

Support America's Working Women

Sign a letter to Department of Labor Secretary Elaine Chao asking that she restore the Women's Bureau's budget to FY2006 levels.

Dear Colleague:

Please join me in writing to the Department of Labor's Secretary, Elaine Chao, to ask that the Department restore the Women's Bureau's FY2007 funding level to the full amount budgeted by Congress.

The Women's Bureau plays a critical role as the only federal agency devoted exclusively to the concerns of the nearly 70 million women in the United States' labor force. Under the Joint Resolution making continuing appropriations for FY 2007 (H. J. Res. 20), Congress allowed for a Women's Bureau budget at the FY 2006 level, so that the Bureau could continue to operate critical initiatives for working women. However, under its operating plan for FY2007, the Department of Labor cut the Bureau's budget by over \$300,000. I am very concerned that the Department's cut to the Bureau's already modest budget puts its important work in jeopardy.

The Women's Bureau has been instrumental in improving the workplace for women for the past 86 years and continues to support America's working women in their increasingly important role in our nation's economy. This latest attempt to downsize the Bureau has serious negative impacts on the work of the Women's Bureau, and most importantly, on the women workers whose interests the Bureau represents. I hope you will join me in asking the Department of Labor to restore the Women's Bureau's budget to the FY2006 level.

For more information or to sign on to this letter by Friday, April 27th at noon, please call Letty Mederos at ext. 53661.

Sincerely,
Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress

April 25, 2007

The Honorable Elaine Chao, Secretary
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Secretary Chao,

We are writing to express our opposition to the Department's decision to reduce the Women's Bureau budget under your operating plan for FY2007. It was Congress' intent under H. J. Res. 20 to maintain FY2006 funding levels for the Bureau; we are deeply concerned that the reduction you've proposed will have detrimental effects on critical initiatives to advance women in the workforce. As a result, we ask that you revise your operating plan to provide \$9,666,000 for the Women's Bureau in FY 2007, as Congress intended.

The Women's Bureau plays a critical role as the only federal agency devoted exclusively to the concerns of the 70 million women in the United States' labor force. Since 1920, the Women's Bureau has led the nation in representing and protecting the needs of wage-earning women. In recent years, the Bureau has advanced 21st century solutions to help women in economic transition obtain employment in high-growth, demand-driven occupations and take steps to improve their families' security and well-being. For example, through its grant program with the Women Work! network-the nation's only direct service delivery system specifically equipped to meet the needs of unemployed and underemployed women-the Bureau helps over 300,000 women each year to make sustainable transitions into paid work.

Under the Joint Resolution making continuing appropriations for FY 2007 (H. J. Res. 20), Congress allowed for a Women's Bureau budget at the FY 2006 level, so that the Bureau could continue to operate the Women Work! grant program and other critical initiatives for working women. We are very concerned that the Department's cut to the Bureau's already modest budget puts this important work in jeopardy.

We are also concerned that your decision to reduce the Women's Bureau's budget suggests a dangerous pattern of disregard for needs of women in the United States' labor force. This action, viewed in combination with past attempts to diminish the Bureau-such as the near-elimination of Women's Bureau regional offices in 2001-calls into question the your commitment to expanding employment opportunities for women.

Secretary Chao, advancing women in the workforce must be among the top priorities of the Department of Labor. It is imperative that you fund the Women's Bureau at \$9,666,000, so that the Bureau can continue to support the Women Work! grant program and other critical initiatives to empower 21st century women workers to participate more fully in the American economy.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and we look forward to your response.