

## **US FORUM CONNECTION #68, AUGUST 2009**

This free newsletter is sponsored by the United States Forum of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International. The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International is an organization of leading women educators with over 140,000 United States members. Delta Kappa Gamma members wishing to subscribe to this FREE newsletter should send a request to [Angela.Bedenbaugh@usm.edu](mailto:Angela.Bedenbaugh@usm.edu). We urge you to share this newsletter with other interested educators who are not members of Delta Kappa Gamma or do not subscribe to this publication.

### **AFGHAN WOMEN AND GIRLS NEED OUR HELP**

#### **FDIC INSURANCE ALERT**

#### **PENDING HEALTH CARE LEGISLATION – A COMPARISON**

#### **CONVENTION TO ELIMINATE ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)**

### **AFGHAN WOMEN AND GIRLS NEED OUR HELP**

Desperate poverty persists and gender-based violence is increasing in Afghanistan. Nearly 200 schools have been bombed or set on fire and school girls have had acid thrown in their faces. Illiteracy is over 80 percent among women, and the country has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world. There is an epidemic of suicide among young women who set themselves on fire to escape the severe repression and poverty that they face. The Afghan Women Empowerment Act, S. 229, sponsored by Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), would give Afghan women and girls a chance at a better life with more opportunities. To urge your U. S. senator to support this legislation call toll free to 1-866-327-8670 or send an email through <http://www.senate.gov/>.

S. 229 would establish primary and secondary schools for girls that will offer mathematics, sciences, and languages as well as expanding technical and vocational training for women to develop skills needed to support their families. Funding would be provided for programs to protect women and girls against various forms of violence such as sexual assault, physical abuse, trafficking, abduction, and exploitation. This includes developing emergency shelters for women and girls who are facing danger and violence.

#### **FDIC INSURANCE ALERT**

The Helping Families Save Their Homes Act (H.R. 1106/S. 896) included an extension of the \$250,000 deposit insurance limit through December 31, 2013. The act was signed into law on May 20, 2009 and is Public Law 111-22. Note that as the law stands now taking out a 5 year CD will not protect the value of the CD over \$100,000.

#### **PENDING HEALTH CARE LEGISLATION – A COMPARISON**

For a comparison of three of the health care bills currently pending in Congress go to <http://ocean.otr.usm.edu/~w305514/HomePage.htm> and click on the link to Comparison of Pending Health Insurance Legislation. Keep in mind that there is a second bill being worked on in the Senate about which no details are known. The main House bill is HR3200 if you are inclined to look it over.

#### **CONVENTION TO ELIMINATE ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)**

Senator Barbara Boxer (CA) in her capacity as chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on International Operations and Organizations, Human Rights, Democracy and Global Women's Issues is holding hearings on this measure. The Convention needs 2/3 of the votes, or 67 "yes" votes, for the Senate to consent to ratification. Action by the House of Representatives is not required for ratification to international treaties. To date, five states, California, Iowa, Massachusetts, New York and South Dakota, have endorsed U. S. Ratification in their state legislatures.

The U.S. has put four reservations, three understandings, and two declarations on the Convention. The

reservations state that the U.S. is not obligated to any of the following: "Assigning" women to all units of military service (though women are free to participate in any military unit), mandating paid maternity leave (article 11-2-b), legislating equality in the private sector (articles 2,3,5), and **ensuring comparable worth (equal pay for work of equal value)**. The understandings say that the state and federal implementations will be made according to the appropriate jurisdiction, that no restrictions will be made to the freedom of speech, expression, or association under the Convention (articles 5,7,8, 13), and that any free health services to benefit women will be determined by states and not automatically mandated by U.S. ratification of CEDAW (article 12). The declarations made are that the convention is "non self-executing," and that disputes on interpretation of the Convention will be handled on a "case-by-case" basis (articles 29-2, 29-1).

For on-line information on specific bills go to <http://thomas.loc.gov/>

#### **CONTACT ADDRESSES FOR GOVERNMENT INFORMATION**

**U.S. GOVERNMENT CONTACT INFORMATION** can be obtained through Congressional Switchboard 1-866-327-8670 (this is a toll free number). You can contact your Congressman and Senator through this number without paying long distance charges.

<http://www.house.gov/> for members of the House of Representatives <http://www.senate.gov/> for members of the U.S. Senate

**STATE GOVERNMENT CONTACT INFORMATION** can be obtained through <http://www.emailyourgovernor.com/> Information available at this site allows contact with governors, members of the state legislature, state supreme court, congressional delegation and state agencies such as the Education Department, Attorney General, Motor Vehicles Department and Voter Registration.

#### **INFORMATION ON HOW YOUR CONGRESSMAN VOTED ON KEY BILLS**

<http://projects.washingtonpost.com/congress/110/bills/>

#### **FIVE CONSTITUENT CONTACTS WILL CAUSE A LEGISLATOR TO PAY SERIOUS ATTENTION TO A GIVEN ISSUE.**

Archival copies of the U.S. Forum Connection can be found at <http://ocean.otr.usm.edu/~w305514/HomePage.htm>

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