



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 798

Resolution calling on President Obama to sign the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Senate to ratify both the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

By Council Members Dromm, Brewer, Comrie, Ferreras, James, Koppell, Lander, Mendez, Rose, Van Bramer, Williams and Mark-Viverito

Whereas, The Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is an international human rights treaty specifically created to address sex-based discrimination and to promote the economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights of women; and

Whereas, CEDAW sets forth basic standards that individual nations agree to pursue to eliminate prejudices and customs based on the perceived inferiority of one sex or on stereotyped gender roles; and

Whereas, CEDAW also requires ratifying nations to incorporate gender equality into their policies and to repeal any laws that discriminate against women; and

Whereas, CEDAW is overseen by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which meets biannually to review signatory nations' compliance with the provisions of the treaty; and

Whereas, The United Nations General Assembly adopted the CEDAW in 1979, which entered into force in 1981; and

Whereas, The United States signed the CEDAW in 1980 but has yet to ratify it; and

Whereas, One hundred eighty-six countries have ratified CEDAW, and the United States, Somalia, Sudan, Iran, Palau, Nauru, and Tonga are the only United Nations member states that have not; and

Whereas, The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination

against Women (OP-CEDAW), which establishes a complaint and investigatory mechanism for violations under the treaty, was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1999 and went into effect in 2000; and

Whereas, One hundred two nations have signed on to OP-CEDAW; and

Whereas, President Barack Obama has not signed OP-CEDAW despite expressing public support for the CEDAW; and

Whereas, Requiring the United States to adhere to the principles of CEDAW would be particularly beneficial to the women of New York, where discrimination and disparate treatment endure despite its progressive reputation; and

Whereas, According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median weekly salary for a woman in New York State is 84 percent that of a man; and

Whereas, Women are also disproportionately affected by domestic violence, accounting for 84 percent of the victims of abuse by an intimate partner in New York City in 2009; and

Whereas, Unfortunately, women are also underrepresented in New York's political sphere, accounting for just 23 percent of elected officials in the state legislature, and only 35 percent of the New York City Council; and

Whereas, Ratification of both CEDAW and OP-CEDAW is an important step towards improving the well-being of women in the United States and would solidify this nation's place as an international leader in the human rights; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on President Obama to sign the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Senate to ratify both the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

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