

# Civil Rights Commission Says Federal Effort To Combat Sex Discrimination Is Inadequate

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Federal effort to combat sex discrimination in education is inadequate according to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

The Commission's assessment is contained in a 78-page report released this week, "Enforcing Title IX," which evaluates HEW's enforcement of Title IX from 1977 to May 1980.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that receives Federal financial assistance. Approximately 20,000 school districts and institutions of higher education receive such funds. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) was responsible for ensuring that they complied with this important civil rights law. In May 1980, this responsibility, together with the basic enforcement processes used in

HEW, passed to the new Department of Education (ED).

Although the study shows that HEW's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) improved its management systems and productivity during the last three years, it concluded that Title IX enforcement is "still unduly slow." It shows that HEW failed to comply with a major court order because it took too long to resolve policy questions and that compliance reviews planned for fiscal 1980 were "irretrievably" behind schedule, well before the end of the year. According to the report, reviews to resolve complaints of sex discrimination in intercollegiate athletics, one such complaint dating back to 1972, began only six weeks before the date they were originally to have been completed.

The Commission recommends that ED reassess OCR's staff resources in light of falling

productivity figures since fiscal 1979 and that it stop scheduling more compliance reviews than can be completed within the fiscal year.

The report finds that schools have not received enough guidance on how to comply with Title IX and that OCR has not kept its commitment to inform the public of Title IX enforcement developments.

The commission recommends that a comprehensive "civil rights policy reporter" be published in fiscal 1981 and updated quarterly. The Commission notes that, in order to meet the public's need for information, such a compilation should include and cross-reference all documents relevant to enforcement policy under Title IX, as well as Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The report points out that although data

management has been improved, OCR still cannot fully evaluate the status of Title IX compliance or its own effectiveness unless staff reads through each case file. In particular, the report cites OCR's inability to identify all the violations of Title IX it has found and the remedies it has required schools to undertake.

The Commission recommends several steps to improve data management, such as collecting more data from colleges

and universities. Data now collected do not indicate possible sex, race, or handicap discrimination in such areas as financial aid, student employment, nondegree-granting programs, and student services.

Another major finding in the report is that HEW has referred few Title IX cases to the Department of Justice (DOJ) and that DOJ has refused to take any of them to court.

The Commission recommends that ED and

DOJ agree upon the types of cases to be referred and take other steps to improve communication and cooperation.

The Commission says that a thorough review of the Title IX enforcement program should be one of ED's top priorities. It emphasizes that its recommendations could strengthen enforcement not only of Title IX but of other civil rights laws.

The Commission on Civil Rights is an independent, bipartisan, fact-

finding agency concerned with discrimination or denial of equal protection of the laws because of race, color, religion, sex, age, handicap or national origin.

Members of the Commission are Chairman Arthur S. Flemming; Vice Chair Mary Frances Berry, professor of history and law and senior fellow at the Institute for the Study of Educational Policy at Howard University, Washington, D.C.; Stephen Horn, president

of California State University, Long Beach; Blandina Cardenas Ramirez, director of development at the Inter-Cultural Development Research Association, San Antonio; Jill S. Ruckelshaus, former special assistant to the President for Woman's affairs, Washington, D.C.; and Murray Saltzman, Rabbi, Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, Baltimore. Louis Nunez is staff director.



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WHERE: CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL  
TIME: 7:30 P.M.

The Durham City Council will hold a public hearing to receive comments on a proposed St. Theresa Redevelopment Plan. The St. Theresa Project Area is outlined in the map below. Activities in the Project Area include housing rehabilitation, acquisition of land, demolition and removal of structures, relocation of displaced families and individuals, reconstruction of streets and sidewalks and other improvements to make the land available for development. Any person or organization interested in the revitalization and preservation of the St. Theresa neighborhood will be afforded opportunities to comment on the Redevelopment Plan. For more information call the Community Development Department at 683-4160.



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