

WE NEED ACTION ON CEDAW!

Forty-four years ago in 1979, Pres. Carter approved and sent to the Senate for final approval the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) – a treaty for the rights of women. To date, 189 of the 193 UN Member States have ratified CEDAW and 114 have ratified the Optional Protocol. The proposed amendment will enter into force once a two thirds majority of States parties has accepted it. Our country is the only major country in the world that has not yet ratified it. The Senate has never approved it. Shameful!

Though the US is a key country in leading world issues, this is an embarrassment, especially on this topic.

The major issues are:

Civil Rights: Included are the rights to vote, to hold public office and to exercise public functions; rights to non-discrimination in education, employment and economic and social activities; equality of women in civil and business matters; and equal rights with regard to choice of spouse, parenthood, personal rights and command over property.

Reproductive Rights: Included are provisions for fully shared responsibility for childrearing by both sexes; the rights of maternity protection and child-care including mandated child-care facilities and maternity leave; and the right to reproductive choice and family planning.

Gender Relations: The convention requires ratifying nations to modify social and cultural patterns to eliminate gender prejudices and biases; revise textbooks, school programs and teaching methods to remove gender stereotypes within the educational system; and address modes of behavior and thought which define the public realm as a man's world and the home as a woman's, thereby affirming that both genders have equal responsibilities in family life and equal rights regarding education and employment.

Countries that ratify the agreement are expected to work toward implementing the convention's provisions. Every four years each nation must submit a report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. A panel of 23 CEDAW board members reviews these reports and recommends areas requiring further action.

[See: Lowen, Linda. "Why Won't the U.S. Ratify the CEDAW Human Rights Treaty?" ThoughtCo, Feb. 16, 2021, <https://www.thoughtco.com/why-wont-u-s-ratify-cedaw3533824>.]

Through the efforts of local activists, our city commission, county commission and the Florida legislature approved it over 15 years ago.

Articles 4 and 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights forbids slavery and Article 6 of CEDAW addresses slavery and degrading treatment (common attributes of human trafficking). Human trafficking is a present-day problem, even locally in Florida.

We need to move forward. Looking at ourselves and others, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights needs to be more fully activated.

Because of the U.S. Senate ignoring it, Article 6 in the treaty focusing on safety of women in human trafficking, has intensified and increased substantially in our country especially with Florida, Washington DC, and California being on top of the list. You can see activity of it in Tampa and Ocala, the leading hot beds in Florida; it has also increased in our own community of Alachua County.

The issue of CEDAW needs to be brought up again with the Senate, where it has been languishing on Mitch McConnell's desk for many years.

The world needs this! We demand action from the new Congress in 2023!

See: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/conventionelimination-all-forms-discrimination-against-women>

See: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

Please communicate with our elected officials what needs to be done – RATIFICATION!
- send email or personal letters - the sticky wheel needs the grease. Thank you!

Outreach to:

President Joe Biden: info@contact.joebiden.com

Vice President Kamala Harris: vice.president@whitehouse.gov (this address is iffy)

Senator Marco Rubio: from his website:

<https://www.rubio.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact>)

Senator Rick Scott: from his website: <https://www.rickscott.senate.gov/contact/contact>)

Governor Ron DeSantis: governorron.desantis@eog.myflorida

Senator Keith Perry: perry.keith@flsenate.gov (this address is correct)

Representative Chuck Clemons: chuck.clemons@myfloridahouse.gov

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