

# Caucus of Women Legislators

Fourth Quarter 2007

State House, Room 460 • Boston, Massachusetts 02133 • Ph: (617) 722-2266

## Past and Present Legislators Gather for *157, And Counting* Reunion

### Former Representative

**Katharine Kane** smiled at both the familiar and unfamiliar faces around the room as she received applause. Representative Marty Walz (D-Boston), Ms. Kane's state representative and House Chair of the Caucus of Women Legislators, had just recognized Ms. Kane's legislative service from 1965 to 1968, some 40 years ago. Ms. Kane served under former House Speaker John McCormack when Lyndon Johnson was President of the United States. She took part in the state's ratification of the 15th amendment to the Bill of Rights,



Former Representative Anne Paulsen, Representative Lida Harkins, Former Representatives Barbara Gardner and Barbara Hildt (left to right) chat at *157, And Counting*.

which allowed for the Vice President to

succeed the President in the case of the latter's removal, resignation or death. In the room full of past and present female state representatives and senators, Ms. Kane was the earliest-serving legislator present at that night's event held at the College Club of Boston, and is one of the earliest-serving who is still alive today.

Titled *157, And Counting* after the 157 women legislators who have served in the Massachusetts General Court, the October 11 reception and dinner brought together former and current women legislators for the first reunion of its kind in recent

(Continued on page 4)

## Brown Bag Lunches Spotlight Lung Cancer in Women and Child Hunger

### Caucus Hosts Lung Cancer Alliance for October Discussion on Women's Health

\* \* \*

**O**ver lunch on October 25, legislators and staff joined co-chairs Diane Legg and Joanne O'Connor of the Massachusetts chapter of the Lung Cancer Alliance for a discussion on lung cancer in women.

Following an introduction by Senator Susan C. Fargo (D-Lincoln), Senate Chair of the Caucus of Women Legisla-

tors and the Committee on Public Health, both women shared how each had been touched by lung cancer. Ms. Legg is a survivor of the disease. Her close friend, Susan Levinsky,

(Continued on page 5)

### Dr. Deborah Frank Speaks to Legislators and Staff About Child Hunger

\* \* \*

**I**n introducing guest speaker **Dr. Deborah A. Frank** to legislators and staff gathered for the Caucus of Women Legislators' November brown bag lunch on child hunger, Representative Cory Atkins (D-Concord) explained how the idea for that day's briefing came about. In late 2006, Dr. Frank had contacted Representative Atkins after she was quoted in *The Boston Globe*, responding to a report that found one in every three children in 35 poor communities around the Commonwealth was going hungry. "I was appalled," Representative Atkins said. "Child hunger should be a zero-tolerance issue. We have the resources to make sure that every child in this Commonwealth is fed," she was quoted as saying. The meeting between legislators, staff, and Dr. Frank, a recognized leader in the field of child development and nutrition, was one of the results of that important

(Continued on page 5)

### Save the Dates!

**February 13**  
**Go Red for Women**

**February 27**  
**Annual Meeting**

# Massachusetts Caucus of Women Legislators

## 2007 Co-Chairs

Representative Martha M. Walz

Senator Susan C. Fargo

## Treasurer

Representative Harriett L. Stanley

## Board of Directors

Representative Willie Mae Allen

Senator Harriette L. Chandler

Representative Mary E. Grant

Representative Kay Khan

Representative Denise Provost

Representative Mary S. Rogeness

## Executive Director

Diana Hwang

## Members of House

Willie Mae Allen  
Cory Atkins  
Ruth B. Balsler  
Jennifer M. Callahan  
Linda Dean Campbell  
Christine E. Canavan  
Cheryl A. Coakley-Rivera  
Geraldine Creedon  
Jennifer L. Flanagan  
Linda Dorcea Forry  
Gloria L. Fox  
Colleen M. Garry  
Susan W. Gifford  
Anne M. Gobi  
Mary E. Grant  
Patricia A. Haddad  
Lida E. Harkins  
Rachel Kaprielian  
Kay Khan  
Barbara A. L'Italien  
Elizabeth A. Malia  
Sarah Peake  
Alice H. Peisch  
Elizabeth A. Poirier  
Karyn E. Polito  
Denise Provost  
Kathi-Anne Reinstein  
Pam Richardson  
Mary S. Rogeness  
Rosemary Sandlin  
Joyce A. Spilotis  
Harriett L. Stanley  
Marie P. St. Fleur  
Ellen Story  
Patricia A. Walrath  
Martha M. Walz  
Alice K. Wolf

## Members of Senate

Gale D. Candaras  
Harriette L. Chandler  
Cynthia Stone Creem  
Susan C. Fargo  
Patricia D. Jehlen  
Joan M. Menard  
Therese Murray  
Pamela P. Resor  
Karen E. Spilka  
Susan C. Tucker  
Marian Walsh  
Dianne Wilkerson

## *A Message from the Co-Chairs*

*Dear Colleagues, Staff, and Friends:*

*Happy New Year to all! We hope you had a wonderful holiday season and survived the first snowstorms of our early-arriving winter.*

*As we enter the new year, we have news to report from the last few months and upcoming plans to share with you.*

*First, we welcome the Caucus' two newest appointees to the Commission on the Status of Women, Azell Murphy Cavaan and Pam Malumphy, and congratulate a familiar face, Elizabeth Houlihan, on her re-appointment to the Commission. More information about each of these women can be found on page 4. We also want to recognize and thank the members of our Screening Committee for their hard work in reviewing and interviewing candidates for our three open positions this year: Co-Chairs, Anne Gobi and Mary Grant, as well as Willie Mae Allen, Kay Khan, Rosemary Sandlin, Harriett Stanley, and Alice Wolf.*

*Our brown bag lunches in 2007 brought a number of important issues to the legislature's attention, and the first one planned for 2008 on January 17 spotlights the Massachusetts Public Higher Education Initiative in Nursing Education, an innovative home-grown program that is being replicated around the country. With a severe shortage of nurses in the state, compounded by a shortage of nurse educators, our healthcare suffers. The Nursing Initiative aims to remedy both problems through the implementation of ground-breaking workforce development training and program development. We hope you will join us for this special briefing.*

*February 13 is Go Red for Women Day at the State House. The Caucus is proud to once again sponsor this important event that spotlights the issue of women and heart disease, the #1 killer of women nationwide. Also ahead is the Caucus' Annual Meeting, scheduled for February 27, and a trip to MCI-Framingham to discuss issues pertinent to women in prison. A special report release, tour of the facility, and Q&A session with new Department of Corrections Commissioner Harold Clarke is planned.*

*Needless to say, we're not wasting any time in starting 2008.*

*We always invite your ideas and feedback. Best wishes to all for a happy and healthy New Year.*

*Sincerely,*

*Marty Walz and Susan Fargo*

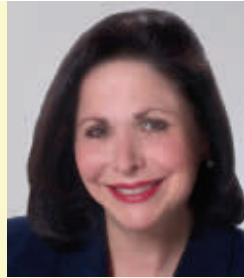
## **ABOUT THE CAUCUS OF WOMEN LEGISLATORS**

The Massachusetts Caucus of Women Legislators is a bipartisan, bicameral group of female legislators, the mission of which is to enhance the economic status and equality of women and to encourage and foster women in all levels of government.

# CONGRATULATIONS!

Members share with us news of their achievements!

☆ In late September, the Springfield Education Association (SEA) presented **Senator Gale D. Candaras** (D-Wilbraham) with its Friend of Education Award. Timothy Collins, SEA President, thanked her for her support of “public education, the children and the teachers in Springfield Public Schools...for many years.” Most notably, Senator Candaras’ “hard work and strong advocacy was one of the driving forces behind the SEA achieving a fair contract for the City’s educators,” he said.



☆ **Representative Geraldine Creedon** (D-Brockton) was honored by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) as Legislator of the Year for 2007. In announcing Representative Creedon as this year’s honoree, the MASC recognized her leadership as Vice Chair of the Education Committee and described her as a “forceful advocate” for key public education issues, including school building assistance funding and meaningful reimbursement rates.



☆ The Women Legislators’ Lobby/Women’s Action for New Directions (WiLL/WAND) presented **Representative Kay Khan** (D-Newton) with its Pacesetters Award at its National Conference held in Washington, D.C. from September 30 to October 2. Representative Khan, the Massachusetts State Director for WiLL/WAND, was honored for her “noteworthy legislative service, her contributions to sound progressive policy, and her groundbreaking leadership in the state.”



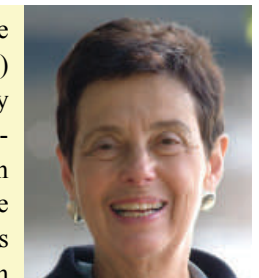
☆ This fall, **Representative Marie P. St. Fleur** (D-Boston), along with Senator Thomas M. McGee (D-Lynn), was honored with the Massachusetts Recreation and Parks Association’s 2007 Legislative Award and recognized as Legislator of the Year for 2007 by the YMCA. Both organizations lauded their work as Co-Chairs of the Massachusetts Special Commission on After School and Out of School Time, which released its final report, *Our Common Wealth: Building a Future for Our Children and Youth*, in mid-November.



☆ On October 11, the Community Dispute Settlement Center honored **Representative Martha M. Walz** (D-Boston) at its annual Spirit Mediation Gala for “her continued public service in the area of mediation and conflict resolution.”



☆ In December, Representative **Alice K. Wolf** (D-Cambridge) was named Legislator of the Year by the Massachusetts chapter of the National Organization of Women (NOW). In honoring Representative Wolf, the group praised her efforts “throughout her career” to “champion legislation that advances women’s equality.” “2007 was no different,” Victoria Steinberg, Co-President of Massachusetts NOW, said, citing her leadership on pay equity and comprehensive health education legislation.



---

# Caucus Makes 2007-2008 Appointments to Commission on the Status of Women

**T**he Caucus of Women Legislators has appointed Azell Murphy Cavaan and Pam Malumphy and reappointed Elizabeth Houlihan to the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women (MCSW).



*Azell Murphy Cavaan  
Springfield, Massachusetts*



*Elizabeth Houlihan  
Falmouth, Massachusetts*



*Pam Malumphy  
Pittsfield, Massachusetts*

cluded a 27-year career as the Vice President of Sales and Service and as Vice President/General Manager of Operations. Mrs. Houlihan was appointed to the Commission in 2005. She was elected and has served as Vice Chair and then Chair of the Commission. Under her leadership,

Ms. Cavaan of Springfield serves as the Community Relations Director for the City of Springfield. She has an extensive background in news media, working for six years as a reporter for The Boston Herald and four years covering local government news for Springfield's The Republican. As an Adjunct Professor at Northeastern University, she also taught news writing and news analysis classes to undergraduate journalism students.

Ms. Malumphy, a Pittsfield resident, is the Berkshire County Regional Director for the Massachusetts Office of Business Development and served as the Chairwoman of the Berkshire County Commission on the Status of Women. She is a former Pittsfield city councilor and also serves on the city's Planning Board and Board of Health. For her many professional and community efforts, she was named the 2005-2006 Woman of Achievement by Berkshire Business and Professional Women.

Mrs. Houlihan of Falmouth is President of E.H. Houlihan & Associates, an executive search and business consulting firm. Previously, she was the Chief Operating Officer for CO Space, Inc. based in Burlington, MA. Mrs. Houlihan was also a Senior Manager at Verizon Corporation, then known as Nynex. At Nynex, she con-

the Commission expanded its annual Unsung Heroines event to honor almost 300 women from across the Commonwealth and launched the Massachusetts Women's Resource and Referral Network, an online database that provides Massachusetts women with information about local, regional and state resources. As Chair, she introduced the Commissioner Emerita position to honor women who previously served on the Commission and to keep them involved in MCSW activities.

In addition to Ms. Cavaan, Ms. Malumphy, and Mrs. Houlihan, the Caucus' MCSW appointees are Lianne Cook, Angela Menino, and Carol Pimentel.

*About the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women*  
*The MCSW is an independent state agency that was legislatively created in 1998 to advance women of the Commonwealth to full equality in all areas of life and to promote their rights and opportunities. The 19 Commissioners are appointed by one of four appointing authorities: the Caucus of Women Legislators (6), the Governor (5), the Speaker of the House (4), and the Senate President (4).*

---

## Caucus of Women Legislators Hosts 157, And Counting

*(continued from page 1)*

memory. Surrounded by black-and-white photos of colleagues and former colleagues at State House events, former Representative Kane met and mingled with freshmen Representatives Linda Dean Campbell (D-Methuen) and Sarah Peake (D-Provincetown). Former Governor Jane Swift and former State Treasurer Shannon O'Brien chatted while former Representative Ruth Provost and Representative Denise Provost (D-Somerville) laughed about their shared last name. (The two are not related.)

As Representative Walz told attendees in her welcoming remarks, there was a particular inspiration behind the organization of the night's event: to strengthen and build on this network of women who share the unique experience of serving in the Massachusetts legislature.

The numbers Representative Walz shared with the group were staggering: 157 women have served in the state's legislature, but over 23,000 men have done the same since statehood. Though the Commonwealth now has its first

woman Senate President in Senate President Therese Murray (D-Plymouth), no woman has served as House Speaker for longer than a day. Former Representative Sylvia Donaldson was granted that honor on February 18, 1926. And, though former Senators Jane Swift and Shannon O'Brien rose to become the first female Governor and State Treasurer in Massachusetts history, respectively, there is still much to be accomplished for women in the Commonwealth.

157...and counting.

# October Brown Bag Lunch with Lung Cancer Alliance

(continued from page 1)

was diagnosed with an advanced form of the cancer a few months before her own early diagnosis. In 2005, nine months after Ms. Levinsky learned she suffered from the disease, she passed away. That Ms. Legg survived and her friend did not felt unfair and wrong, she said. For Ms. O'Connor, it was her sister Kathy who battled the disease. After complaining of back pain and visiting a chiropractor, Kathy was told that she had stage IV lung cancer. The doctors found skeletal tumors throughout most parts of her body, and she was given six months to live. Kathy died two weeks after her 55th birthday.

Needless to say, these experiences drive Ms. Legg's and Ms. O'Connor's efforts to increase awareness of the disease and affect health policy with regard to lung cancer. Both women testified to the critical need for increased research into lung cancer treatment and early detection methods. 70% of lung cancer diagnoses are late-stage diagnoses,

Ms. Legg and Ms. O'Connor told attendees, and a late-stage diagnosis means likely death. A general screening system has yet to be established.

There is an important gender component to lung cancer incidence. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in Massachusetts and U.S. women, killing as many women as breast cancer and all gynecological cancers combined. Even more alarming is the fact that 20% of lung cancer victims have never smoked, and almost 75% of those people are women. Doctors believe that women are more susceptible to the disease because of the existence of estrogen receptors in lung cancer cells, which work to fuel tumor growth in women. This would make risk factors such as second-hand smoke or air pollution more toxic for women than for men.

Ms. Legg commented on the stigma attached to the disease: "When people find out you have [lung cancer], they immediately ask, 'Did you smoke?'" They assume you did something to "deserve" it. That stigma

has translated into a lack of funding for lung cancer research, Ms. Legg said.

In early November, Senator Fargo filed legislation addressing the lack of research dollars for lung cancer prevention and treatment. Co-sponsored by 29 Senators and 52 Representatives, S. 2454, *An Act Establishing the Commonwealth Lung Cancer Early Detection and Treatment Research Fund*, taps a portion of the state's cigarette excise revenue to institute lung cancer screening programs for underserved populations and those at high-risk of developing the disease, Senator Fargo explained to brown bag lunch attendees. The money will also support research on targeted therapies, chemoprevention, and disparities.

Laurie Fenton Ambrose, President and CEO of the Lung Cancer Alliance, heralded the introduction of S. 2454 as a "watershed moment for the entire lung cancer community and all of those at risk for the disease in Massachusetts."

The bill will be heard by the Joint Committee on Revenue in early 2008.

---

## Caucus Hosts Child Hunger Discussion

(continued from page 1)

meeting over the phone.

In her briefing on child hunger, Dr. Frank, Founder/Director of the Grow Clinic at Boston Medical Center and Principal Investigator at the Children's Sentinel Nutrition Assessment Program (C-SNAP), explained that one of the challenges in raising awareness of the problem is that the physicalization of child hunger sometimes works to mask the problem. "You see a child with a big head and a skinny body, and you think you see a cute 2 year-old." In actuality, "that cute 2 year-old is an underfed 3 year-old," Dr. Frank said.

Child nutrition is vital for more than survival purposes, Dr. Frank told attendees. "Poor nutrition prevents kids from fighting infections, it affects their concentration at school, and it manifests itself as disruptive or violent behavior. "I always say that before you medicate them, feed them," Dr. Frank commented. "It's all intertwined."

Dr. Frank warned legislators and staff about the crisis many families find themselves in as winter arrives. Because of the skyrocketing costs of food and fuel this year, some families

will not be able to afford to both heat their homes and feed themselves. This either/or scenario is termed "the heat or eat crisis" and is scientifically documented. In general, "the food budget is the only fungible part of a family's budget, so when things get tight, food is the first thing to go," Dr. Frank explained.

Dr. Frank stressed the importance of providing emergency assistance to poor families who struggle to pay their heating bills and face this "heat or eat crisis." In early November, \$15 million of emergency home heating assistance for low-income and elderly residents was unanimously approved by the Massachusetts legislature. Dr. Frank believes more will be needed as the winter progresses.

She also expressed support for the proposed state housing tax credit plan, legislation to restore food stamp benefits to legal immigrants, and increased funding for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). "Energy, housing, and food" are the three central needs and expenses for every family, Dr. Frank explained. Relieving the problem of child hunger requires that all three needs are met.