

Whereas despite achievements by individual female leaders, women around the world are still vastly underrepresented in high-level positions and in national and local legislatures and governments and, according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, women account for only 21.9 percent of national parliamentarians;

Whereas 1 in 3 women around the world has experienced some form of gender-based violence, and 1 in 4 women has suffered abuse during pregnancy;

Whereas according to the World Health Organization, approximately 800 women die from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth every day, with 99 percent of all maternal deaths occurring in developing countries;

Whereas according to the United Nations Population Fund, more than 200,000,000 women and girls around the world would like to access family planning services but are unable to do so;

Whereas according to data from the World Bank, women between the ages of 15 and 44 are at a greater risk of rape and domestic violence than cancer, war, traffic accidents, and malaria combined;

Whereas on August 10, 2012, President Barack Obama announced the United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally, the first inter-agency strategy to address gender-based violence around the world;

Whereas violence against women and girls impedes progress in meeting many international global development goals, including efforts to stem maternal mortality and the spread of HIV/AIDS;

Whereas on October 11, 2013, President Barack Obama stated that the practice of child marriage was a “threat to fundamental human rights”;

Whereas according to the International Center for Research on Women, one-third of girls worldwide are married before the age of 18 and 1 in 9 girls are married before the age of 15;

Whereas according to the World Health Organization, suicide is the leading cause of death for girls ages 15 to 19, followed by complications from pregnancy and childbirth;

Whereas it is imperative to alleviate violence and discrimination against women and afford women every opportunity to be full and productive members of their communities;

Whereas 2015 marks the 20th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, where 189 countries committed to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action to integrate gender equality into all dimensions of society;

Whereas 2015 marks the deadline for meeting the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, and progress towards meeting the targets for gender equality and women’s empowerment remains uneven; and

Whereas March 8 is recognized each year as International Women’s Day, a global day to celebrate the economic, political, and social achievements of women past, present, and future, and to recognize the obstacles that women still face in the struggle for equal rights and opportunities: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals of International Women’s Day;

(2) recognizes that the empowerment of women is inextricably linked to the potential of countries to generate economic growth, sustainable democracy, and inclusive security;

(3) recognizes and honors individuals in the United States and around the world, including women who are human rights defenders, who have worked throughout history to en-

sure that women are guaranteed equality and basic human rights;

(4) reaffirms the commitment to ending discrimination and violence against women and girls, to ensuring the safety and welfare of women and girls, to pursuing policies that guarantee the basic human rights of women and girls worldwide, and to promoting meaningful and significant participation of women in all aspects of their societies and communities;

(5) supports international calls for a “Post-2015 Development Agenda” to include a stand-alone goal to achieve gender equality and women’s empowerment; and

(6) encourages the people of the United States to observe International Women’s Day with appropriate programs and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 98—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. CASEY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. BROWN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. COONS, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. MARKEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 98

Whereas multiple sclerosis (referred to in this preamble as “MS”) can impact people of all ages, races, and ethnicities, but is at least 2 to 3 times more common in women than in men;

Whereas there are approximately 2,300,000 people worldwide who have been diagnosed with MS;

Whereas MS is typically diagnosed in individuals between the ages of 20 and 50, however it is estimated that between 8,000 and 10,000 children and adolescents are living with MS in the United States;

Whereas MS is an unpredictable neurological disease that interrupts the flow of information both within the brain and between the brain and the rest of the body;

Whereas symptoms of MS range from numbness and tingling in the extremities to blindness and paralysis, and the progress, severity, and specific symptoms of MS in any one person cannot yet be predicted;

Whereas there is no laboratory test available that can definitively diagnose MS;

Whereas while MS is not directly inherited, studies show that there are genetic and, probably, environmental factors that make certain individuals, such as Caucasians of Northern European ancestry, more susceptible to the disease than others;

Whereas the exact cause of MS is still unknown and there is no cure;

Whereas the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition, a national network of independent MS organizations dedicated to the enhancement of the quality of life for all those affected by MS, recognizes and supports Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

Whereas the mission of the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition is to increase opportunities for cooperation among MS organizations and provide greater opportunity for the effective use and development of resources for the benefit of individuals and families affected by MS;

Whereas the United States plays a critical role in coordinating MS research globally and amplifies the impact of research in the United States through which results are delivered to MS patients;

Whereas in 2012, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society of the United States was a founding member of the Progressive MS Alliance, which coordinates research to accelerate the development of treatments for pro-

gressive MS by removing international scientific and technological barriers, and which now includes MS societies from 11 countries;

Whereas the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition recognizes and supports Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week during March of every calendar year;

Whereas the goals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week are to invite people to join the movement to end MS, encourage everyone to do something to demonstrate their commitment to moving toward a world free of MS, and to acknowledge those who have dedicated their time and talent to help promote MS research and programs; and

Whereas this year, Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week is recognized during the week of March 2, 2015, through March 8, 2015: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(2) encourages States, localities, and the territories and possessions of the United States to support the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week by issuing proclamations designating Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(3) encourages media organizations to participate in Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week and help provide education to the public about multiple sclerosis;

(4) commends the efforts of States, localities, and the territories and possessions of the United States to support the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(5) recognizes and reaffirms the commitment of the United States to ending multiple sclerosis by—

(A) promoting awareness about individuals that are affected by multiple sclerosis; and

(B) supporting multiple sclerosis research and education programs;

(6) recognizes all individuals in the United States living with multiple sclerosis;

(7) expresses gratitude to the family members and friends of individuals living with multiple sclerosis, who are a source of love and encouragement to those individuals; and

(8) salutes the health care professionals and medical researchers who—

(A) provide assistance to individuals affected by multiple sclerosis; and

(B) continue to work to find ways to stop the progression of the disease, restore nerve function, and end multiple sclerosis forever.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 8—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE SHOULD ISSUE A COMMEMORATIVE STAMP HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE THREE CIVIL RIGHTS MARCHES FROM SELMA, ALABAMA TO MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA THAT TOOK PLACE OVER THE COURSE OF SEVERAL WEEKS IN MARCH 1965

Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. SCOTT, Mrs. McCASKILL, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. COONS, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. WARREN, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:

S. CON. RES. 8

Whereas on March 7, 1965 “Bloody Sunday”, approximately 600 civil rights marchers, led by now-Representative John Lewis of