



## Message from the Director

Today is the day after the Super Bowl. Even I watched the game, and it was thrilling! Exciting...and very, very manly.

What about women’s sports?

Title IX passed in 1972, granting girls and women in schools and colleges an equal opportunity to participate in sports. It’s made a huge difference. Today, 40 percent of high school girls are athletes; before Title IX, that figure was 3.7 percent.

But what about media coverage of women’s sports?

OESW’s extraordinary intern, Jaimee Leibfried, a senior at St. Kate’s, combed through the Sports section of the Minneapolis Star Tribune every day during November, and counted the number of articles on men’s sports and the number on women’s sports. Her findings are striking.

To help put the findings in context, we sought comments from a female sports reporter at the Star Tribune, from the Director of the U of M’s Tucker Center for Research on Girls and Women in Sports, and from a female student athlete interning at the U of M Center for Women.

The second part of this newsletter is an overview of bills that have been introduced so far in Minnesota’s 2017 legislative session. If you want further information on any of these bills, please feel welcome to email me. I will post updates on legislative activity on OESW’s [Facebook Page](#) and [Twitter](#).

We hope you find this newsletter interesting and informative. Its purpose is to provide information to legislators, legislative staff, and the community on priority and emerging women's economic issues.

Please send your suggestions to [barbara.battiste@oesw.leg.mn](mailto:barbara.battiste@oesw.leg.mn). Visit OESW’s [Facebook Page](#), [Twitter](#), and website [www.oesw.leg.mn](http://www.oesw.leg.mn).

## In This Issue

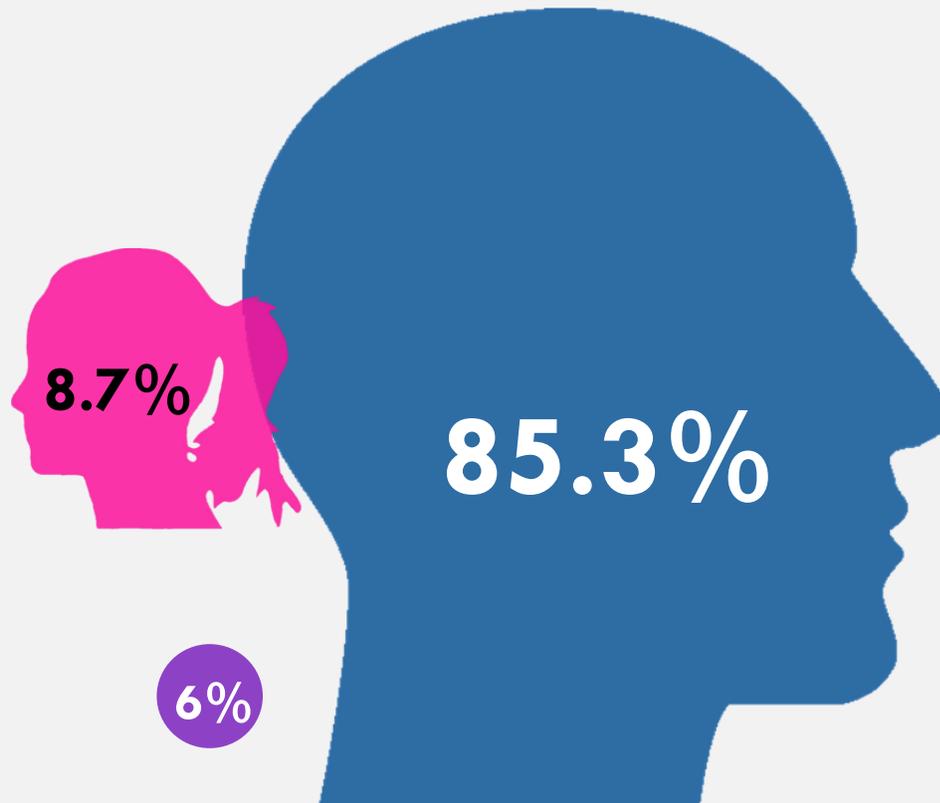
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**Minneapolis Star Tribune's Sports Section  
Percentage of Men's Articles Compared to  
Women's  
November 2016**



**Data**

**Women's Articles: 129**  
**Both Gender Articles: 132**

**Men's Articles: 1,878**  
**Total Articles: 2,202**

**About This Data**

Counts are daily and do not include score reports, summaries, standings or game schedules, but do include multiple stories under one headline, "notes", "jottings," and unrelated "etc." pieces.



# Interpreting the Data

*"It's disappointing but not surprising to see coverage of women's sports continue to lag so far behind that of men's sports. The Star Tribune and other local media are doing better in some areas, though there still is a long way to go. The Lynx are now covered far better than they were in the past; their championships have made them impossible to ignore, and their vocal fan base lets media know that coverage is important to them. Gophers women's volleyball also gets good coverage during the postseason. Women Olympians were well served by our Rio Summer Games coverage.*

*That said, we still don't treat women's sports anywhere close to equally. We don't travel to regular-season Lynx road games, though we travel to all Timberwolves games. We don't cover all home games for Gophers women's basketball, though the men's team has a full-time beat reporter assigned. The answer given by the decision makers is that there isn't as much interest in women's sports, as gauged by metrics such as TV ratings, attendance and clicks generated by online stories. I believe that this is partially because of the chicken-and-egg effect; perhaps there would be more interest if there were more media coverage. A lack of coverage sends the message that something isn't important, and we all know how powerful media buzz can be as a promotional tool.*

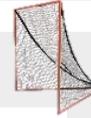
**"The key is getting more women in decision making roles."**

- Rachel Blount

*The key is getting more women in decision making roles. In 2014, The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sports (TIDES) gave the Association Press Sports Editors its fourth consecutive "F" grade for gender hiring practices. TIDES data shows that men account for 90.1 percent of sports editors, 90.2 percent of assistant sports editors, 87.6 percent of sports columnists and 87.4 percent of sports reporters. Those are the people setting the agenda for coverage. While there are some male editors and columnists who believe it is important to cover women's sports, the vast majority view women's sports as far less worthy than men's sports. If coverage of women's sports is to increase, we need more women in these roles.*

*I tell people who want more coverage of women's sports to contact editors and reporters. They need evidence that people are interested and that there is a demand for these stories. Make your voices heard!"*

- Rachel Blount, Star Tribune Sports Reporter



*"Over the last 40 years, sports media scholars have produced a consistent body of evidence, which is quite unusual. The research studies show two very significant patterns: The first pattern has to do with amount of coverage. Even though females represent 40% of all sports participants nationwide, they only receive about 2-4% of all sports media coverage on average. The second pattern of portrayal has to do with the type of coverage within that 2-4% of media coverage. Female athletes, when compared to their male counterparts, are much more likely to be portrayed off the court, out of uniform and in highly sexualized poses. It has not mattered whether we look at high school and college or pro and Olympic sports."*

- Mary Jo Kane, Director of U of M's Tucker Center for Research on Girls and Women in Sports

## Interpreting the Data cont.

*"The statistics regarding coverage of men's sports vs. women's sports are upsetting but unfortunately not surprising. Conversations about sports almost always center around men's teams. Women's sports are rarely discussed, and when they are, they're treated as a lesser version of men's sports or even as a joke. Women who play sports have to fight for recognition - whether that comes in the form of media coverage, attendance, salaries, or simply being viewed as skilled athletes worthy of attention. Exceptions exist, but it is clear that invisibility and devaluation are the norm for women athletes.*

*Disparities in media coverage between men and women athletes are a direct reflection of gender inequity in larger society. The majority of sports editors and journalists are men. Sports fans prefer men's sports by a wide margin, as evidenced by ticket sales and TV viewership. Opportunities and incentives for competitive women athletes to continue their careers professionally are scant. The National Women's Hockey League (NWHL) recently cut their already paltry \$15,000 salaries in half due to financial constraints. For reference, the federal poverty threshold for a one-person household is approximately \$12,000. The average National Hockey League (NHL) player makes over \$2 million per year.*

*As an advocate for gender equity and female athletes, the gender disparities in sports coverage leaves me feeling frustrated, exhausted, and devalued. Women have made considerable progress in the arena of athletics but it is obvious that major barriers remain, ones that cannot be dismantled without addressing gender inequity as a whole."*

- Stephanie Richardson, MSW Graduate Intern at the U of M's Center for Women and life-long hockey player



## Go Figure

**37.1%**

of all journalists are women<sup>1</sup>

**40%**

of high school girls are athletes. Before Title IX, 3.7% of high school girls were athletes<sup>2</sup>

**\$109,500**

was the 2015 WNBA salary cap. The NBA was capped at \$16.407 million<sup>3</sup>

# Title IX

**“No person  
in the United States  
shall, on the basis of sex,  
be excluded from  
participation in, be denied  
the benefits of, or be subjected  
to discrimination under  
any education  
program or activity  
receiving Federal financial assistance”**

*- Title IX of the Education Amendments Act  
of 1972*

## **Application to Athletics<sup>4</sup>:**

- 1. Participation:** Athletes must be provided equitable opportunities to participate in sports. Title IX does not require institutions to offer identical sports but an equal opportunity to play.
- 2. Scholarships:** Scholarships student-athletes receive must proportional to their participation.
- 3. Other benefits:** Equal treatment of all student-athletes is required in the provisions of: equipment and supplies; scheduling; travel and daily allowance; tutoring; coaching, locker rooms, and facilities; medical and training provisions; housing and dining services; publicity and promotions; and support services and student-athlete recruitment.

## **Effect on Athletics<sup>5</sup>:**

1. Female participation in sports increased in the last 40 years, with **ten times** as many high school female athletes and **six times** as many collegiate female athletes. This demonstrates that females are interested in sports and deserve equal participation.
2. Participation in sports leads to many benefits for both genders, including **lowered** levels of **risky behavior**, **higher** rates of **academic success** and a **boost in health**.
3. There is still work to do! Male's sports still receive more money, athletic opportunities are not equal across the races, and the number of female coaches is dropping.

# Advancing the Ball

## *Achieving Gender Equity within Sports*

### **Sports Producers, Commentators and Anchors<sup>6</sup>**

1. Dedicate proportionate coverage to men's and women's sports based on the total number of sports played by each gender.
2. Present sports stories with the same quality of reporting, regardless of gender. This includes technical quality and verbal presentation.
3. Open sports anchor positions up to applicants who are will follow through on proportionate and equal quality coverage. It is hard to fake excitement. Therefore applicants should show equal passion for both male and female sports.

### **Parents<sup>7</sup>**

1. Start sports equity conversations at your child's school. Talk with other parents, gather facts and meet with the Athletic Director to get a good idea of where your child's school is in terms of equity.
2. If the school is unresponsive to meeting equity needs, further action may need to be taken. Advocate with the school board and contact legislators if necessary.

### **Citizens**

1. Let the media know that you are interested in women's sports<sup>8</sup>.
2. Submit articles to your newspaper about the disparity and women's sports in general.

#### **Footnotes**

1. American Society of News Editors, "Newsroom Diversity Survey- 2015 Census." Available at: <http://asne.org/content.asp?contentid=144>
2. Women's Sports Foundation, "Get your game on, girls! Celebrating the 40th anniversary of Title IX." Available at: <https://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/media-center/press-releases/press-release-june-23-2011/>
3. McCullough, S. "Equality in the NBA and WNBA." Available at <http://www.slideshare.net/SamanthaMcCullough2/equality-in-the-nba-wnba-45491260>
4. NCAA, "Title IX Frequently Asked Questions." Available at: <http://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/inclusion/title-ix-frequently-asked-questions#title>
5. National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education (NCWGE), "Title IX and Athletics: Proven Benefits, Unfounded Objections." Available at: <https://www.ncwge.org/TitleIX40/Athletics.pdf>
6. Sage Publications: Communications & Sport 2015. "'It's Dude Time!' A Quarter Century of Excluding Women's Sports in Televised News and Highlight Shows." Available at <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/2167479515588761>
7. Women's Sports Foundation, "Step By Step: A Practical Guide to Assessing and Achieving Gender Equity in School Sports." Available at: <https://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/athletes/for-athletes/know-your-rights/parents/step-by-step/>
8. Referring to Rachel Blount's comments on page 2.

# Legislative Update

The 2017 Minnesota legislative session began on January 3, 2017, and will end on or before May 22, 2017. By Groundhog Day, 1,410 bills had been introduced—799 in the House of Representatives and 611 in the Senate.

Here is an overview of bills that have particular impact on women's economic security. "HF" stands for "House File," and "SF" for "Senate File." Each HF and SF number given is a live link that will take you to the wording of the bill, and show its authors and status. When a bill is noted like this [HF64/SF212](#), that means the bills are "companion" bills; i.e., identical bills have been introduced in the House and the Senate.

## Child Care

Child care is a major legislative focus this year. Not only is child care generally not affordable, it is sometimes, especially in Greater Minnesota, not even available, particularly for infants.

A number of child care bills have been introduced, and it is expected that more will be introduced soon.

[HF64/SF212](#) would increase the dependent care tax credit. [HF219](#) gives priority to homeless families for the state Basic Sliding Fee (BSF) child care financial assistance program for low-income families. (There is not enough BSF funding to serve all eligible families, so priorities are important.)

[HF724/SF560](#) would fully fund the BSF program, so that all eligible families would receive child care subsidies and there would be no waiting list. This same bill would also allow "portability" of BSF funding, ending the current situation where a family is receiving BSF assistance in one county, but when they move to a different county that has a waiting list for BSF, they lose their child care assistance.

[HF604](#) repeals the right of family child care providers to unionize. In actuality, family child care providers have not elected a union to represent them, and without this, the current statutory authority of family child care providers to unionize expires on June 30, 2017, regardless of HF604.

An interesting bill ([SF448](#)) would re-fund the At Home Infant Care Program (AHIC). AHIC was established in 1997, but there has been no funding for it since 2007. The At Home Infant Care Program provides monthly payments for up to 12

months to a parent who stays home to care for a newborn. The amount of the assistance is 90 percent of what the Basic Sliding Fee assistance would be if the parent instead went back to work that first year and had the baby in child care.

A study in the year 2000, three years after the At Home Infant Care Program began, found a significant savings to the state. The parents choosing to stay home not only received less than the state would have paid under BSF if the parent had gone back to work, but the parents who stayed home were also taking care of their other pre-school children, and taking them off the BSF program. Average time that the AHIC parents took off was five months.

## Racial and Ethnic Equity

Last year saw a major legislative effort to address racial and ethnic economic disparities in our state. "Equity" remains a strong concern of legislators this year.

[HF 577](#) provides grants for pilot projects in the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota to encourage and support girls of color, low-income girls, and girls with disabilities in exploring and pursuing STEM education and careers.

[HF142](#) requires a Disparity Impact Analysis of all proposed legislation and of the Governor's budget proposal. State agencies would also be required to report regularly on actions they have taken to address disparities.

[HF144](#) provides support services for students that are first-generation college students, low-income, or disabled. [HF280](#) requires a better way to measure performance of schools with a large percentage of students who have difficulty in the traditional education system, like homeless or pregnant students, students who have children, who are victims of sex abuse, or who are ESL students. [HF341](#) would prevent over-enrollment of minority students and English learners in special education or disproportionate dismissal of minority students.

[HF620](#) provides funding to foster economic development in minority and new immigrant communities in St. Paul's East Side. [HF751](#) provides funding to increase the African American cultural competency of persons seeking a teaching license.

## Women's Health

The second bill to pass this session is a new law ([Minnesota Session Laws 2017, Chapter 2 – signed by Governor Dayton on January 26, 2017](#)) that provides relief for Minnesotans with rising health insurance premiums. The law requires health insurers to subsidize qualifying customers' premiums. The state will reimburse insurance insurers for these subsidies. The subsidies result in a 25% discount to the approximately 120,000 Minnesotans who buy their health insurance as individuals (rather than having health insurance provided through an employer, being on Medicare, or on state health insurance programs for low-income residents, like MinnesotaCare or Medical Assistance) and who don't receive federal subsidies. Approximately \$310 million was appropriated for this legislation.

There are numerous other health care bills introduced. [HF420/SF285](#) would increase eligibility for MinnesotaCare (a state health care insurance program for low-income residents); [HF656](#) allows health insurance premiums to be tax-deductible; [HF496/SF365](#) would allow all state residents to have health insurance through the state employee's plan; and a number of bills would establish a new state health insurance plan that would guarantee affordable health insurance to all residents ([HF488/SF220](#), [SF221](#), [SF222](#), [SF223](#)).

There are also bills that would require health insurance plans to cover the cost of prescription contraceptives ([HF795/SF409](#)), bills that place additional requirements or restrictions on abortion services ([HF601](#), [SF702](#), [SF703](#), [SF704](#), [SF705](#)) and a bill ([HF411/SF281](#)) that would repeal the "informed consent" requirement for abortion.

## Student Loan Debt/Education Expenses

Numerous bills would help people pay for college and manage student debt. Some allow a tax exemption or tax credits for contributions to college savings plans and for student loan payments. [HF25](#) would help students of closed, private, for-profit colleges, requiring that credits from these closed colleges be transferred to the U of M and MnSCU and extends eligibility of students of these closed colleges for state financial aid programs, child care grants, and Minnesota GI Bill benefits.

[HF21](#) creates a State Student Loan Ombudsper-

son to handle complaints from borrowers and help borrowers understand their rights & responsibilities.

[HF319/SF109](#) would provide student loan forgiveness for those who work, post-college, in Greater Minnesota.

Several bills would help residents pay for their children's K-12 education expenses. ([HF255/SF416](#), [HF386/SF256](#), [HF387](#))

## Older Women

Many bills have been introduced that would exempt social security benefits from taxable income—either immediately or on a phased-out basis. [HF9/SF19](#) and [HF213/SF286](#) are two of these bills that have already been heard in House committees.

[HF225](#) increases eligibility for Medical Assistance (Minnesota's health insurance program for low-income residents) for older, blind, or disabled Minnesotans. There are bills to encourage savings for retirement and purchase of long term care insurance.

[SF637](#) funds a pilot program for health and wellness services to elderly East Africans.

## Supportive Workplaces for Parents

The Working Parents Act, which was introduced last year, but didn't pass, has been re-introduced as [HF239](#). This bill provides for wage theft protection and mandates paid family leave, earned sick and safe time, and work schedules that are predictable and flexible, with advance notice of schedule changes.

Another bill, [HF315/SF454](#), takes a different approach to paid leave by giving tax credits for employers who offer paid parental leave and tax credits to employees for forgone wages when they take unpaid parental leave. ***HF315 has been approved by its first committee, and will be heard next by the House Tax Committee.***

[HF600/SF580](#) would prohibit local governments from requiring private employers to pay a wage higher than the state minimum wage, from requiring paid or unpaid leave, and from setting requirements for private employers pertaining to work schedules or any other employment benefit or work condition. This prohibition would be retroactive to January 1, 2016, and thus nullify the earned sick and safe time ordinances of St. Paul and Minneapolis. [HF600/SF580](#) is referred to as

“preemption” or the “Uniform State Labor Standards Act.” **Both [HF600](#) and [SF580](#) have been approved by their first committees. [HF600](#) has a hearing before the House Government Operations Committee on Wednesday, Feb. 8, at 10:15 a.m.**

## Poverty

Women are more likely to live in poverty than men, especially single mothers and older women. There are a number of bills that would affect those who are poor. [HF357](#) would expand General Assistance eligibility to persons who are unemployed and looking for work and to families with children who exceed the 60-month limit on MFIP (the Minnesota Family Investment Program) eligibility. [General Assistance is a state program that provides cash assistance to individuals or childless couples who are not eligible for federally funded assistance programs, but who are unable to provide for themselves.] MFIP provides cash and food assistance to low-income families with children.

[HF28](#) would require drug and alcohol screening for certain MFIP and General Assistance applicants. Persons with two DWIs within the last five years would be ineligible for MFIP or General Assistance for three years.

[HF71](#) would count a fetus as “a human being” when determining household size for purposes of Medical Assistance.

[HF516/SF28](#) increases the state Working Family Credit—a refundable tax credit for working individuals whose income is below a certain level.

## Gender Wage Gap

Under current law, after 30 working days “replacement teachers” are considered “public employees,” with the protections and benefits granted public employees, including the protection of pay equity. [HF50](#) increases that to 60 working days. Teachers, including “replacement teachers,” are disproportionately women.

[HF758](#) funds the ongoing SciTechsperience paid STEM internships for college students, offered through the Minnesota High Tech Association. One goal is to increase participation of women and other underserved populations in STEM.

## Women-Owned Businesses

[HF797](#) funds a grant to WomenVenture to provide business training specifically tailored to Hispanic, African American, Hmong, and American

Indian women, delivered at locations in their communities and taught by trainers from their communities. **A hearing on [HF797](#) is scheduled in the House Jobs Committee at 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 8.**

[HF89](#), with an author's amendment being offered on February 8, amends the existing Small Business Investment Tax Credit (also called the “Angel Tax Credit”) to give priority to investments in businesses in cities that do not receive local government aid payments from the state. Minnesota's Angel Tax Credit provides a 25 percent credit to investors in startup companies focused on high technology, new proprietary technology, or a new proprietary product, process or service in specified fields. Fifty percent of these tax credits are currently reserved every year until October 1 for investment in three targeted categories: businesses in Greater Minnesota, minority-owned businesses, and women-owned businesses. This bill would set the total credit amount at \$20 million beginning in tax year 2018, and reduce the amount reserved for the targeted categories to \$5 million per year. Priority for the remaining \$15 million would go to businesses that are in municipalities not certified to receive local government aid. In 2015 and 2016, targeted category businesses used less than \$5 million per year in angel tax credits. **A hearing on [HF89](#) is scheduled in the House Jobs Committee at 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 8.**

[SF234](#) provides grants for statewide broadband. Lack of broadband access was cited as a priority economic concern of women in Greater Minnesota during this year's OESW listening sessions.

## Equal Rights Amendment

A number of “ERA” bills have been introduced, some calling for a state constitutional ERA amendment, and some asking Congress to remove the deadline for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment by the states. ([HF189](#), [HF313/SF101](#), [HF356/SF229](#), [SF224](#))

## Marriage and Divorce

[HF302](#), the “Cooperative Divorce” bill, would allow divorce by completion of an on-line form, without involvement of attorneys or the court system.