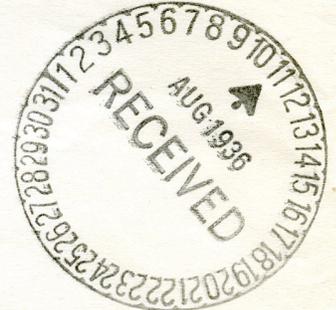


WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
618 HEARD BUILDING
PHOENIX, ARIZONA

August 10, 1936



Hon. B. B. Moeur,
Governor of Arizona,
Capitol Building,
Phoenix, Arizona.

My dear Governor:

A copy of a letter addressed to you under date of July 30th, by the Carpenters Union at Miami, Arizona, has been referred to my department.

The writer of this letter, Earl Shirley, recently sent in a protest to the Works Progress Administration along the same line, and I replied to this protest in a lengthy communication, explaining why it is impossible for the WPA to pay women as much for work in the sewing room projects as is paid to men on construction projects.

Under an Act of Congress the WPA is compelled to pay the prevailing wage rate in the State. You are no doubt aware that this means the wages that prevail in any community for certain classes of work. It is true the Industrial Commission has set up a scale for public work of a construction nature. The WPA at this time is adhering to this scale as closely as possible. We are paying unskilled laborers 50¢ per hour, intermediate 75¢ skilled \$1.00 and professional and technical \$1.25.

When a copy of this tentative scale was sent to Washington we received a few complaints about it being too high. However, the scale was finally approved. In arriving at a prevailing wage for women, we were bound to take into consideration the pay women were receiving in private employment in the communities where our projects are located. After a survey of our Women's Department, ascertained that the prevailing wage for women over the State was approximately 25¢ per hour. This takes into consideration the women working in all classes of work, such as clerks in stores, waitresses, chamber maids and even in the higher brackets as stenographers and clerical help. A wage was set for WPA women's projects and non-construction projects at 36¢ per hour, and in order to secure the full amount of monthly earnings, each woman is entitled to, she is asked to work 122 hours per month. 36¢ per hour is considerably more than is paid to farm laborers and men and women in private employment.

The women in our sewing room projects in reality are compelled to work only approximately 88 hours per month, and

Handwritten calculations:
12 2
36 2
63 2
66 2
43 9 2

are asked to take training for approximately 34 hours per month. In this training period they are given the advantage of high-class instructors with the one view in mind to assist them to earn a living when the WPA program is over. I believe you will agree with me that this is a splendid idea and I do not think the Unions should complain about the small difference in hours between women working on light work in the sewing rooms, and the men who are working on heavy construction work on projects.

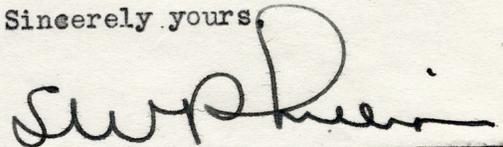
Another factor to take into consideration in arriving at a wage scale for women in our sewing room projects is the fact that the garments they produce are given away to needy people. In fact many of the women working in the sewing rooms receive garments for their families absolutely free of charge.

Another reason for setting the 36¢ per hour wage rate is the fact that WPA is not attempting to furnish steady employment for any group of people. We are merely operating as a stop-gap to assist people until such time as they can be absorbed in private employment. You can readily see if we were compelled to pay 50¢ per hour to women in our sewing rooms, there would be no incentive for them to accept private employment at a wage below this figure.

As stated above, I have written to Mr. Shirley and thoroughly explained the reason for the differential in hours, but I am writing you this letter to inform you of the true situation.

If I can be of any further service to you along this line, please feel free to call upon me.

Sincerely yours,



L. W. PHILLIPS, State Director
Division of Employment

LWP:LR

cc: Jane Rider
Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Bouse
File