



# League of Women Voters of Ventura County

Statement to Ventura County Board of Supervisors

Re: Commission on the Status of Women

By: League of Women Voters of Ventura County, Marion Schillo, Pres.

Members of the League of Women Voters of Ventura County strongly support the creation of a Commission on the Status of Women as part of our county government. The Commission would act as an information center, correlating information from many sources on matters pertaining to women. The Commission would bring recommendations and positive solutions to the Board of Supervisors regarding programs, policies and legislation that affect women. The aim would be to insure equal rights and equal opportunities for all women in Ventura county.

In planning to meet the needs of all its citizens, government must recognize the unique alterations that have occurred in women's lives. These are not fads or trends, but are serious and permanent changes. For example, the divorce rate and the increase in the number of unwed mothers have meant overwhelming change for the American woman.

In Ventura county in 1970 11.1% of all families were headed by a woman. The median earnings for a woman in the county were \$3,700 per year. 44% of the women in the county were working--the vast majority because of economic necessity. The issue for them was not raising their standard of living or buying "extras"; the issue was food and housing for their families.

These are 1970 census statistics. It will be interesting to note the new figures when the results of the 1980 census become available in the coming weeks.

Women in their new roles in society face tremendous obstacles. Many of their problems could be alleviated by a concerted effort to recognize that problems exist, and implementing plans to solve them. The Commission on the Status of Women would bring together the efforts of public and private agencies to do this.

We urge you to support the proposal for a commission so that women in Ventura county can reach their full potential as individuals and as citizens.