

SHORT TITLE: Requiring adoption of a policy establishing gender-neutral language standards for legislative drafting; distribution.

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 44th Legislature (1994)

SENATE CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION NO. 072

By: Monson, Stipe, Long (Ed)
and Brown of the Senate

and

Boyd (Betty), Steidley,
Boyd (Laura) and McCorkell
of the House

AS INTRODUCED

A Concurrent Resolution stating legislative intent that the Oklahoma Statutes reflect gender-neutral language; requiring adoption of a policy establishing gender-neutral language standards for legislative drafting; requiring certain training; and directing distribution.

WHEREAS, gender bias is a source of harm for Oklahoma citizens, and the continuing insidious effects of gender bias are well documented by current statistics relating to all aspects of life, including education, health, welfare, crime, employment, family and financial well-being; and

WHEREAS, the influence of language in perpetuating gender stereotypes and bias has been well documented; and

WHEREAS, there are practical and sensible writing norms which can be easily adapted to eliminate gender bias from written communications; and

WHEREAS, the Oklahoma Statutes should serve as a model of communication in which gender-neutral language is used to balance gender differences in contexts so that harmful effects are eliminated; and

WHEREAS, the Oklahoma Legislature is an appropriate body to set the example in eliminating gender bias by adopting a policy setting gender-neutral standards for drafting legislation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE 44TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN:

THAT it is the intent of the Oklahoma Legislature that legislation shall reflect gender-neutral language.

THAT both houses of the Legislature will adopt policy beginning with the 1995 legislative session which establishes gender-neutral language standards for drafting new legislation and for revising existing statutes as they are amended by request.

THAT the gender-neutral standards shall reflect sensible and easily adaptable writing norms that have been shown to be effective in eliminating gender bias in written communications.

THAT, once the standards have been established, the staffs of the respective houses of the Legislature will be trained in the use of the gender-neutral writing norms so that the policy will be incorporated uniformly in legislative drafting.

THAT copies of this resolution be distributed to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

44-2-2427

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