

LYNN WOOLSEY
8TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEES:

SCIENCE
EDUCATION AND THE
WORKFORCE
STEERING

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0506

October 22, 1999

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Dear Chairman Helms:

As supporters of advancing international women's rights, we call on you to take immediate action on the United Nations Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). We are disappointed that you continue to withhold your support from this basic women's treaty.

WHY DO WE NEED CEDAW?

CEDAW is the most comprehensive international treaty advancing the status of women. This agreement establishes rights for women in areas not previously subject to international standards, including politics, law, employment, education, and health care.

More than 160 countries have ratified the treaty. There is an overwhelming outcry both in the United States and abroad urging you to hold hearings or discharge CEDAW from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF RATIFICATION?

The United States, the oldest democracy in the world, has earned the dubious distinction of being the only developed nation that has not committed itself to ending discrimination against women. As a leading advocate for human rights, the United States has a responsibility to improve conditions for all women. By ratifying CEDAW the United States will strengthen its position as a superpower by leading the way on this critical issue.

Women can not wait another day. We urge you to hold hearings or discharge CEDAW from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Sincerely,

Lynn Woolsey

Robert J. Matson

Bob Land

Pat T. Smith

Letter to Chairman Jesse Helms
October 27, 1999
Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
Signees:

The Honorable Neil Abercrombie
The Honorable Thomas Allen
The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
The Honorable Tom Barrett
The Honorable Xavier Becerra
The Honorable Shelley Berkeley
The Honorable Howard Berman
The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson
The Honorable Rod Blagojevich
The Honorable David Bonior
The Honorable Robert Brady
The Honorable Sherrod Brown
The Honorable Corrine Brown
The Honorable Lois Capps
The Honorable Mike Capuano
The Honorable Julia Carson
The Honorable Eva Clayton
The Honorable James Clyburn
The Honorable John Conyers
The Honorable Joseph Crowley
The Honorable Elijah Cummings
The Honorable Danny Davis
The Honorable Diana DeGette
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
The Honorable Peter Deutsch
The Honorable Julian Dixon
The Honorable Chet Edwards
The Honorable Eliot Engel
The Honorable Anna Eshoo
The Honorable Bob Etheridge
The Honorable Lane Evans
The Honorable Eni Faleomavaega
The Honorable Sam Farr
The Honorable Bob Filner
The Honorable Mike Forbes
The Honorable Martin Frost
The Honorable Sam Gedjenson
The Honorable Richard Gephardt
The Honorable Charles Gonzalez

The Honorable Gene Green
The Honorable Luis Guterrez
The Honorable Maurice Hinchey
The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
The Honorable Rush Holt
The Honorable Darlene Hooley
The Honorable Sheila Jackson Lee
The Honorable William Jefferson
The Honorable Marcy Kaptur
The Honorable Patrick Kennedy
The Honorable Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick
The Honorable Ron Kind
The Honorable John LaFalce
The Honorable Nick Lampson
The Honorable John Larson
The Honorable Barbara Lee
The Honorable John Lewis
The Honorable Zoe Lofgren
The Honorable Nita Lowey
The Honorable Carolyn Maloney
The Honorable Edward Markey
The Honorable Robert Matsui
The Honorable Karen McCarthy
The Honorable Carolyn McCarthy
The Honorable Jim McDermott
The Honorable James McGovern
The Honorable Cynthia McKinney
The Honorable Marty Meehan
The Honorable Carrie Meek
The Honorable Juanita Millender-McDonald
The Honorable George Miller
The Honorable Patsy Mink
The Honorable Dennis Moore
The Honorable James Moran
The Honorable Constance Morella
The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
The Honorable Grace Napolitano
The Honorable John Olver
The Honorable Major Owens

The Honorable Donald Payne
The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
The Honorable Lynn Rivers
The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
The Honorable Loretta Sanchez
The Honorable Bernard Sanders
The Honorable Tom Sawyer
The Honorable Jan Schakowsky
The Honorable Bobby Scott
The Honorable Jose Serrano
The Honorable Brad Sherman
The Honorable Louise Slaughter
The Honorable Vic Snyder
The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
The Honorable Pete Stark
The Honorable Bart Stupak
The Honorable Ellen Tauscher
The Honorable Mike Thompson
The Honorable Karen Thurman
The Honorable James Tierney
The Honorable Stephanie Tubbs Jones
The Honorable Mark Udall
The Honorable Tom Udall
The Honorable Robert Underwood
The Honorable Nydia Velasquez
The Honorable Bruce Vento
The Honorable Maxine Waters
The Honorable Henry Waxman
The Honorable Anthony Weiner
The Honorable Robert Wexler
The Honorable Robert Weygand
The Honorable Lynn Woolsey
The Honorable David Wu

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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-0506

YOU CAN SUPPORT CEDAW!

November 9, 1999

Dear Colleague:

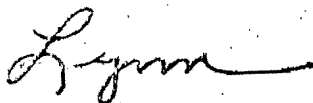
Thank you for your solid support for the United Nations Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Below is a summary of the past CEDAW events for your information.

- On Wednesday, October 27, 1999, 11 Congresswomen delivered a letter signed by 111 women and men of the House of Representatives to Senate Foreign Relations Chairman Jesse Helms urging the Senate to act on CEDAW. Following this event, the issue of CEDAW ratification received much deserved media coverage.
- On Thursday, October 28, 1999, nine Congresswomen accepted a White House invitation to discuss CEDAW with Chief of Staff John Podesta and Counselor to the President Ann Lewis. At this meeting the White House cemented their commitment to this vital international women's treaty.
- Further, on Wednesday, November 3, 1999, women of the House of Representatives met to strategize on CEDAW ratification with Senator Barbara Boxer, who announced she would introduce a Senate Resolution before adjournment of this session that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee should hold hearings and the Senate should act on CEDAW before International Women's Day - March 8, 2000.
- Also, on Wednesday, November 3, 1999, others of us met with Democratic Leader Tom Daschle who pledged his support for CEDAW.

Given the considerable amount of noteworthy attention the Senate has received regarding CEDAW ratification, I also want to point out an opportunity where you can demonstrate your support at home. The President's Interagency Council on Women is coordinating a series of nationwide events, entitled *Women 2000: Beijing Plus Five*. At the United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing in September 1995, the United States made ratification of CEDAW by year 2000 one of its commitments. I encourage you to fight for the women's rights espoused in this treaty and highlight them at the event closest to your district. Please refer to the contact name and information listed on the back.

Should you have any additional questions or need further information, please don't hesitate to contact me, or Carisa Henze of my staff, at 5-5161.

Sincerely,



Lynn Woolsey
Member of Congress

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S. RES. 237 IS

106th Congress

1st Session

S. RES. 237

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

November 19, 1999

Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. LINCOLN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. COLLINS, Mrs. LANDRIEU, Mrs. SNOWE) submitted the following resolution; which was ordered to lie over, under the rule

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations should hold hearings and the Senate should act on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW),

WHEREAS the United States has shown leadership in promoting human rights, including the rights of women and girls, and was instrumental in the development of international human rights treaties and norms, including the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW);

WHEREAS the Senate has already agreed to the ratification of several important human rights treaties, including the Genocide Convention, the Convention Against Torture, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;

WHEREAS CEDAW establishes a worldwide commitment to combat discrimination against women and girls;

WHEREAS 165 countries of the world have ratified or acceded to CEDAW and the United States is among a small minority of countries, including Afghanistan, North Korea, Iran and Sudan, which have not;

WHEREAS CEDAW is helping combat violence and discrimination against women and girls around the world;

WHEREAS CEDAW has had a significant and positive impact on legal developments in countries as diverse as Uganda, Colombia, Brazil and South Africa, including, on citizenship rights in Botswana and Japan, inheritance rights in Tanzania, property rights and political participation in Costa Rica;

WHEREAS the Administration has proposed a small number of reservations, understandings and declarations to ensure that U.S. ratification fully complies with all constitutional requirements, including states' and individuals' rights;

WHEREAS the legislatures of California, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, South Dakota and Vermont have endorsed U.S. ratification of CEDAW;

WHEREAS more than one hundred U.S.-based, civic, legal, religious, education, and environmental organizations, including many major national membership organizations, support U.S. ratification of CEDAW;

WHEREAS ratification of CEDAW would allow the United States to nominate a representative to the CEDAW oversight committee, and

WHEREAS 1999 is the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of CEDAW by the UN General Assembly: Now, therefore, is it

RESOLVED, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

- (1) the Senate Foreign Relations Committee should hold hearings on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); and
- (2) (2) the Senate should act on CEDAW by March 8, 2000, International Women's Day.

CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

"I call on the Senate, again, to ratify the United Nations Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women...it is, to say the least, an embarrassment that the United States has not done this..."

President Bill Clinton

Human Rights Day, December 10, 1996

"...it is long past time for America to become party to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women."

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright

March 12, 1997

"Violence and discrimination against women don't just victimize individuals; they hold back whole societies...Guaranteeing human rights is a moral imperative with respect to both women and men. It is also an investment in making whole nations stronger, fairer, and better."

From the official U.S. Government statement to the World
Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, Austria, 1993

BACKGROUND

On December 18, 1979, the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The call for a Women's Convention emerged from the First World Conference on Women in Mexico City in 1975. Until 1979, when the General Assembly adopted the Women's Convention, there was no convention that addressed comprehensively women's rights within political, cultural, economic, social, and family life.

CURRENT STATUS

In June 1997 the Clinton Administration informed the Senate Foreign Relations Committee of its priorities for ratification of international treaties in the 105th Congress. The Women's Convention is the only human rights treaty listed in Category 1: "Treaties for which there is an urgent need for Senate approval."

As of December 1997, 161 countries had ratified the Convention. The United States was active in drafting the Convention and signed it on July 17, 1980. It was transmitted to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in November 1980. In the summer of 1990, the Committee held hearings on the Convention. In the spring of 1993, sixty-eight senators signed a letter to President Clinton, asking him to take the necessary steps to ratify the Women's Convention. In June 1993, Secretary of State Warren Christopher announced at the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna that the Administration would move on the Women's Convention and other human rights treaties.

In September 1994, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee reported out favorably on the Convention, by a vote of 13 to 5 (with one abstention). Unfortunately, this occurred in the last days of the Congressional session, when several senators put a hold on the Convention, thereby blocking it from the Senate floor during the 103rd Congress. When the new Senate convened in January 1995, the Convention reverted to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for action, where it remains.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, CONTACT
THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS TREATY:

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tel: (202) 675-8577, fax: (202) 546-7142, E-Mail: prengel@aiusa.usa.com

Kit Cosby, Bahá'ís of the U.S.

tel: (202) 833-8990, fax: (202) 833-8988, E-Mail: usnsa-oca@usbnc.org

In April 1996, Senators Snowe, Feinstein, Jeffords and Pell sent a "Dear Colleague" to the other 96 Senators urging them to ratify the Convention. The Senators' letter included an appeal for prompt Senate action that was signed by 111 national organizations.

Sixty-seven "yes" votes are required for the Senate to consent to ratification. Action by the House of Representatives is not required for ratification of international treaties. To date five states, California, Iowa, Massachusetts, New York and South Dakota, have endorsed U.S. ratification in their state legislatures.

IMPORTANCE OF U.S. RATIFICATION

The Convention provides a universal definition of discrimination against women so that those who would discriminate on the basis of sex can no longer claim that no clear definition exists.

Women in all parts of the world lack basic legal rights or protection of their rights under law. The cry that women's rights are human rights originates from consideration of the plight of women. As a leading advocate for human rights, the United States has a compelling interest to improve conditions for women. Yet, as one of the few nations that has failed to ratify the Women's Convention, the United States compromises its credibility as a leader for human rights. The fact that the United States was heavily involved in the drafting of the Women's Convention also lends weight to its obligation to ratify.

Ratification of the Convention is called for in the concluding documents of the Fourth World Conference on Women, the UN Conference on Human Rights, and the Vienna/Helsinki agreements of the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The United States was a signatory to these documents. The United States also made ratification of the Women's Convention one of its public commitments at the UN Conference on Women in Beijing in September 1995.

Ratification of the Women's Convention would also entitle the U.S. to join the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which monitors reports of progress in the treatment of women from the countries that have ratified the Convention.

TREATY SUMMARY

Article 1: defines discrimination against women as any "distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of marital status, on the basis of equality between men and women, of human rights or fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil, or any other field."

Article 2: mandates States Parties to condemn discrimination in all its forms and to ensure a legal framework, including all laws, policies and practices that provide protection against discrimination and embody the principle of equality;

Article 3: requires that States Parties take action in all fields -- civil, political, economic, social and cultural -- to guarantee women's human rights;

Article 4: permits States Parties to take "temporary special measures" to accelerate equality;

Article 5: declares the need to take appropriate measures to modify cultural patterns of conduct as well as the need for family education to recognize the social function of motherhood and the common responsibility for raising children;

Article 6: obligates States Parties to take measures to suppress traffic in women and the exploitation of prostitution of women;

Article 7: mandates the States Parties to end discrimination against women in political and public life, and to ensure women's equal rights to vote, be eligible for election, participate in the formulation of policy, hold office, and participate in associations and non-governmental organizations in these spheres;

Article 8: requires action to allow women to represent their governments internationally on an equal basis with men;

Article 9: mandates that women will have equal rights with men to acquire, change, or retain their nationality and that of their children;

Article 10: obligates States Parties to end discrimination in education, including in professional and vocational training, access to curricula and other means of receiving an equal education; as well as to eliminate stereotyped concepts of the roles of men and women;

Article 11: mandates the end of discrimination in the field of employment, including the right to work, to employment opportunities, to equal remuneration, to free choice of profession and employment, to social security, and to protection of health, including maternal health, and also in regard to discrimination on the grounds of marriage or maternity;

Article 12: requires steps to eliminate discrimination from the field of health care, including access to services such as family planning;

Article 13: requires that women be ensured the same rights as men in all areas of social and economic life, such as family benefits, mortgages, bank loans, and participation in recreational activities and sports;

Article 14: focuses on the particular problems faced by rural women, including the areas of women's participation in development planning, access to adequate health care, credit, education, and adequate living conditions;

Article 15: obligates States Parties to take steps to ensure equality before the law and the same legal capacity to act in such areas as contracts, administration of property, and choice of residence;

Article 16: requires steps to ensure equality in marriage and family relations, including equal rights with men freely to choose marriage, equal rights and responsibilities toward children, including the right to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of children and the means to do so, and the same rights to property;

Article 17: calls for the establishment of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) which will evaluate progress made in implementation of the Convention.

Article 18: establishes a schedule of reporting on progress by ratifying countries;

Article 19: establishes the ability of CEDAW to adopt rules of procedure and sets a two-year term for its officers;

Article 20: Sets annual CEDAW meetings to review States Parties' reports;

Article 21: directs CEDAW to report annually to the General Assembly through ECOSOC, and to make suggestions and general recommendations based on the States Parties' reports;

Article 22: allows for representation of the specialized agencies of the UN and for CEDAW to invite reports from them;

Articles 23-30: set forth elements of the operation of the treaty, including the manner by which the treaty comes into operation, the limits on the scope of permissible reservations, and the way in which disputes between States Parties can be settled.

ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE ENDORSED THE WOMEN'S CONVENTION (Partial list)

Action for Development	Lawyers Committee for Human Rights
American Association of Retired Persons	Leadership Conference of Women Religious
American Association of University Women	League of Women Voters of the United States
American Bar Association (endorsed position by separate letter)	Louisville Women-Church
American College of Nurse-Midwives	Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs
American Council for the United Nations University	Maryknoll Mission Association of the Faithful
American Federation of Teachers	Maryknoll Sisters
American Friends Service Committee, Washington Office	Maryknoll Society Justice and Peace Office
American Jewish Committee	Massachusetts Women-Church
American Nurses Association	Na'amat USA
American Veterans Committee	National Association of Social Workers
Americans for Democratic Action, Inc.	National Association of Women Lawyers
Amnesty International USA	National Audubon Society
Association for Women in Development	National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Association for Women in Psychology	National Coalition of American Nuns
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith	National Council of Negro Women
Bahá'ís of the United States	National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA
Black Women's Agenda	National Council of Women of the USA
B'nai B'rith International	National Education Association
Bread for the World	National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council
Business and Professional Women/USA	National Women's Conference Committee
BVM Network for Women's Issues	NOW Legal Defense & Education Fund
Catholics for A Free Choice	NETWORK - A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
Center for Advancement of Public Policy	Older Women's League
Center for Policy Alternatives	Oxfam America
Center for Reproductive Law and Policy	Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Center for Women's Global Leadership	Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Washington Office
Center of Concern	Psychologists for Social Responsibility
Chicago Catholic Women	Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights
Chicago Women-Church	San Francisco Bay Area Women's Ordination Conference
Church of the Brethren, Washington Office	Sierra Club
Church Women United	Sisterhood is Global Institute
Coalition on Religion & Ecology	Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace
Coalition for Women in International Development	Soka Gakkai International - USA
Columban Fathers' Justice & Peace Office	Society for International Development/Women in Development
Commission on the Advancement of Women/InterAction	Soroptimist International of the Americas
D.C. Statehood Solidarity Committee	Union of American Hebrew Congregations
Earthcommunity Center	Unitarian Universalist Association, Washington Office
Eight Day Center for Justice	Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
Episcopal Church	United Church of Christ Office for Church and Society
Feminist Majority Foundation	United Methodist Church (GBCS)
Francois Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights	United Nations Association of the United States of America
Friends of the U.N.	United Nations Association/National Capital Area
Friends Committee on National Legislation	United States Committee for UNICEF
General Federation of Women's Clubs	United States Committee for UNIFEM
Global Commission to Fund the UN	U.S. Network for Women/Beijing and Beyond
Gray Panthers	Washington Office on Africa
Guatemala Human Rights Commission	Winrock International
Hadassah	Woman's National Democratic Club
Health & Development Policy Project	Women Empowering Women of Indian Nations (WEWIN)
Human Rights Advocates	Women of Reform Judaism
Human Rights Watch/Women's Rights Project	Women for International Peace and Arbitration
The Humane Society	Women for Meaningful Summits
International Center for Research on Women	Women Law and Development International
International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission	Women's Action for New Directions
International Human Rights Law Group	Women's Environment and Development Organization
International Women's Health Coalition	Women's Institute For Freedom of The Press
International Women's Human Rights Law Clinic	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
International Women Judges Foundation	Women's Legal Defense Fund
The J. Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights	Women's Ordination Conference
Jewish Women International	World Federalist Association
Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc.	YWCA of the U.S.A.

NACW & CEDAW

Two Sides of the Same Coin

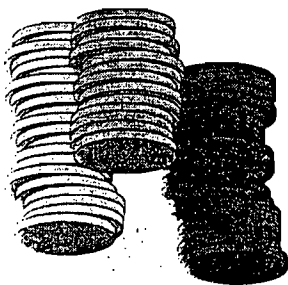
The National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW) has supported United States ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) for several years. In 1996, NACW passed a resolution urging the United States Senate to ratify this important treaty ensuring equal rights for women around the world. This treaty still languishes on Capitol Hill. Therefore NACW's support for this effort is more critical than ever.

Why . . . ?

Ratification of CEDAW would send a strong signal to other countries that the United States is serious about ending discrimination internationally and giving women in other countries the same opportunities that we enjoy here in the United States. Moreover, many of the resolutions adopted by NACW to combat discrimination in this country are directly linked to similar resolutions in CEDAW.

Did you know that . . . ?

- NACW has worked consistently to combat the practice of **trafficking in women**, CEDAW, in turn, obligates States Parties to take measures to suppress trafficking in women and the exploitation of prostitution of women internationally;
- NACW has supported the establishment of wage laws in the United States to ensure women receive equal pay for equal work. CEDAW, in turn, mandates that all participating countries end discrimination in the field of employment, including rights to **equal remuneration**;
- NACW has been at the forefront of ensuring that the U.S. Social Security System continues to provide **economic security** for women. CEDAW, in turn, ranks this issue as a top priority internationally;
- NACW has long supported efforts in the United States to provide women access to **health information**, equity in research & treatments. CEDAW, in turn, requires steps by States Parties to eliminate discrimination from the entire field of health care, including clinical trials, treatment and services.
- NACW recently passed a resolution outlining goals to achieve **gender equity** in the educational systems throughout the United States. CEDAW, in turn, obligates States Parties internationally to end discrimination in education, citing professional and vocational training, access to curricula and other means of receiving an equal education;
- NACW has cited domestic violence as a critical national issue requiring the collection of more comprehensive demographic data through member commissions. CEDAW, in turn, focuses on combating **violence against women** at the international level and makes the linkage between discrimination against women and the violence directed toward them.



Two Sides of the Same Coin

CEDAW

&

NACW
National Association of Commissioners for Women

In summary

The priorities of commissions for women at the local level are reinforced by NACW at the national level and at the international level through CEDAW. Urging the United States Senate ratification of CEDAW simultaneously advances the NACW agenda.

It's two sides of the same coin.

For additional information, please contact:

NACW

8630 Fenton Street, Suite 934

Silver Spring, MD 20910-3803

301-585-8101 or 800-338-9267

fax: 301-585-3445

www.nacw.org



CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

"...obtaining Senate advice and consent to the ratification of CEDAW is a top Administration priority during this [105th] session of Congress."

President Bill Clinton

From a letter to the Senate leadership, March 11, 1998

"...it is long past time for America to become party to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women."

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright

March 12, 1997

"Violence and discrimination against women don't just victimize individuals; they hold back whole societies... Guaranteeing human rights is a moral imperative with respect to both women and men. It is also an investment in making whole nations stronger, fairer, and better."

From the official U.S. Government statement to the World
Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, Austria, 1993

BACKGROUND

On December 18, 1979, the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Women's Convention or CEDAW). The call for a Women's Convention emerged from the First World Conference on Women in Mexico City in 1975. Until 1979, when the General Assembly adopted the Women's Convention, there was no convention that addressed comprehensively women's rights within political, cultural, economic, social, and family life. As of December 1999, 165 countries had ratified the Convention.

CURRENT STATUS

In June 1997 the Clinton Administration informed the Senate Foreign Relations Committee of its priorities for ratification of international treaties in the 105th Congress. The Women's Convention is the only human rights treaty listed in Category 1: "Treaties for which there is an urgent need for Senate approval."

The United States was active in drafting the Convention and signed it on July 17, 1980. It was transmitted to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in November 1980. In the summer of 1990, the Committee held hearings on the Convention. In the spring of 1993, sixty-eight senators signed a letter to President Clinton, asking him to take the necessary steps to ratify the Women's Convention. In June 1993, Secretary of State Warren Christopher announced at the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna that the Administration would move on the Women's Convention and other human rights treaties.

In September 1994, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee reported out favorably on the Convention, by a vote of 13 to 5 (with one abstention). Unfortunately, this occurred in the last days of the Congressional session, when several senators put a hold on the Convention, thereby blocking it from the Senate floor during the 103rd Congress. When the new Senate convened in January 1995, the Convention reverted to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The committee has taken no action since then.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, CONTACT
THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS TREATY:

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Kit Cosby, Bahá'ís of the U.S.

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Sixty-seven "yes" votes are required for the Senate to consent to ratification. Action by the House of Representatives is not required for ratification of international treaties. To date ten states have endorsed U.S. ratification in their state legislatures: California, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, South Dakota, and Vermont. The Connecticut State Senate and the Illinois House of Representatives have also endorsed U.S. ratification.

IMPORTANCE OF U.S. RATIFICATION

The Convention provides a universal definition of discrimination against women that provides a basis for every government's domestic and foreign policy to combat discrimination.

As one of the few nations that has failed to ratify the Women's Convention, the United States compromises its credibility as a leader for human rights. The United States made ratification of the Women's Convention by the year 2000 one of its public commitments at the UN Conference on Women in Beijing in September 1995. The United States must keep that commitment.

The Women's Convention is a tool that women around the world are using in their struggle against the effects of discrimination: violence against women, poverty, lack of legal status, no right to inherit or own property, access to credit, etc. Women need the United States to speak loudly and clearly in support of the Women's Convention so that the Convention becomes a stronger instrument in support of their struggles. Without US ratification, other governments can more easily ignore the Convention's mandate and their obligations under it.

Violence against women seriously inhibits women's ability to enjoy rights and freedoms on a basis of equality with men. But violence against women itself emerges from the phenomenon of discrimination against women which makes them a target of violence. To effectively combat the crime of violence against women, US policy must address this linkage of discrimination and violence. By ratifying the Women's Convention, the United States will reinforce its commitment to eliminate discrimination and, therefore, move closer to effectively combating violence against women.

The Clinton Administration has developed a number of provisions that will be incorporated into US ratification of the Convention to ensure that there will be no inappropriate intrusion on states' rights or into the private domain.

Ratification of the Women's Convention will entitle the United States to nominate a U.S. expert to be a member of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, which monitors reports of progress in the treatment of women from the countries that have ratified the Convention. In this capacity, the US expert could bring the benefit of US experience in combating discrimination against women to this international forum.

TREATY SUMMARY

Article 1: defines discrimination against women as any "distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of marital status, on the basis of equality between men and women, of human rights or fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil, or any other field."

Article 2: mandates States Parties to condemn discrimination in all its forms and to ensure a legal framework, including all laws, policies and practices that provide protection against discrimination and embody the principle of equality;

Article 3: requires that States Parties take action in all fields -- civil, political, economic, social and cultural -- to guarantee women's human rights;

Article 4: permits States Parties to take "temporary special measures" to accelerate equality;

Article 5: declares the need to take appropriate measures to modify cultural patterns of conduct as well as the need for family education to recognize the social function of motherhood and the common responsibility for raising children;

Article 6: obligates States Parties to take measures to suppress traffic in women and the exploitation of prostitution of women;

Article 7: mandates the States Parties to **end discrimination against women in political and public life**, and to ensure women's equal rights to vote, be eligible for election, participate in the formulation of policy, hold office, and participate in associations and non-governmental organizations in these spheres;

Article 8: requires action to allow women to represent their governments internationally on an equal basis with men;

Article 9: mandates that women will have equal rights with men to acquire, change, or retain their nationality and that of their children;

Article 10: obligates States Parties to end discrimination **in education**, including in professional and vocational training, access to curricula and other means of receiving an equal education; as well as to **eliminate stereotyped concepts** of the roles of men and women;

Article 11: mandates the end of discrimination **in the field of employment**, including the right to work, to employment opportunities, to **equal remuneration**, to free choice of profession and employment, to **social security**, and to protection of health, including maternal health, and also in regard to discrimination on the grounds of marriage or maternity;

Article 12: requires steps to eliminate discrimination from the field of **health care**, including **access to services** such as family planning;

Article 13: requires that women be ensured the same rights as men in all areas of social and economic life, such as **family benefits, mortgages, bank loans**, and participation in **recreational activities and sports**;

Article 14: focuses on the particular problems faced by **rural women**, including the areas of women's participation in development planning, access to adequate health care, credit, education, and adequate living conditions;

Article 15: obligates States Parties to take steps to ensure **equality before the law** and the same legal capacity to act in such areas as **contracts**, administration of **property**, and choice of residence;

Article 16: requires steps to ensure **equality in marriage and family relations**, including equal rights with men **freely to choose marriage, equal rights and responsibilities toward children**, including the right to **decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of children** and the means to do so, and the **same rights to property**;

Article 17: calls for the **establishment of the Committee** on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) which will evaluate progress made in implementation of the Convention.

Article 18: establishes a **schedule of reporting** on progress by ratifying countries;

Article 19: establishes the ability of CEDAW to adopt rules of procedure and sets a two-year term for its officers;

Article 20: Sets annual CEDAW meetings to review States Parties' reports;

Article 21: directs CEDAW to report annually to the General Assembly through ECOSOC, and to **make suggestions and general recommendations** based on the States Parties' reports;

Article 22: allows for representation of the specialized agencies of the UN and for CEDAW to invite reports from them;

Articles 23-30: set forth elements of the operation of the treaty, including the manner by which the treaty comes into operation, the limits on the scope of permissible reservations, and the way in which disputes between States Parties can be settled.

ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE ENDORSED THE WOMEN'S CONVENTION (Partial list)

- | | |
|--|---|
| Action for Development | Lawyers Committee for Human Rights |
| *American Association of Retired Persons | *Leadership Conference of Women Religious |
| *American Association of University Women | *League of Women Voters of the United States |
| *American Bar Association | Louisville Women-Church |
| American College of Nurse-Midwives | Maryknoll Mission Association of the Faithful |
| American Council for the United Nations University | Maryknoll Office of Global Concerns |
| American Federation of Teachers | Massachusetts Women-Church |
| *American Friends Service Committee | Na'amat USA |
| *American Jewish Committee | *National Association of Commissions for Women |
| *American Nurses Association | National Association of Social Workers |
| American Veterans Committee | National Association of Women Lawyers |
| Americans for Democratic Action, Inc. | National Audubon Society |
| *Amnesty International USA | National Coalition Against Domestic Violence |
| Association for Women in Development | National Coalition of American Nuns |
| Association for Women in Psychology | *National Council of Negro Women |
| Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith | National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA |
| *Bahá'ís of the United States | National Council of Women of the USA |
| Black Women's Agenda | *National Council of Women's Organizations |
| *B'nai B'rith International | *National Education Association |
| Bread for the World | National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council |
| *Business and Professional Women/USA | National Women's Conference Committee |
| BVM Network for Women's Issues | *NOW Legal Defense & Education Fund |
| Catholics for A Free Choice | NETWORK - A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby |
| Center for Advancement of Public Policy | Older Women's League |
| Center for Policy Alternatives | Oxfam America |
| Center for Reproductive Law and Policy | Planned Parenthood Federation of America |
| Center for Women's Global Leadership | *Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Washington Office |
| Center of Concern | Psychologists for Social Responsibility |
| Chicago Catholic Women | Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights |
| Church of the Brethren, Washington Office | San Francisco Bay Area Women's Ordination Conference |
| *Church Women United | *Sierra Club |
| Coalition on Religion & Ecology | Sisterhood is Global Institute |
| Coalition for Women in International Development | Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace |
| Columban Fathers' Justice & Peace Office | Soka Gakkai International - USA |
| Commission on the Advancement of Women/InterAction | Society for International Development/Women in Development |
| D.C. Statehood Solidarity Committee | *Soroptimist International of the Americas |
| Earthcommunity Center | Union of American Hebrew Congregations |
| Eighth Day Center for Justice | *Unitarian Universalist Association, Washington Office |
| Episcopal Church | Unitarian Universalist Service Committee |
| *Evangelical Lutheran Church of America | United Church of Christ Office for Church and Society |
| *Feminist Majority Foundation | *United Methodist Church |
| Francois Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights | *United Nations Association of the United States of America |
| Friends of the U.N. | United States Committee for UNICEF |
| *Friends Committee on National Legislation | United States Committee for UNIFEM |
| *General Federation of Women's Clubs | Washington Office on Africa |
| Global Commission to Fund the UN | Winrock International |
| Gray Panthers | Woman's National Democratic Club |
| Guatemala Human Rights Commission | Women Empowering Women of Indian Nations (WEWIN) |
| Hadassah | Women of Reform Judaism |
| Health & Development Policy Project | Women for International Peace and Arbitration |
| Human Rights Advocates | Women for Meaningful Summits |
| Human Rights Watch/Women's Rights Division | Women Law and Development International |
| The Humane Society | *Women's Action for New Directions/Women Legislators Lobby |
| International Center for Research on Women | Women's Environment and Development Organization |
| International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission | Women's Institute For Freedom of The Press |
| International Human Rights Law Group | *Women's International League for Peace and Freedom |
| International Women's Health Coalition | Women's Legal Defense Fund |
| International Women's Human Rights Law Clinic | Women's Ordination Conference |
| International Women Judges Foundation | World Citizen Foundation |
| The J. Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights | *World Federalist Association |
| Jewish Council for Public Affairs | *YWCA of the U.S.A. |
| *Jewish Women International | |
| Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc. | |

*Active National Membership Organizations

December 1999

**WORKING GROUP ON RATIFICATION
OF THE
U.N. CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF
DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN**

Co-Chair:

Kit Cosby
Director for External Affairs
National Spiritual Assembly
of the Bahá'is of the United States
1320 19th Street, N.W. Suite 701
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 833-8990 • fax: (202) 833-8988

Co-Chair:

Pat Rengel
Chief Legislative Counsel
Amnesty International U. S.A.
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E., 5th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20003
(202) 675-8577 • fax: (202) 546-7142

Suggested Grassroots/NGO Action Items to Urge Ratification of CEDAW

- Contact your Senator (whether for, against, or uncommitted) and encourage him/her to sign on to the Senate Resolution, S. Res. 237, that urges the Senate to hold hearings and act on CEDAW by March 8, 2000.
- Call your Senator's statewide offices and request a meeting with the Senator or foreign affairs legislative aide during the Senate recess (December and January). If your Senator(s) do not already support CEDAW, ask them to state their concerns so that you can address them.
- Send your Senator(s) a "holiday" card/letter, and ask them to support CEDAW and co-sponsor S. Res. 237.
- Contact your senator* if he/she is a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (SFRC). Encourage them to urge the SFRC's leadership, Jesse Helms (R-NC) & Joseph Biden (D-DE), to move CEDAW out of the SFRC to the floor for a vote this Congress.
- Write letters to your senators* encouraging them to urge the Republican (Trent Lott/Jesse Helms) and Democratic (Tom Daschle/Joseph Biden) Senate leadership to bring CEDAW to a vote on the floor this Congress.
- Arrange a visit with your senators* during a Senate recess, particularly if he/she is still uncommitted on ratification and a junior senator from your state. Include NGO representatives from like-minded groups as part of a delegation.
- Arrange a meeting with your senator if he/she is committed and urge him/her to become a more active leader in the effort to ratify the treaty.
- Encourage local, statewide, and national Republican and Democratic women leaders to speak out in favor of ratification.
- Work with local organizations/religious groups (i.e., Bahá'is, Methodists, YWCA, Amnesty International, UNA-USA, General Federation of Women's Clubs) to organize events highlighting ratification.
- Urge NGO membership in the relevant states to contact their newly elected senators* asking them about their position on CEDAW and urging them to support ratification.

* Refer to other side for *Senate Assessments*

Please inform the Working Group, at the above address, of any of your activities in support of ratification of CEDAW

December 1999

FOR:

Akaka, D. (D-HI)^o
 Baucus, M. (D-MT)^o
 Biden, J. (D-DE)^{o+}
 Bingaman, J. (D-NM)^o
 Boxer, B. (D-CA)^{o+}
 Breaux, J. (D-LA)^o
 Bryan, R. (D-NV)^o
 Byrd, R. (D-WV)^o
 Campbell, B. (R-CO)^o
 Cleland, Max (D-GA)
 Collins, S. (R-ME)
 Conrad, K. (D-ND)^o
 Daschle, T. (D-SD)^o
 Dodd, C. (D-CT)^{o+}
 Dorgan, B. (D-ND)^o
 Durbin, R. (D-IL)
 Feingold, R. (D-WI)^{o+}
 Feinstein, D. (D-CA)^o
 Graham, B. (D-FL)^o
 Harkin, T. (D-IA)^o
 Hollings, E. (D-SC)^o
 Inouye, D. (D-HI)^o
 Jeffords, J. (R-VT)^o
 Johnson, T. (D-SD)
 Kennedy, E. (D-MA)^o
 Kerrey, R. (D-NE)^o
 Kerry, J. (D-MA)^{o+}
 Kohl, H. (D-WI)^o
 Landrieu, M. (D-LA)
 Lautenberg, F. (D-NJ)
 Leahy, P. (D-VT)^o
 Levin, C. (D-MI)^o

FOR:

Lieberman, J. (D-CT)^o
Lincoln, B. L. (D-AR)*
 McCain, J. (R-AZ)^o
 Mikulski, B. (D-MD)^o
 Moynihan, D. (D-NY)^o
 Murray, P. (D-WA)^o
 Reed, J. (D-RI)
 Reid, H. (D-NV)^o
 Robb, C. (D-VA)^o
 Rockefeller, J. (D-WV)^o
 Sarbanes, P. (D-MD)^{o+}
Schumer, C. (D-NY)*
 Snowe, Olympia (R-ME)
 Specter, A. (R-PA)^o
 Thurmond, S. (R-SC)^o
 Torricelli, R. (D-NJ)+
 Warner, J. (R-VA)^o
 Wellstone, P. (D-MN)^{o+}
 Wyden, R. (D-OR)

NEW SENATORS:

Bayh, E. (D-IN)*
 Bunning, J. (R-KY)*
 Chafee, L. (R-RI)*+
 Crapo, M. (R-ID)*
 Edwards, J. (D-NC)*
 Fitzgerald, P. (R-IL)*
 Voinovich, G. (R-OH)*

UNKNOWN:

Abraham, S. (R-MI)
 Allard, W. (R-CO)
 Bennett, R. (R-UT)
 Bond, C. (R-MO)
 Brownback, S. (R-KS)+
 Burns, C. (R-MT)
 Cochran, T. (R-MS)
 Craig, L. (R-ID)
 DeWine, M. (R-OH)
 Domenici, P. (R-NM)
 Enzi, M. (R-WY)
 Frist, B. (R-TN)+
 Gorton, S. (R-WA)
 Grams, R. (R-MN)+
 Grassley, C. (R-IA)
 Hatch, O. (R-UT)
 Hutchinson, T. (R-AR)
 Inhofe, J. (R-OK)
 Kyl, J. (R-AZ)
 Lott, T. (R-MS)
 Lugar, R. (R-IN)+
 Mack, C. (R-FL)
 Murkowski, F. (R-AK)^o
 Nickles, D. (R-OK)
 Roberts, P. (R-KS)
 Roth, W. (R-DE)
 Santorum, R. (R-PA)
 Sessions, J. (R-AL)
 Shelby, R. (R-AL)^o
 Smith, G. (R-OR)+
 Smith, R. (R-NH)
 Stevens, T. (R-AK)
 Thomas, C. (R-WY)+
 Thompson, F. (R-TN)

AGAINST:

Ashcroft, J. (R-MO)+
 Coverdell, P. (R-GA)
 Gramm, P. (R-TX)
 Gregg, J. (R-NH)
 Hagel, C. (R-NE)+
 Helms, J. (R-NC)+
 Hutchison, K. (R-TX)
 McConnell, M. (R-KY)

*Newly elected to 106th Congress

+Members of Foreign Relations Committee

^oSigned the Sen. Simon "Dear Colleague" letter in the 103rd Congress

Above list is also based on Senators' responses to constituent letters

S. RES. 237 IS

106th Congress

1st Session

S. RES. 237

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

November 19, 1999

Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. LINCOLN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. COLLINS, Mrs. LANDRIEU, Mrs. SNOWE) submitted the following resolution; which was ordered to lie over, under the rule

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations should hold hearings and the Senate should act on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW),

WHEREAS the United States has shown leadership in promoting human rights, including the rights of women and girls, and was instrumental in the development of international human rights treaties and norms, including the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW);

WHEREAS the Senate has already agreed to the ratification of several important human rights treaties, including the Genocide Convention, the Convention Against Torture, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;

WHEREAS CEDAW establishes a worldwide commitment to combat discrimination against women and girls;

WHEREAS 165 countries of the world have ratified or acceded to CEDAW and the United States is among a small minority of countries, including Afghanistan, North Korea, Iran and Sudan, which have not;

WHEREAS CEDAW is helping combat violence and discrimination against women and girls around the world:

WHEREAS CEDAW has had a significant and positive impact on legal developments in countries as diverse as Uganda, Colombia, Brazil and South Africa, including, on citizenship rights in Botswana and Japan, inheritance rights in Tanzania, property rights and political participation in Costa Rica;

WHEREAS the Administration has proposed a small number of reservations, understandings and declarations to ensure that U.S. ratification fully complies with all constitutional requirements, including states' and individuals' rights;

WHEREAS the legislatures of California, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, South Dakota and Vermont have endorsed U.S. ratification of CEDAW;

WHEREAS more than one hundred U.S.-based, civic, legal, religious, education, and environmental organizations, including many major national membership organizations, support U.S. ratification of CEDAW;

WHEREAS ratification of CEDAW would allow the United States to nominate a representative to the CEDAW oversight committee, and

WHEREAS 1999 is the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of CEDAW by the UN General Assembly: Now, therefore, is it

RESOLVED, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

- (1) the Senate Foreign Relations Committee should hold hearings on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); and
- (2) (2) the Senate should act on CEDAW by March 8, 2000, International Women's Day.

CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

FEAR vs. FACT

The United States is a world leader in the promotion of women's rights, particularly in giving meaning to the principle of the equality of women and men. Nevertheless, the U.S. has not ratified the authoritative document that sets comprehensive standards on women's equality, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Although as of July 1999, 163 countries had ratified this Convention, with its failure to ratify, the U.S. remains in the company of countries like Iran and the Sudan, where women's rights are in a deplorable state. In part, hesitancy to ratify this important document stems from unfounded fears associated with the implementation of CEDAW in the U.S. These fears are addressed below:

FEAR: U.S. ratification of CEDAW would give too much power to the international community with the provisions of the Convention superseding U.S. federal and state law.

FACT: As with many international agreements, countries can express "reservations, understandings and declarations" in cases where there are discrepancies between the international convention or treaty and domestic law. For the most part, U.S. law complies with the requirements of the Convention and the Convention is compatible with the principles of the U.S. Constitution. And, where any differences do exist, the Convention calls for appropriate measures to be taken to progressively promote the principle of nondiscrimination. Such language implies no enforcement authority by the international community.

* * *

FEAR: "Discrimination" is too broadly defined in CEDAW and its implementation in the U.S. would result in "frivolous" lawsuits.

FACT: While implementation of CEDAW could raise U.S. legal standards, a flurry of frivolous lawsuits is unlikely. CEDAW's definition of discrimination includes both discrimination which is intentional and that which is the result of laws, policies, and practices which, when applied, have the impact (sometimes unintentionally) of discriminating against women. U.S. law already governs discrimination in private and public employment, prohibiting policies and practices that unintentionally burden women greater than men. Regardless, claims in the U.S. related to sex discrimination are not subjected to the same "strict scrutiny" standards applied to claims of race discrimination. Thus, implementation of CEDAW could help to rectify these discrepancies in U.S. law over time. But, since there has been no flurry of frivolous lawsuits with respect to race discrimination, it is not expected for sex discrimination, either.

* * *

FEAR: CEDAW can be used to destroy the traditional family structure in the U.S. by redefining "family" and the respective roles of men and women.

FACT: CEDAW does not, and would not, seek to regulate any constitutionally protected interests with respect to family life. Both CEDAW and the U.S. Constitution recognize the restraints of any governing authority to interfere with an individual's most basic decisions regarding family. CEDAW simply urges State Parties "to adopt education and public information programmes, which will eliminate prejudices and current practices that hinder the full operation of the principle of the social equality of women."

* * *

FEAR: Implementation of CEDAW would usurp the proper role of parents in child rearing.

FACT: CEDAW simply calls for a recognition of the “common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing and development of their children” and maintains “the parents’ common responsibility [is] to promote what is in the best interest of the child.” The U.S. Constitution limits the power of government to interfere in certain private matters such as decisions by parents concerning the upbringing of their children. CEDAW implementation would not change this fact. Nonetheless, it should be recognized that determining a child’s “best interest” is not always an easy process and, in extreme cases such as violence, abuse, abandonment, and neglect, is a matter that even our own U.S. courts struggle with.

* * *

FEAR: CEDAW may discourage or eliminate single-sex schools and/or force local school districts to “gender neutralize” school textbooks and programs.

FACT: CEDAW does not require the prohibition of single-sex education, but, in fact, asks States Parties to encourage co-education as well as other types of education which may achieve the aim of education equality. Note that this language is particularly meant to address the needs of many countries which, unlike the U.S., have yet to develop educational programs which are accessible to both young girls and boys. In terms of its application to the U.S., CEDAW would encourage the development of equal educational material, whether taught in single-sex or mixed schools.

* * *

FEAR: CEDAW supports abortion through its promotion of access to “family planning.”

FACT: Actually, CEDAW does not even address the matter of abortion and, according to the U.S. State Department is “abortion neutral.” Moreover, many states in which abortion is illegal – such as Ireland, Burkina Faso and Rwanda – have ratified this Convention.

* * *

FEAR: U.S. ratification of CEDAW might be used to sanction same-sex marriages.

FACT: The Convention makes clear that it is not aimed at all sex-based discrimination, but only at discrimination that is directed specifically against women. A same-sex marriage claim would include a charge that both men and women who want to marry individuals of their own sex are being discriminated against. Moreover, there is no provision in the Convention that would compel the U.S. Congress, or other national legislature, to pass same-sex marriage laws in order to comply with the Convention.

* * *

FEAR: U.S. ratification of CEDAW promotes equal pay for unequal work.

FACT: Comparable worth seeks to remedy the under-valuation of occupations traditionally held by women through objective comparison between their job functions and those of positions traditionally held by men.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, CONTACT
THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS TREATY:
Pat Rengel, Amnesty International, U.S.A.

tel: (202) 675-8577, fax: (202) 546-7142, E-Mail: prengel@aiusa.org

Kit Cosby, Bahá'is of the U.S.

tel: (202) 833-8990, fax: (202) 833-8988, E-Mail: usnsa-oea@usbnc.org

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 237

Expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations should hold hearings and the Senate should act on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 19, 1999

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Whereas the Senate has already agreed to the ratification of several important human rights treaties, including the

Genocide Convention, the Convention Against Torture, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;

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Whereas 165 countries of the world have ratified or acceded to CEDAW and the United States is among a small minority of countries, including Afghanistan, North Korea, Iran, and Sudan, which have not;

Whereas CEDAW is helping combat violence and discrimination against women and girls around the world;

Whereas CEDAW has had a significant and positive impact on legal developments in countries as diverse as Uganda, Colombia, Brazil, and South Africa, including, on citizenship rights in Botswana and Japan, inheritance rights in Tanzania, property rights and political participation in Costa Rica;

Whereas the Administration has proposed a small number of reservations, understandings, and declarations to ensure that U.S. ratification fully complies with all constitutional requirements, including states' and individuals' rights;

Whereas the legislatures of California, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, South Dakota, and Vermont have endorsed U.S. ratification of CEDAW;

Whereas more than one hundred U.S.-based, civic, legal, religious, education, and environmental organizations, including many major national membership organizations, support U.S. ratification of CEDAW;

Whereas ratification of CEDAW would allow the United States to nominate a representative to the CEDAW oversight committee; and

Whereas 1999 is the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of CEDAW by the UN General Assembly: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that

2 (1) the Senate Foreign Relations Committee
3 should hold hearings on the Convention on the
4 Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against
5 Women (CEDAW); and

6 (2) the Senate should act on CEDAW by March
7 8, 2000, International Women's Day.

○

America's Commitment



The United Nations Women's Conference Women 2000 • Beijing Plus Five

The President's Interagency Council on Women

December 10, 1999

DOMESTIC REGIONAL OUTREACH EVENTS

The President's Interagency Council on Women is working to coordinate various outreach events across the United States to celebrate the progress made since the UN Fourth World Conference on Women. These inclusive, regional events will be organized in partnership with diverse non-governmental organizations, colleges and universities, and regional community organizations, and will offer opportunities to share best practices, achievements and lessons learned. Reports generated at each event will be submitted to The President's Council for consideration by the U.S. Delegation to the UN Special Session in June 2000. Provided below is contact information for **Women 2000: Beijing Plus Five** regional outreach events currently being organized across the country.

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

January 28 & 29, 2000

Site: Mint Museum of Craft and Design

Contact: June Kimmel

Southwestern Regional Director, North Carolina Council for Women
500 West Trade Street, Box 360
Charlotte, NC 28202
Tel: (704) 342-6367 Fax: (704) 342-6367
E-mail: jmkimmel@ix.netcom.com

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

February 5, 2000

Site: Simmons College

Contact: Judy Hickey

Event Coordinator, Massachusetts Action for Women
7 Cross Street
Belmont, MA 02478
Tel: (617) 489-3180 Fax: (617) 489-5517
E-mail: judyhickey@aol.com

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

February 12, 2000

"Looking to Women for a CHANGE"

Site: Evergreen College (Olympia, Washington)

Contact: Karen Furia

Regional Administrator, U.S. Dept. of Labor Women's Bureau
1111 Third Avenue, Room 885
Seattle, WA 98101-3211
Tel: (206) 553-1534 Fax: (206) 553-5085
E-mail: furia-karen@dol.gov

DENVER, COLORADO

February 12, 2000

Site: Convention Center

Contact: Karen Beeks

Director, Global Partnerships for Humanity
9461 South Crestmore Way
Highlands Ranch, Colorado 80126
Tel: (303) 470-7810 Fax: (303) 791-0993
E-mail: wkbeeks@compuserve.com

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

February 26, 2000

Site: Pacific Bell Media Center

Contact: Marilyn Fowler
Executive Director, California Women's Agenda
Women's Intercultural Network
1950 Hayes Street, #2
San Francisco, CA 94117-1153
Tel: (415) 221-4841 Fax: (415) 221-4989
E-mail: win@win-cawa.org
Website: www.win-cawa.org

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

March 4, 2000

Site: TBD

Contact: Dorris Muscadin
Program Specialist, U.S. Dept. of Labor Women's Bureau
61 Forsyth Street, SW, Suite 7T95
Atlanta, GA 30303
Tel: (404) 562-2336 or (800) 672-8356
Fax: (404) 562-2413
E-mail: muscadin-dorris@dol.gov

BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA

March 31, 2000

Site: Pennington Biomedical Center

Contact: R. Gayle Harell Jackson
Assistant Attorney General
Louisiana Department of Justice
301 Main Street, Ste. 1250
Baton Rouge, LA 70801
Tel: (225) 342-9724 Fax: (225) 342-9637
E-mail: Jacsong@ag.state.la.us

Previous Women 2000 Regional Outreach Events

KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

October 13, 1999

"Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the 21st Century"

Site: University of Missouri at Kansas City
Contact: Carol Tally Davis
Tel: (816) 235-5725 Fax: (816) 235-5189
E-mail: davisc@umkc.edu
Website: www.umkc.edu/starr

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

November 6, 1999

"Women 2000: Beijing Plus Five Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference"

Site: DuPont Country Club
Contact: Kathleen M. Meyer
Conference Coordinator – Women 2000: Beijing Plus Five
Tel: (302) 764-8592 Fax: (302) 764-3776
E-mail: kathleenmeyer@msn.com

MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

November 6, 1999

"Beijing Plus Five – UN Women's Conference 2000"

Site: Holiday Inn, Manchester
Contact: The Honorable Jackie K. Weatherspoon
New Hampshire House of Representatives
Tel: (603) 778-9493 Fax: (603) 777-4384
E-mail: jkweather@hotmail.com

DALLAS, TEXAS

November 6 & 7, 1999

*"The Third North Texas UN Conference on Women:
Advancing Women and Youth in the Next Millenium"*

Site: University of Texas at Dallas – UTD Conference Center
Contact: Rita Mae Kelly
Co-Chair, Third North Texas UN Conference on Women
The University of Texas at Dallas
Tel: (972) 883-2935 Fax: (972) 883-6297
E-mail: rmkelly@utdallas.edu
Website: www.utdallas.edu/dept/socsci/Prog_pg1.html

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

December 6, 1999

Site: The Chicago Cultural Center

Contact: Nancy Chen
Regional Administrator, U.S. Dept. of Labor Women's Bureau
230 S. Dearborn Street, Rm. 1022
Chicago, IL 60604
Tel: (312) 353-6985 Fax: (312) 353-6986
E-mail: chen-nancy@dol.gov

CEDAW Briefing

**Tuesday, December 14, 1999
10:30 AM to 11:30 AM**

**Room 476
Eisenhower Executive Office Building**

TENTATIVE AGENDA

Lauren Supina
*Deputy Assistant to the President and
Director, White House Office for Women's Initiatives and Outreach*

Harold Koh
*Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor
U.S. Department of State*

Lidia Soto-Harmon
*Deputy Director, President's Interagency Council on Women
U.S. Department of State*

Eric Schwartz
*Senior Director, National Security Council
The White House*

Sean Morre
*Office of Senator Barbara Boxer
U.S. Congress*

Carisa Henze
*Office of Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey
U.S. Congress*

Kit Cosby
*Director for External Affairs
National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the U.S.*

Pat Rengel
*Chief Legislative Counsel
Amnesty International U.S.A.*



THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE FOR WOMEN'S INITIATIVES AND OUTREACH

OVERVIEW

The **White House Office for Women's Initiatives and Outreach** was created by President Clinton on June 7, 1995. The Women's Office contributes to the development of Administration policy as it relates to women and families, often by bringing the concerns of outside experts and constituency groups into the policy-making process. Inside and outside of the White House, the Women's Office advocates for issues that are important to women, including Social Security and Medicare; health care reform; reproductive rights and family planning; and policies to help families better balance work and family responsibilities as we approach the 21st Century.

The Women's Office serves as a liaison between the White House and organizations that work to advance the interests of women and families. The Office initiates events, briefings, and roundtable discussions to amplify and expand the Administration's agenda for women and families. These feature the President, Vice President, the First Lady, Mrs. Gore, and other Administration officials. An important and successful initiative of the Women's Office is *At the Table*, a series of roundtables across the nation between women and Administration officials.

The Women's Office is a valuable source of information on the Clinton Administration's initiatives and on the vast array of programs and resources for women and families across the federal government. Information on the Administration's family agenda, which includes child care, long-term care, after-school programs, and expansion of the Family and Medical Leave Act, as well as on the many other issues that are important to women, is available by regular electronic mail from the Women's Office.

(April 1999)

Phone: (202) 456-7300 Fax: (202) 456-7311
www.whitehouse.gov/WH/EOP/Women/OWIO/index.html



PRESIDENT CLINTON AND VICE PRESIDENT GORE: *Supporting Women and Families*

EXPANDING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Protecting Families.** The Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) -- the first piece of legislation the President signed into law -- enables workers to take up to 12 weeks unpaid leave to care for a new baby or ailing family member without jeopardizing their job. Sixty-seven million Americans -- over half of all workers -- are covered by the FMLA and millions of workers have already benefited from FMLA since its enactment.
- **Cutting Taxes for 15 Million Working Families** by extending the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). In 1997, the EITC lifted 4.3 million people, including 2.2 million children, out of poverty -- double the number of people lifted out of poverty by the EITC in 1993.
- **Increasing the Minimum Wage from \$4.25 to \$5.15**, giving six million women a raise.
- **Narrowing the Wage Gap.** In 1996, the median earnings of women working full-time increased 3 percent. In 1997, the median earnings of women represented 74 percent of the median earnings for men, the narrowest gap ever.
- **Fighting for Paycheck Equity.** Called on Congress to pass legislation to strengthen laws prohibiting wage discrimination.
- **Highest Homeownership Rate in History.** There are more than seven million new homeowners since the President took office. Women's home ownership has increased 14% with 1.9 million new women homeowners since the first quarter of 1994.
- **Providing Incentives to Save.** The President signed into law a five-year, \$125 million demonstration program for Individual Development Accounts, providing incentives for low income families to save for a first home, higher education, or to start a new business, effectively completing his 1992 community empowerment agenda.
- **Increasing Pension Security.** Fought for legislation that has expanded pension coverage, made pensions more secure for 40 million American workers and retirees, and simplified pension plan administration. Promoting new efforts to encourage retirement savings.
- **Closing The Book on A Generation of Deficits.** In 1992, the deficit was \$290 billion, a record dollar high. This year, the Administration expects the budget surplus to be at least \$76 billion, the largest budget surplus in history.

- **Saving Social Security First.** In 1999, nearly 60 percent of all Social Security beneficiaries will be women. Social Security will be the major source of retirement income for a majority of these women. President Clinton is committed to saving Social Security for the 21st Century and has urged that budget surpluses be reserved for a bipartisan plan to strengthen Social Security.

CARING FOR OUR CHILDREN:

- **Extending Health Care to Millions of Children with the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).** This is the single largest investment in Health Care for children since 1965. The President fought to ensure that the 1997 Balanced Budget Act included \$24 billion to provide real health care coverage to millions of uninsured children.
- **Fought for and won \$500 Child Tax Credit for 26 Million Families with over 40 Million Children under Age 17.** Twelve million children from families with income below \$30,000 will receive the child tax credit as a result of the President's efforts.
- **Largest Four-Year Drop in Child Poverty Since 1960s.** Under President Clinton, the child poverty rate has declined from 22.7 percent to 19.9 percent -- the biggest four-year drop in nearly 30 years (1965-1969). While this marks significant progress, President Clinton will continue to fight for policies that help to raise incomes and reduce poverty.
- **Helping 7.4 Million Women and Children with WIC.** In FY99, 7.4 million women, infants and children will receive health and food assistance through the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children program (WIC), one million more than in 1994.
- **Ensuring Safe Food for America's Families.** Issued new standards to reduce and prevent contamination of meat, poultry and seafood; signed the Food Quality Protection Act with special safeguards for kids; issued new regulations that improve the safety of fruit and vegetable juices; and created a President's Council on Food Safety to develop a comprehensive food safety strategic plan for federal agencies.
- **Held First-Ever White House Conference on Early Child Development and Learning and the White House Conference on Child Care.** In April 1997, the President and First Lady held the White House Conference on Early Child Development and Learning to highlight the benefits of early nurturing by parents. And in October 1997, the White House Conference on Child Care began a dialogue on the child care challenges facing parents today -- availability, affordability, and assuring safety and quality.
- **Proposed the Largest Single Investment in Child Care in the Nation's History.** In 1998, the President proposed an historic initiative to improve child care for America's working families by helping families pay for child care, building the supply of good after-school programs, improving child care quality and promoting early learning. The President won \$182 million to improve the quality of child care for America's working families in the FY99 budget.
- **Signed Landmark Adoption and Safe Families Act.** This law will help thousands of children waiting in foster care move more quickly into safe and permanent homes.
- **Signed the Comprehensive Childhood Immunization Initiative.** Thanks to President Clinton, immunization rates among two-year-olds have reached historic highs.
- **Took Steps to Ensure Children Have Safe Medications.** Unveiled an FDA regulation that protects children by requiring manufacturers to study appropriate dosage levels of drugs for pediatric populations.
- **Launched New Strategies to Reduce the High Rate of Teen Pregnancies.** Teen (aged 15 to 19 years) births have fallen six years in a row, by 12 percent from 1991 to 1996.
- **Increased Child Support Collections by 80%.** Signed into law the toughest child support crackdown

PRESIDENT CLINTON AND VICE PRESIDENT GORE:

Supporting Women and Families

EXPANDING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Protecting Families.** The Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) -- the first piece of legislation the President signed into law -- enables workers to take up to 12 weeks unpaid leave to care for a new baby or ailing family member without jeopardizing their job. Ninety-one million Americans -- 71 percent of the labor force -- are covered by the FMLA and millions of workers have already benefited from FMLA since its enactment.
- **Cutting Taxes for 15 Million Working Families** by extending the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). In 1998, the EITC lifted 4.3 million people, including 2.2 million children, out of poverty -- double the number of people lifted out of poverty by the EITC in 1993.
- **Increasing the Minimum Wage from \$4.25 to \$5.15**, giving six million women a raise.
- **Narrowing the Wage Gap.** In 1996, the median earnings of women working full-time increased 3 percent. In 1998, the average woman earned about 75 cents for every dollar earned by men, the narrowest wage gap ever.
- **Fighting for Paycheck Equity.** The President and the Vice President have called on Congress to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would strengthen laws prohibiting wage discrimination.
- **Highest Homeownership Rate in History.** There are 7.8 million new homeowners since the President took office. Women's homeownership has increased 14% with 1.9 million new women homeowners since the first quarter of 1994.
- **Providing Incentives to Save.** The President signed into law a five-year, \$125 million demonstration program for Individual Development Accounts, providing incentives for low income families to save for a first home, higher education, or to start a new business, effectively completing his 1992 community empowerment agenda.
- **Increasing Pension Security.** Fought for legislation that has expanded pension coverage, made pensions more secure for 40 million American workers and retirees, and simplified pension plan administration. Promoting new efforts to encourage retirement savings.
- **Closing The Book on A Generation of Deficits.** In 1992, the deficit was \$290 billion, a record dollar high. This year, the Administration expects the budget surplus to be at least \$123 billion, the largest budget surplus in history. This is the first time the United States has maintained a surplus for two years in a row since 1956-7, and the first time in U.S. history with seven years in a row of fiscal improvement.
- **Saving Social Security First.** In 1999, nearly 60 percent of all Social Security beneficiaries will be women. Social Security will be the major source of retirement income for a majority of these women. The President has laid out a bold framework to devote the entire Social Security surplus to debt reduction and dedicate the resulting interest savings to Social Security, extending the solvency until the middle of the next century. Under the Clinton-Gore Administration, the life of the Social Security Trust Fund has been extended until 2034.
- **Highest Median Family Income in History.** Since the President launched his economic plan in 1993, median family income is the highest it has ever been. The typical family's income is up over \$5,000. In 1998, median household income is up 3.5 percent to a new high of \$38,885.
- **Moving Families from Welfare to Work.** Since enactment of the 1996 welfare reform law, millions of families have moved from welfare to work, and four times more of those on welfare are working than in 1992. Through new regulations, the Clinton Administration has provided states with unprecedented flexibility to support working families. With the President's leadership, the Balanced Budget of 1997

included \$3 billion in Welfare-to-Work grants to move long-term welfare recipients and unemployed non-custodial parents into jobs, and support innovative strategies addressing challenges to employment, including domestic violence and substance abuse. The FY 2000 budget proposed \$1 billion to extend the Welfare-to-Work program.

- **Increasing Child Support Collections.** In FY 1998, the federal-state partnership collected a record \$14.3 billion in child support payments from non-custodial parents, an 80 percent increase since 1992 when \$8 billion was collected. Not only are collections up, but the number of families actually receiving child support increased by 59 percent since 1992.

CARING FOR OUR CHILDREN:

- **Fought for and Won \$500 Child Tax Credit for 27 Million Families with 45 Million Children under Age 17.** Twelve million children from families with income below \$30,000 will receive the child tax credit as a result of the President's efforts.
- **Largest Five-Year Drop in Child Poverty Since 1960s.** Under President Clinton, the child poverty rate has declined from 22.7 percent to 18.9 percent -- the biggest five-year drop in 30 years (1965-1969) and the first time the child poverty rate dropped below 20 percent since 1980. Child poverty among African-Americans is at its lowest level on record. In 1998, the child poverty rate saw its largest one-year drop in more than two decades. While this marks significant progress, President Clinton will continue to fight for policies that help to raise incomes and reduce poverty.
- **Helping 7.4 Million Women and Children with WIC.** In FY99, 7.4 million women, infants and children will receive health and food assistance through the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children program (WIC), one million more than in 1994.
- **Ensuring Safe Food for America's Families.** Issued new standards to reduce and prevent contamination of meat, poultry and seafood; signed the Food Quality Protection Act with special safeguards for kids; issued new regulations that improve the safety of fruit and vegetable juices; and created a President's Council on Food Safety to develop a comprehensive food safety strategic plan for federal agencies.
- **Held First-Ever White House Conference on Early Child Development and Learning and the White House Conference on Child Care.** In April 1997, the President and First Lady held the White House Conference on Early Child Development and Learning to highlight the benefits of early nurturing by parents. And in October 1997, the White House Conference on Child Care began a dialogue on the child care challenges facing parents today -- availability, affordability, and assuring safety and quality.
- **Proposed the Largest Single Investment in Child Care in the Nation's History.** Child care funding has increased 80 percent under the Clinton-Gore Administration, helping parents to pay for the care of about 1.25 million children. In 1998, the President proposed an historic initiative to improve child care for America's working families by helping families pay for child care, building the supply of good after-school programs, improving child care quality and promoting early learning. The President won \$182 million to improve the quality of child care for America's working families in the FY99 budget.
- **Signed Landmark Adoption and Safe Families Act.** 36,000 foster care children were adopted in fiscal year 1998, up from 28,000 in 1996. This is the first significant increase in adoption since the national foster care program was established nearly 20 years ago. The President announced in September 1999 that under the Adoption Opportunities Program \$5.5 million in new awards will be

used to provide grants to public and private organizations to eliminate barriers to adoption, particularly for children with special needs.

- **Raised Immunization Rates to an All-Time High.** 90 percent of toddlers in 1996, 1997, and 1998 received the most critical doses of each of the routinely recommended vaccines, surpassing the President's 1993 goal. Childhood immunization rates in 1998 were the highest ever recorded.
- **Passed the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).** Proposed by President Clinton and passed as part of the bipartisan Balanced Budget Act of 1997, CHIP is the largest single expansion of health insurance coverage for children in more than 30 years. And in October 1999, the President announced new federal efforts to identify and enroll millions of children in Medicaid and CHIP.
- **Took Steps to Ensure Children Have Safe Medications.** Unveiled an FDA regulation that protects children by requiring manufacturers to study appropriate dosage levels of drugs for pediatric populations.
- **Launched New Strategies to Reduce the High Rate of Teen Pregnancies.** Teen (aged 15 to 19 years) births have fallen seven years in a row, by 18 percent from 1991 to 1998. The teen birth rate is at its lowest level since 1987.
- **Imposed Strict Measures to Keep Cigarettes out of the Hands of Our Children** by restricting youth-targeted advertising; and the FDA made 18 the minimum age to purchase tobacco products nationwide, requiring photo I.D.s for anyone under the age of 27. And the President is fighting to enact comprehensive tobacco legislation.

INVESTING IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

- **Largest Investment in Education in 30 Years.** Maintaining his longtime commitment to education, the President enacted the largest investment in education in 30 years -- and the largest investment in higher education since the G.I. Bill -- by signing the 1997 Balanced Budget Act.
- **Providing Early Education to 835,000 Children with Head Start.** More than 200,000 additional children are enrolled in Head Start today than in 1992.
- **More High-Quality Teachers With Smaller Class Sizes.** Won a down payment on the President's new initiative to hire an additional 100,000 well-prepared teachers, helping school districts reduce class size in the early grades, when children learn to read and master the basic skills. Last year \$1.2 billion was provided to help states hire approximately 30,000 new teachers for fall 1999.
- **Teaching Every Child to Read by the 3rd Grade.** More than 1,000 colleges have committed Work Study students to tutor children in reading, and thousands of AmeriCorps members and senior volunteers are organizing volunteer reading campaigns. Won \$260 million for a new child literacy initiative, consistent with the President's America Reads proposal.
- **Striving for Excellence with National Education Standards.** Seeking high national standards for all students, the President has proposed a first-ever national test in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math.
- **Expanding Choice and Accountability in Public School.** Supported increase of public charter schools, from one charter school in the nation in 1993 to more than 1,000 charter schools in 1998, on track toward 3,000 quality charter schools early next century.
- **Establishing the GEAR-UP Mentoring Program for Middle School Children.** Created a new mentoring initiative to help up to 100,000 low income middle school children prepare for college.
- **Providing Safe After-School Opportunities for Nearly 400,000 Children Each Year.** Expanded the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program to provide safe and educational after-school opportunities for 400,000 school-age children in rural and urban communities each year.

- **Paying for College Through Community Service.** AmeriCorps has allowed more than 100,000 young people to serve their communities while earning money for college or skills training.
- **Fought for Passage of Education Tax Breaks to Promote Lifelong Learning.** Representing the largest single increase in higher education since the G.I. Bill, the 1997 Balanced Budget Act included a \$1,500 Hope Scholarship which has made the first two years of college universally available for nearly six million students.
- **Increasing College Opportunity with Tuition Tax Credits and Education IRAs.** Twenty percent tax credit will help more than seven million students offset tuition costs for college or lifetime learning. The expanded IRA allows penalty and tax-free withdrawals for education.
- **Expanded Work Study.** This year, nearly one million students will be able to work their way through college because of the President's expansion of the Work Study Program
- **Largest Maximum Pell Grant Award Ever.** In 1997, President Clinton signed into law the largest one-year increase in Pell Grant scholarships in 20 years. In 1999, nearly four million students will receive a Pell Grant of up to \$3,125, the largest maximum award ever.

IMPROVING OUR NATION'S HEALTH:

- **Protected and Strengthened Medicare, Benefiting the 22 Million American Women Enrolled in Medicare.** President Clinton and Vice President Gore are working to modernize and strengthen Medicare to prepare it for the challenges the program faces in the 21st Century. This historic initiative would make Medicare more competitive and efficient; modernize and reform Medicare's benefits, including a long-overdue optional prescription drug benefit and cost-sharing protections for preventive benefits; and make an unprecedented long-term financing commitment to the program that would extend the life of the Medicare trust fund to 2027. Already the Clinton-Gore Administration has extended the life of the Medicare Trust Fund until 2015 -- when they took office, it was expected to run out of funds in 1999. They have expanded choices in health plans and provided beneficiaries new preventive benefits, including more affordable annual mammograms for all beneficiaries, cervical cancer screening, and tests to help detect osteoporosis. The President also put forth a proposal that will provide greater access to health insurance for Americans ages 55 to 65, including an option to buy into Medicare.
- **Increased Funding for Breast Cancer Research.** Since the President took office, funding for breast cancer research, prevention and treatment has doubled, from \$283 million in FY93 to \$550 million in FY98 (Health and Human Services' discretionary funding). In addition, the President has implemented the Mammography Quality Standards Act to ensure the quality of mammograms. Women can now find a certified mammography facility by calling 1-800-4-CANCER.
- **Created Office of Cancer Survivorship.** President Clinton unveiled the new Office of Cancer Survivorship at the National Cancer Institute. The Office will support research covering the range of issues facing survivors of cancer.
- **Providing Protection with the Patients' Bill of Rights.** The President and Vice President have called on Congress to pass Federally enforceable consumer health care protections that include: guaranteed access to needed health care specialists including direct access to an OB-GYN; access to emergency room services when and where the need arises; continuity of care protections to ensure that patients' care will not abruptly change if their provider is dropped; access to a timely internal and independent external appeals process for consumers to resolve their differences with their health plans; a limit on financial incentives to doctors to limit care and assurances that doctors and patients can openly discuss treatment options. Women are particularly vulnerable without these health care

protections because they are greater users of health care services, they make three-quarters of the health care decisions for their families, and they have specific health care needs that are directly addressed by a patients' bill of rights.

- **Preventing Discrimination Based on Genetic Information Both by Health Plans and Employers.** The Administration has urged Congress to pass bipartisan legislation to prohibit health plans from inappropriately using genetic screening information to deny coverage, set premiums, or to distribute confidential information. The President also has supported legislation that ensures that employers do not use genetic information to discriminate against employees.
- **Fought for Greater Health Security for America's Families.** The President signed into law the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act which helps millions of Americans who move from one job to another, who are self-employed, or who have pre-existing medical conditions keep their health insurance.
- **Endorsed Legislation That Would Ban Drive-Thru Mastectomies,** allowing women to stay in the hospital at least 48 hours following a mastectomy.
- **Ended Drive-Thru Deliveries.** Proposed and signed into law legislation requiring insurers to cover at least 48 hours of a post-natal hospital stay (72 hours for a Cesarean).

MAKING OUR HOMES AND COMMUNITIES SAFER:

- **Violent Crime at Lowest Level Since 1973.** Under the Clinton-Gore Administration, America has experienced the longest continuous drop in crime on record. Violent crime fell 6 percent in 1998 and 21 percent since 1993. The murder rate is down 30 percent since 1994, its lowest point since 1967. The rate of forcible rape is down 12 percent since 1994.
- **Putting 100,000 New Police on the Street.** This year, ahead of schedule and under budget, the Administration has met its commitment to fund 100,000 police officers for our communities. The Administration is working to put 50,000 more police on the streets, especially in high-crime neighborhoods, to keep communities safe.
- **Signed the Assault Weapons Ban, the Brady Bill and an Expansion of Brady into Law.** The Brady Law has already kept guns away from more than 400,000 persons including felons, fugitives and other prohibited purchasers (including individuals convicted of domestic violence misdemeanors or who are under restraining orders). The President signed into law the expansion of the Brady Law to include individuals convicted of domestic violence misdemeanors. The use of firearms in relation to homicides has steadily declined during the Clinton-Gore Administration.
- **Held the First-Ever White House Conference on School Safety.** On October 15, 1998, the President hosted the White House Conference on School Safety. The participants explored solutions to this national challenge: How do schools, families and communities work together to make sure that every child is safe in every school in America.
 - **National Campaign Against Youth Violence.** In August 1999, President Clinton announced the formation of an independent, national campaign to address the problem of youth violence. The Campaign plans to launch anti-violence activities including a major media campaign, concerts, town hall meetings, in- and after-school programs. The Campaign will also highlight effective youth violence initiatives in cities across the country.
- **Signed Megan's Law and the Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexually Violent Offender Registration Act.** Requiring states to set up sex offender registration systems and require community notification when sex offenders are released.
- **Championed and Signed the Violence Against Women Act,** the cornerstone of the President's

efforts to fight domestic violence, bolstering local law enforcement, prosecution, and victims' services to better address these crimes. Created the Violence Against Women Office at the Department of Justice. Won \$283 million in FY99 budget to continue the Administration's efforts to combat gender-based crime. The President's FY 2000 budget includes an additional \$27.9 million to fund a department-wide initiative to prevent violence against women from occurring and to provide services to its victims.

- **More than Quadrupled Funding to Domestic Violence Shelters** and signed the Interstate Stalking Punishment and Prevention Act of 1996 which makes it a Federal crime to cross state lines intending to injure or harass another person.
- **Established Nationwide 24-Hour Domestic Violence Hotline.** The hotline (1-800-799-SAFE) provides immediate crisis intervention, counseling and referrals for those in need. Since the hotline opened, there have been more than 230,000 calls -- averaging 8,000 calls a month -- from all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

PROMOTING REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES FOR WOMEN:

- **Reversed the "Gag Rule"** limiting the information federally funded family planning clinics could give to women.
- **Increased Funding for Family Planning.** The FY99 budget increased Title X Family Planning grants by \$12 million -- a 24 percent increase since FY93. And in 1998, successfully defeated parental consent restrictions on contraceptives services for minors.
- **Provided Contraceptive Coverage to More than a Million Women.** The FY99 budget requires the 300 Federal Employees Health Benefits Plans (FEHBP) to cover contraceptive drugs and devices, providing coverage to approximately 1.2 million women of childbearing age.
- **Protected FDA's Role in Testing RU-486.** In 1993, reversed the ban on the importation of Mifepristone or RU-486. In 1998 and 1999, successfully fought for removal of a provision that would prohibit the FDA from testing, developing or approving RU-486, thereby usurping the Agency's role in making scientific determinations about the effect of drugs on the safety and health of the American people.
- **Signed the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act,** establishing a safety-zone around women's health clinics.

STRENGTHENING EQUAL EMPLOYMENT PROTECTIONS:

- **Increasing Funding for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).** The FY99 budget included \$279 million -- a \$37 million increase over the previous year -- to significantly expand EEOC's alternative dispute resolution program and reduce the backlog of private sector discrimination complaints. The final budget fully funds the President's request -- providing the first real increase for EEOC in several years.

GENERATING MORE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN:

- **Women Are Starting Businesses at Twice the Rate of All Businesses.** Women own nearly 40 percent of all firms in the United States, and the number of women-owned businesses grew by 46 percent from 1987 to 1997. These eight million women-owned firms employ more than 23 million

employees and contribute \$2.3 trillion to the economy. The Small Business Administration's Office of Women's Business Ownership is working to foster this growth.

- **Expanded Small Business Opportunities for Women.** In the FY99 budget, doubled the funding for SBA Women's Business Centers which provides resources to foster increased entrepreneurship among women.
- **Tripled the Number of Small Business Loans to Women Entrepreneurs.** Between 1993 and 1997 the SBA approved nearly 50,000 loans to women entrepreneurs under the 7(a) and 504 loan programs. In 1997 alone, the Small Business Administration granted more than 10,000 loans, worth \$1.67 billion, to women small business owners, triple the number of loans granted in 1992.

WOMEN AS PARTNERS IN DECISION MAKING:

- **Appointed More Women than Any Other President --** 40 percent of Administration appointees are women.
- **Women Hold 28 Percent of the Top Positions --** 28 percent of the positions requiring Senate confirmation (PAS) are held by women. Additionally,
 - 34 percent of Presidential appointments, including boards and commissions, are held by women.
 - 41 percent of non-career Senior Executive Service positions are held by women.
 - 58 percent of Schedule C positions are held by women.
- **Appointed the First Women Ever to Serve as Attorney General, Janet Reno; and Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright.** Including the Attorney General and Secretary of State, women make up 32 percent of the Clinton Cabinet: Alexis Herman, Secretary of Labor; Donna Shalala, Secretary of Health and Human Services; Carol Browner, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency; Aida Alvarez, Administrator of the Small Business Association; Charlene Barshefsky, United States Trade Representative all serve in the President's Cabinet; and Janice LaChance, Director of the Office of Personnel Management.
- **30 Percent of All of the President's Judicial Nominees Are Women.**
- **Nominated the Second Woman to Serve on the Supreme Court.** During his first year in office, President Clinton nominated Ruth Bader Ginsburg to the United States Supreme Court. Justice Ginsburg is only the second woman to serve on the nation's highest court.
- **Created Offices to Address the Concerns of Women.** The President created the White House Office for Women's Initiatives & Outreach, the Justice Department's Violence Against Women Office, and the Interagency Council on Women's Business Enterprise to ensure that women's economic concerns are addressed at the top levels of his Administration.

White House Office for Women's Initiatives and Outreach Federal Programs and Resources for Women and Families

Business

- 202-205-6673** Women's Business Ownership
(assistance with women's entrepreneurial issues) www.sba.gov
- 800-827-5335** Department of Labor Women's Bureau Clearinghouse (women's legal rights in the workplace) www.dol.gov/dol/wb
- 202-219-6611** Department of Labor Women's Bureau, general office (concerning economic and international issues) www.sba.gov
- 202-205-6673** U.S. Small Business Administration Office of Women's Business Ownership (specifically created to help women entrepreneurs) www.sba.gov
- 800-8-ASK-SBA** U. S. Small Business Administration (on managing and financing a woman-owned small business) www.sba.gov
- 800-532-1169** Department of Transportation Short-Term Lending Program (application for a short-term loan, particularly women in small businesses) www.dot.gov
- 202-512-1800** Working Women Count! A Report to the Nation, Government Printing Office, Publication #029-002-0082 (call for a copy of the survey results) www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/
- 800-669-4000** Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (to report sexual discrimination or harassment) www.eeoc.gov
- 202-693-0101** Office of Federal Contract Compliance (to report sexual discrimination in any company which contracts with the federal government) www.dol.gov
- 800-616-2242** Department of Health and Human Services, National Child Care Information Center (concerning child care and other work and family issues) www.nccic.org
- 202-616-8894** Violence Against Women Office in the Justice Department (for information concerning domestic violence) www.usdoj.gov

Education

- 800-433-3243** Federal Student Aid Information Center (information and applications for student loans) www.fafsa.ed.gov
- 800-4-FED-AID**
- 800-251-7236** National School to Work Program, Learning and Information Center (about implementing a School-to-Work program in your area; helping students make the connection between schoolwork and career) www.ftw.ed.gov
- 202-606-5000** Corporation for National Service, AmeriCorps Program (about AmeriCorps, a program which loans money to students in return for community service) www.nationalservice.org or www.americorps.org
- 202-260-3954** Department of Education, Office for Safe and Drug-Free Schools (regarding federal programs addressing violence and drugs in public schools) www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS
- 800-USA-LEARN** Department of Education, Information Resource Center (referral to any Department of Education program, including Goals 2000: Educate America) www.ed.gov
- 202-205-5463** Department of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs (about bilingual education programs) www.ed.gov/offices/OBEMLA
- 202-205-8572** Department of Health and Human Services, Head Start (about Head Start, a pre-school program for low income children) www.hhs.gov
- 202-226-2502** Department of Education, Women's Educational Equity Act Program (funding for agencies and organizations which implement programs to promote educational equality for women and girls) www.ed.gov
- 202-226-2533**
- 202-514-4092** Department of Justice, Educational Opportunity Section (federal statutes concerning discrimination in schools) www.usdoj.gov

Health

- 800-799-SAFE** National Domestic Violence Hotline
(domestic violence, emergency shelters,
legal advocacy, assistance programs,
social services, and batterers' programs)
www.ndvh.org
- 202-690-7650** Public Health Service, Office on Women's
Health (coordinates and provides general
information on resources, services, and
education on women's health programs in
the federal government)
www.4woman.gov
- 301-594-4000** Public Health Service, Office of
Population Affairs (oversees federally-
funded family planning clinics)
www.hhs.gov/progorg/opa/opa.html
- 301-402-1770** Office of Research on Women's Health,
National Institutes of Health (about
women's health research at the National
Institutes of Health)
www4.od.nih.gov/orwh/overview.html
- 301-827-0350** Office of Women's Health, Food and Drug
888-INFO-FDA Administration (FDA policies and
regulations concerning women's inclusion
in clinical drug trials and research)
www.fda.gov/womens/
- 800-677-1116** Eldercare Locator, Department of Health
and Human Services Administration on
Aging (for assistance for elder persons
and caregivers) www.aoa.dhhs.gov
- 800-729-6686** National Clearinghouse on Alcohol and
Drug Information, Department of Health
and Human Services, Center on Substance
Abuse Prevention (on drug and alcohol
abuse) www.health.org
- 800-421-4211** National Institute of Mental Health
Depression www.nimh.nih.gov
- 800-994-9662** Women's Health Initiative, National
Institutes of Health (largest study on
preventing heart, lung and bone disease
in older women) www.nih.gov
- 800-4-CANCER** Cancer Information Service, National
Cancer Institute (about cancer and for
referral to an FDA approved
mammography center in your area)
www.nci.nih.gov
- 800-458-5231** AIDS Clearinghouse, Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention (about AIDS and
referral to research and medical services)
www.cdcnpin.org

Children and Youth

- 800-959-FMLA** Department of Labor, Wage and Hour
Division, Family and Medical Leave Team
(to find out your rights under the Family
and Medical Leave Act)
www.dol.gov/dol/esa/fmla.htm
- 202-690-6782** Department of Health and Human
Services, Administration for Children and
Families, Child Care Bureau (for referrals
to local, federally-funded child care
centers, and information about national
child care policy)
www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ccb
- 202-442-5999** Department of Health and Human
Services, Administration for Children
and Families, Family and Youth
Services Bureau (about federally funded
youth programs)
www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/fysb
- 202-606-5000** Corporation for National Service, Learn
and Serve America (grants to community
and school-based programs)
www.nationalservice.org
- 301-496-3454** Department of Health and Human
Services, National Institute of Child
Health and Human Development (for
biomedical information on children's
disorders and health, research
reproductive health and preventative
medicine) www.nih.gov/nichd
- 703-385-7565** National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse
and Neglect (about child abuse and
neglect) www.calib.com/nccanch
- 202-647-2688** Department of State, Office of Children's
Issues (about international child adoption)
www.state.gov
- 202-401-9373** Department of Health and Human
Services, Administration for Children
and Families, Child Support
Enforcement (on child support
enforcement) www.acf.dhhs.gov

Interagency

- 202-647-6227** Department of State, The President's
Interagency Council on Women
(coordinates follow-up of Beijing World
Conference on Women)
secretary.state.gov/www/iacw/index.html

THE WHITE HOUSE WOMEN'S OFFICE
PHONE: (202) 456-7300 FAX: (202) 456-7311
www.whitehouse.gov/WH/EOP/Women/OWIO