

**Governor's Council on Women and Girls**  
**Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity and Workforce Equity**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Tuesday, November 5, 2024, 3:00PM**  
**Microsoft TEAMS Virtual Meeting**

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**I. Introduction**

Tracy Opoku, General Counsel to the Lt. Governor, began the meeting at 3:00pm.

**II. Childcare is Infrastructure Presentation (Jill E. Ashton, Northeast Regional Administrator, Women's Bureau, US Department of Labor)**

Jill E. Ashton, Northeast Regional Administrator for the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Women's Bureau, and her colleague, Christine Sarkes, presented on available resources at the Women's Bureau. The Women's Bureau is a sub agency of the U.S. DOL with the mission of supporting women into the workforce and ensuring that they have knowledge of and the ability to fully exercise their workplace rights to guarantee women's equal access to opportunity and economics equalities. Specifically, the presentation focused on the 'Childcare is Infrastructure' Report and the National Database of Childcare Prices.

Jill Ashton presented three key strategies to advance the work of the Women's Bureau:

1. Research and Policy Analysis
2. Grantmaking
  - WANTO Grant - Women and Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations
  - FAIR Grant - Fostering Access Rights and Equity
3. Education and Outreach

3 Key Pillars in setting policy or research agenda:

1. Addressing or closing the gender wage gap by disrupting occupational segregation
2. Eliminating the pain that women face as care providers
3. Addressing and preventing gender-based violence and harassment in the world of work

Jill explained that "there is no work without care work" and eliminating the pain that women face as care providers is necessary to increase women's labor force participation. The Childcare is Infrastructure focuses on the contribution to the economy of the care workforce, highlighting that care has been invisible, undercompensated, undervalued, and overwhelmingly done by women, and women of color in the professional sense. Additionally in their private lives, women carry a large share of care in their homes.

The Childcare is Infrastructure Report built on the idea that when cities and states invest in childcare (e.g., universal pre-K) there are higher rates of employment and higher rates of labor force participation by mothers. It highlighted that, in 2022, at least 13 million parents relied on paid caregiving to care for their children when they worked, attended school or were otherwise unavailable. If every working parent who relies on childcare to stay employed lost that support, the loss of gross domestic product could total as much as \$2.1 trillion with women's labor force participation decreasing by 9.3 percentage points.

The presentation also highlighted the National Database of Child Care Prices (NDCP), the most comprehensive database on childcare pricing at the county level. Data that's included in the database was captured from 2008 to 2018, including information about children's cost of care from ages 0 to 12. It also breaks pricing into various kinds of care such as day care centers, at home, or in a family neighbor network. In Hartford County in 2023, it costs \$18,790 to provide care for an infant, or 17% of an average family income.

Jill also presented a Pew Foundation Report which indicated the US median prime-age women's labor force participation is at 75%, a record high but lags similar economies in other countries. Connecticut's labor force participation of prime age women is 79%.

### **III. Brainstorm Future Agenda Topics**

- Department of Transportation new unit on engaging young girls in construction, engineering, and technology
- Department of Transportation CDL apprentice program
- Liberty Bank Professional Development Program
- Liberty Bank Small Business Academy

### **IV. Announcements**

There were no announcements.

### **V. Adjournment**

Tracy Opoku ended the meeting.