

House Resolution 1662

By: Representatives Stephenson of the 90th, Mitchell of the 88th, Scott of the 76th, and Mosby of the 83rd

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing March 8, 2018, as United Nations International Women's Day; and for other
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, United Nations International Women's Day commemorates the role of ordinary
4 women in making a difference in history and is rooted in the centuries-old struggle of women
5 participating in society on an equal footing with men; and

6 WHEREAS, in 1910, at an international meeting in Copenhagen with over 100 women
7 present from 17 countries, Women's Day was established to honor the movement for
8 women's rights and to assist in achieving universal suffrage for women; and

9 WHEREAS, as a result of a decision made at the Copenhagen meeting, United Nations
10 International Women's Day was designated for the first time in Austria, Denmark, Germany,
11 and Switzerland on March 19, 1911; and

12 WHEREAS, on that day, more than one million women and men attended rallies concerning
13 not only the right to vote and hold public office but also the right to work, to vocational
14 training, and an end to job discrimination; and

15 WHEREAS, as of March, 2018, there are more than 3.6 billion women in the world; and

16 WHEREAS, women around the world have the fundamental right to participate in the
17 political, social, and economic lives of their communities; play a critical role in providing
18 and caring for their families; contribute substantially to economic growth and the prevention
19 and resolution of conflict; work as farmers and caregivers; and play an important role in the
20 advancement of food security for their communities; and

21 WHEREAS, the National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security includes a
22 comprehensive set of commitments by the United States to advance the meaningful
23 participation of women in decision making that relates to matters of war or peace; and

24 WHEREAS, the plan states that "deadly conflicts can be more effectively avoided, and peace
25 can be best forged and sustained, when women become equal partners in all aspects of peace
26 building and conflict prevention, when their lives are protected, their voices heard, and their
27 perspectives taken into account"; and

28 WHEREAS, currently, 63 national action plans have been implemented around the world,
29 and several additional plans are known to be in development; and

30 WHEREAS, the joint strategy of the Department of State and the United States Agency for
31 International Development entitled "Department of State & USAID Joint Strategy on
32 Countering Violent Extremism" notes that women can play a critical role in identifying and
33 addressing drivers of violent extremism in their families, communities, and broader society;
34 and

35 WHEREAS, the United Nations Global Awards, the Organization of World Leaders, and
36 Trinity Girls Network are committed to supporting programs that engage women as key
37 stakeholders in preventing and countering violent extremism in their communities; and

38 WHEREAS, despite the historical underrepresentation of women in conflict resolution
39 processes, women in conflict-affected regions have nevertheless achieved significant success
40 in moderating violent extremism, countering terrorism, resolving disputes through nonviolent
41 mediation and negotiation, and stabilizing societies by improving access to peace and
42 security; and

43 WHEREAS, according to the United Nations, peace negotiations are more likely to end in
44 a peace agreement when women's groups play an influential role in the negotiation process;
45 and

46 WHEREAS, a study by the International Peace Institute shows that a peace agreement is 35
47 percent more likely to last at least 15 years if women participate in the development of the
48 peace agreement; and

49 WHEREAS, approximately 15 million girls are married every year before they reach the age
50 of 18, which means that 41,000 girls are married every day, or one girl is married every two
51 seconds; and

52 WHEREAS, according to UNICEF, 25 percent of girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are
53 victims of physical violence, and it is estimated that one in three women around the world
54 has experienced some form of physical or sexual violence; and

55 WHEREAS, more than 6 million women live in countries in which domestic violence is not
56 criminalized, and approximately 50 percent of the 65,300,000 refugees, internally displaced,
57 or displaced persons in the world are women and children; and

58 WHEREAS, the 2016 report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime entitled
59 "Global Report on Trafficking in Persons" states that 79 percent of all detected trafficking
60 victims are women and children; and

61 WHEREAS, while trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation and forced labor are
62 the most prominently detected forms of trafficking, the trafficking of women and girls for
63 the purpose of forced marriage is emerging as a more prevalent form of trafficking; and

64 WHEREAS, the ability of women and girls to realize their full potential is critical for a
65 country to achieve strong and lasting economic growth, as well as political and social
66 stability; and

67 WHEREAS, women around the world are more likely to manage households or engage in
68 agricultural work than men and have access to fewer income-earning opportunities, an
69 inequity that makes women more vulnerable to economic insecurity caused by natural
70 disasters and long-term changes in weather patterns; and

71 WHEREAS, violence, discrimination, and harmful practices against women and girls are a
72 direct result of negative social norms that undervalue females in society; and

73 WHEREAS, it is imperative to alleviate violence and discrimination against women and to
74 afford women every opportunity to be full and productive members of their communities;
75 and

76 WHEREAS, the 8th of March of every year is recognized as International Women's Day all
77 over the globe in order to celebrate the economic, political, and social achievements of
78 women in the past, present, and future and to highlight the obstacles women face in their
79 struggle for equal rights; and

80 WHEREAS, International Women's Day is a time to reflect on the progress made in women's
81 rights and to reaffirm the world's commitment to end discrimination and violence against
82 women and girls, pursue strategies that guarantee the basic human rights of women and girls
83 both statewide and around the globe, promote meaningful and significant participation of
84 women in every aspect of society and community, and support policy initiatives that seek to
85 achieve the empowerment of women.

86 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
87 the members of this body recognize March 8, 2018, as United Nations International Women's
88 Day.

89 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
90 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the
91 public and the press.