

[PRINT ON YOUR PROGRAM LETTERHEAD - Reformat as necessary, try to keep it to 2 pages or less. At the end of first page, put - More - and then at the top of the second page, put a header saying, New Report Finds Law Fails Women and Girls, Page 2 of 2]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: [DATE HERE]

CONTACT: *(Add your name and phone number here as contact)*

Jill Miller, Women Work!, (202) 467-6346

Lela Shepard, National Women's Law Center, (202) 588-5180

New Report Finds Law Fails Women and Girls in [NAME STATE]

[ADD YOUR CITY, ST HERE IN PARENTHESES] Vocational programs for women and girls in [ADD STATE NAME HERE] are [ADD STATE RATING HERE, FOUND ON PAGE 17 OF REPORT, i.e. losing ground, failing, protected, etc.], according to a recently issued report by the Washington, DC-based nonprofit organization, National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education (NCWGE). *Invisible Again: The Impact of Changes in Federal Funding on Vocational Programs for Women and Girls* rates all states in their efforts to protect and strengthen programs that received funds through the federal Perkins law to provide women and girls with the training and skills needed to achieve economic self-sufficiency.

The cutbacks identified in this report mirror what is really happening here in [NAME YOUR CITY OR STATE], says [YOUR NAME], director of one such program in [YOUR CITY], [NAME PROGRAM]. These results prove that there is a great need in our community for state and federal support to assure that these programs don't fall by the wayside, especially now when the need for such programs is greater than ever, given the current economic climate.

More than half of the survey respondents reported cuts in their funding, and many programs had been forced to close their doors, eliminating even the promise of progress for local women and girls. Not one state was able to improve its programs under the 1998 law.

Prior to its reauthorization in 1998, provisions in the Perkins law aimed at ensuring equal access and opportunity in vocational education for women and girls and achieved great success, according to the NCWGE report. These provisions set aside money for programs to foster gender equity in vocational education and to provide various services, such as counseling, tuition assistance and child care. In addition, each state was required to fund a full-time employee to coordinate efforts to overcome gender bias and stereotyping in vocational education.

As a result of such provisions, hundreds of single parents and displaced homemakers in [YOUR STATE] successfully entered education and training programs and found employment. Nationally, thousands of women moved into careers traditionally dominated by men, and teen parents were able to access vocational programs. The 1998 Perkins law eliminated these important provisions.

In 2002 Congress is scheduled to reauthorize the Perkins law, as well as the 1996 welfare reform law. ***Invisible Again*** casts severe doubt on the ability of the current Perkins law to provide the support educational programs need to help female students gain the skills required to avoid a life of poverty. ***Invisible Again*** recommends steps that students, educators, advocates and policymakers can take on state and federal levels to ensure opportunities for women and girls to prepare for the workforce and achieve economic independence.

The **National Coalition of Women and Girls in Education** (NCWGE) is a national, nonprofit organization comprised of approximately 50 organizations dedicated to improving educational opportunities for women and girls. NCWGE is currently chaired by the National Women's Law Center, a nonprofit organization that has been working since 1972 to advance and protect women's legal rights at work, in school, and in virtually every aspect of their lives.

Invisible Again was coordinated by NCWGE's Vocational Education and Training Task Force, which is chaired by **Women Work! The National Network for Women's Employment**. Women Work! is a national, nonprofit organization that advocates for the economic security of women and families through policies, programs and partnerships. In addition to individuals throughout the country, Network members include more than 1,000 education, training and employment programs. Since 1978 Women Work! Network programs have helped more than 10 million women in transition gain the skills needed to compete in the workforce and become self-sufficient.

(Your program's name here) is one of more than 1,000 programs that make up the Women Work! Network nationwide. (Add paragraph about your program here, type of programs and services offered, type of people served, etc. Try to keep it to one paragraph. So the overall press release is no more than 2 pages long... Be sure to end with For more information about (program name), contact (name) at (phone).)

For more information or a copy of ***Invisible Again***, please contact Women Work! at (202) 467-6346. Copies of the publication can also be obtained from the NCWGE and Women Work! websites at **www.ncwge.org** and **www.womenwork.org**.

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