

Narrative for OPM

The Commission currently employs 74 full time employees. As of September 1, 2016 the Commission will have 71 full time employees. Two Regional Managers and one investigator have submitted notice of retirement. The Commission has been appropriated 85 positions. There are positions that require refill, salary adjustments that are needed at the Administration level and upgrades that are required in order for the Commission to provide its current services and meet its mission.

The mission of the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities is to eliminate discrimination in housing, employment, credit transactions, and in places of public accommodations such as schools, police departments, hospitals, etc. through law enforcement, advocacy and education and to ensure affirmative action on state funded projects and in hiring and promotions in state agencies. For years the Commission has attempted to meet its mission while being chronically understaffed and underfunded. Despite the many hurdles that the Commission has faced in carrying out its statutory responsibilities, the employees of the Commission have been the driving force in ensuring equality and equal opportunity in the state of Connecticut. The Commission continues to be understaffed and requires additional funding and refilling of positions in order to effectively meet its mission. The Commission desperately needs a legislative liaison, support staff positions and investigator positions to be refilled. While in the short term the Commission can continue to efficiently and effectively serve the general public, for long term success the Commission needs a larger appropriation of dollars.

This has been a banner year for the Commission. The Commission has reduced its aged inventory to less than 2% which is a feat that hasn't been accomplished for decades. The Commission has settlements of complaints totaling over ten million dollars this fiscal year. The Commission has ensured that there is equal opportunity on state funded contracts and municipal public works contracts and has trained businesses, non-profits and schools across the state.

Through the work of the Commission, on a yearly basis the CT General fund receives millions of dollars of federal funding. This year, due to the yeomen efforts of CHRO housing unit and the legal staff the Commission is eligible for additional funding from HUD. Specifically, the Commission is eligible for an additional \$47,000. That additional funding will be deposited into the general fund. We are being asked to contribute to the deficit mitigation plan and we have done so without hesitation even though the Commission remains severely understaffed. We are able to meet the guidelines of reducing our costs for the short term, but the rate of underfunding is not sustainable in the long term. According to the information provided to us by the Business unit we will be able to break even with retirements, no external refills, no backfills and no overtime. Anita Zakrewski is retiring as of 09/01, we received notice that Jim Flynn, Regional

Manager is retiring as of September 1 of 2016, Paul Gaynor, Regional Manager is retiring as of October 1, 2016 and Yvette Moore separated on 07/04/2016. This brings the FTE count to 71 and personal services to less than \$6,000,000. CHRO's FY17 allotment is \$6,024,547 which will leave a surplus. We will have to provide for some overtime and should be able to do so with the additional notice of retirement of a Regional Manager and the lapse in time it will take to get a refill.

Please be mindful that this is a temporary solution. In order to provide current services we require the refill of a clerical position, the refill of a legislative liaison, a refill of investigator positions, salary adjustments for the Administration, refill of at least one attorney position, and the upgrades of two clerical persons. Thank you for your time.