

9/1/20

Item 2.D.



September 1, 2020

Mayor Gillmor and City Council  
City of Santa Clara

*Via Email to the City Clerk*

Re: Item 2D (File #20-322) on the Council's Agenda for September 1, 2020

Dear Mayor Gillmor and Members of the City Council:

I urge you all to support and adopt the proposed Resolution in Support of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

As you may know, the Convention was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979 and has been ratified by 187 countries; however, to our continuing shame, the United States remains one of only six countries that have not ratified the treaty.

The Cities for CEDAW movement emerged in response to the failure of the United States to ratify the Convention. Organizers urged American cities to put the principles of CEDAW into action, including by creating and funding a task force to determine what specifically the city must do to ensure equal treatment of women and protect women from the economic, health, safety, and other consequences of inequality. In 1998, San Francisco adopted a local CEDAW ordinance and, more recently, the City of San Jose and Santa Clara County adopted CEDAW ordinances in 2017.

Women continue to suffer greatly due to inequality. These effects include unequal pay for the same work; unequal access to jobs, promotions, and educational opportunities; under representation in positions of leadership and power in public and private life; domestic violence and other violence against women; lack of access to healthcare; lower investment in research into health concerns of women; and lack of protection and respect for reproductive rights, among many other effects.

I am attaching a copy of a resolution adopted in March 2019 by the Santa Clara County Democratic Central Committee urging local cities to join the City of San Jose and Santa Clara County in adopting a local CEDAW ordinance. In adopting the proposed resolution, the City of Santa Clara would show itself to be a leader among the cities in Santa Clara County in committing itself in a meaningful way to realizing the principles of equality and protection embodied in the Convention.

**POST MEETING MATERIAL**

## **Resolution to Adopt Principles from the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**

WHEREAS the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is a comprehensive international women's rights treaty that calls for appropriate measures, such as legislation, to ensure women's rights and equality in all aspects of life, including in the political, social, economic, cultural, and civil fields; and the CEDAW was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979 and ratified by 187 countries but the United States remains one of only six countries that have not ratified the treaty.

WHEREAS the formation of a grassroots network, Cities for CEDAW, has worked to apply the principles of CEDAW to address gender disparities at the local level, and successfully passed CEDAW ordinances in 2017 in both the County of Santa Clara and the City of San Jose; in 1998, San Francisco was the first city to pass a CEDAW ordinance and has seen reduced homicides of women, increased collaboration to address human trafficking and support survivors, improved working conditions for parents and caregivers, and CEDAW ordinances include establishing an oversight body, measuring disparities via a gender analysis of government department and operations, and allocating appropriate funds.

WHEREAS there are vast gender disparities at the local, state, and national level; women, particularly women of color, disabled women, Native women, immigrant women, trans women, and women from marginalized communities suffer from unequal pay in Santa Clara County; intimate partner violence impacts tens of thousands of individuals in Santa Clara County with 178 domestic violence-related deaths between 2000 and 2018; sexual assault is also at epidemic levels in Santa Clara County particularly for college-age women, and there has been a 263% increase in reported sexual assaults in San Jose over the past decade, even as sexual violence rates have declined nationally during the same period;

BE IT RESOLVED the Santa Clara County Democratic Central Committee adopts the principles outlined in the CEDAW and supports the implementation of these principles through local ordinances and state laws, including the United Nations Convention precept that "[Discrimination is any] distinction, exclusion, or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil, or any other field;"

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Santa Clara County Democratic Party will ensure that the principles of CEDAW are reflected and advanced through the activities of the Party, including without limitation in the endorsement decisions of the Party and the expectations the Party has for those candidates who seek its endorsement that they will support the adoption and implementation of CEDAW ordinances; call on local cities to adopt a CEDAW ordinance modeled after the SF CEDAW ordinance; form an ad hoc committee to be appointed by the Chair; and call on the U.S. Senate to ratify the CEDAW.

Author: Michele Dauber, SCCDCC voting member from Silicon Valley Democratic Club, and CADEM Delegate (Appointed by Rep. Ro Khanna); Jennie Hutchinson, Vice President and Chair of Women's Caucus, SVDC and CADEM Delegate (Appointed by Evan Low).

Adopted by the Santa Clara County Democratic Central Committee on March 7, 2019