; and

9 (14) approximately 65.9% of women in Illinois are  
10 registered to vote.

11 Based on the foregoing findings, the General Assembly  
12 determines and declares that it is the public policy of the  
13 State of Illinois to provide fair and equal access for women in  
14 Illinois to adequate healthcare, resources for professional  
15 and academic opportunity, and resources for safety and proper  
16 living conditions for them and their young children, paying  
17 attention to the variances of impact in these areas along the  
18 lines of race and ethnicity.

19 Section 10. Definitions. As used in this Act:

20 "Council" means the Illinois Council on Women and Girls  
21 created by this Act.

22 "Woman" or "women" means all persons of the female gender,  
23 including both cisgender and transgender persons.

24 "Transgender" describes persons whose gender identity is  
25 different from the gender they were assigned at birth.

1 "Cisgender" describes persons whose gender identity is the  
2 same as the gender they were assigned at birth.

3 "Gender identity" means a person's deeply felt, inherent  
4 sense of who they are as a particular gender, such as female.

5 Section 15. The Illinois Council on Women and Girls.

6 (a) There is hereby created the Illinois Council on Women  
7 and Girls.

8 (b) The Council shall advise the Governor and the General  
9 Assembly on policy issues impacting women and girls in this  
10 State, including, but not limited to, the following goals:

11 (1) to advance the role and civic participation of  
12 women and girls in this State;

13 (2) to put in place programs and advocate policies that  
14 work to end the gender pay gap and discrimination in  
15 professional and academic opportunities;

16 (3) to promote resources and opportunities for  
17 academic and professional growth;

18 (4) to allow women and young girls to have legal  
19 protections and recourse in cases of sexual harassment in  
20 the workplace;

21 (5) to prevent and protect women from domestic  
22 violence;

23 (6) to provide proper standards of healthcare, and to  
24 study the disparate impacts on women as it pertains to  
25 diverse demographics;

1           (7) to promote increased access to reproductive health  
2           care;

3           (8) to protect women who are transgender from violence  
4           and harassment, and increase their fair and equal access to  
5           culturally competent health care, housing, employment, and  
6           other opportunities;

7           (9) to disseminate information and build relationships  
8           between State agencies and commissions in furtherance of  
9           the Council's goals under this Act; and

10          (10) to give significant attention to the inclusion of  
11          women of color in decision-making capacities and  
12          identifying barriers toward parity, and for leadership  
13          inclusion that works to realize America's founding  
14          principles of equity and opportunity for all.

15          Section 20. Council members.

16          (a) The Council shall consist of 21 members. The Governor  
17          shall appoint one member to be the representative of the Office  
18          of the Governor. The Governor, the President of the Senate, the  
19          Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Minority Leader of  
20          the Senate, and the Minority Leader of the House of  
21          Representatives shall also each appoint 4 public members to the  
22          Council. The Governor shall select the chairperson of the  
23          Council from among the members.

24          (b) Appointing authorities shall ensure, to the maximum  
25          extent practicable, that the Council is diverse with respect to

1 race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, and  
2 geography.

3 (c) Appointments to the Council shall be persons of  
4 recognized ability and experience in one or more of the  
5 following areas: higher education, business, law, social  
6 services, human services, immigration, refugee services,  
7 community development, or healthcare.

8 (d) Members of the Council shall serve 2-year terms. A  
9 member shall serve until his or her successor shall be  
10 appointed and qualified. Members of the Council shall not be  
11 entitled to compensation for their services as members.

12 (e) The following officials shall serve as ex officio  
13 members: the Lieutenant Governor, or his or her designee, and  
14 the Chief of the Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Services  
15 within the Department of Human Services, or his or her  
16 designee. Additionally, the Director, Executive Director, or  
17 Superintendent of the following State agencies shall each  
18 appoint one liaison to serve as an ex officio member of the  
19 Council: the Department on Aging, the Department of Human  
20 Rights, the Department of Children and Family Services, the  
21 Department of Healthcare and Family Services, the Department of  
22 Public Health, the Department of Labor, the Illinois State  
23 Board of Education, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and  
24 the Illinois Community College Board.

25 (f) The Council may establish committees that address  
26 certain issues, including, but not limited to, communications,

1 economic development, and legislative affairs.

2 (g) The Office of the Governor shall provide administrative  
3 and technical support to the Council, including a staff member  
4 to serve as the Council's ethics officer.

5 Section 25. Meetings. The Council shall meet at least once  
6 per quarter. In addition, the Council may hold up to 2 public  
7 hearings annually to assist in the development of policy  
8 recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly, and  
9 implement programming to meet its overall mission goals. All  
10 meetings of the Council shall be conducted in accordance with  
11 the Open Meetings Act. A majority of current non-ex-officio  
12 members of the Council shall constitute a quorum.

13 Section 30. Reports. The Council shall electronically  
14 issue semi-annual reports on its policy recommendations by June  
15 30th and December 31st of each year to the Governor and the  
16 General Assembly. The reports issued to the General Assembly  
17 under this Section shall be filed electronically with the  
18 General Assembly as provided under Section 3.1 of the General  
19 Assembly Organization Act, and shall be provided to any member  
20 of the General Assembly upon request.

21 Section 97. Severability. The provisions of this Act are  
22 severable under Section 1.31 of the Statute on Statutes.

23 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon

1 becoming law.