



## **Official Citation**

**Be it hereby known to all that**

**sincerest congratulations**

**are offered to**

**THE WOMEN OF MARYLAND**

**in recognition of**

***adopting the Pledge to Maryland Women,  
implementing the Platform of the  
United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women  
Beijing, September 1995.***

**presented on  
March 7, 1996**

By *Jennie Forehand*  
**Senator Jennie M. Forehand  
President, Women Legislators of Maryland  
The General Assembly**

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**WHEREAS,** The historic United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, brought together 30,000 women from 190 countries, including 7,000 U.S. women; and

**WHEREAS,** The Conference produced a Platform for Action based on a global plan for equality and women's empowerment; and

**WHEREAS,** Many of the elements of the Beijing Platform are priority issues that are relevant to U.S. women. These issues have been compiled for adoption by each state to assure that the promises made in Beijing become reality; and

**WHEREAS,** In Maryland, this campaign has taken the form of a *Pledge to Maryland Women* under which the policymakers of this State pledge to work together to overcome discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, race, class, age, immigration status, religion, and disability; and

**WHEREAS,** The General Assembly recognizes the need to end social, economic and political inequities, violence, and the human rights abuses that still confront millions of American women and girls; and

**WHEREAS,** Looking to the 21st century, we give this Pledge to Maryland Women to achieve our vision of a healthy planet, healthy nations, states, and communities, with peace equality, and justice for all; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED BY THE WOMEN LEGISLATORS OF MARYLAND,** That we adopt the following Pledge to Maryland Women:

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*[Signature]*  
President, Women Legislators of Maryland  
The General Assembly

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## **1. EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN**

We pledge ourselves to the empowerment of women in all their diversity through their equal participation in decision-making and equal access to shared power in government, in all spheres and at every level of society.

## **2. SHARING FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES**

We pledge ourselves to equal sharing of family responsibilities by partners and individual members, to respect the diversity of families and to promote practices and policies that enhance the multiple roles, security, and well-being of women and girls, men and boys.

## **3. ENDING POVERTY**

We pledge ourselves to ending poverty, which falls most heavily on women and children. We recognize the value of women's unpaid and underpaid labor to families, communities, and the economy. We support fair wages, child care, education, job training, and access to collateral-free credit for women-owned enterprises.

## **4. HIGH QUALITY, AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE**

We pledge ourselves to reaffirming the rights of all women and girls to high quality, accessible, affordable, and respectful physical and mental health care that includes women-focused research.

## **5. SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS**

We pledge ourselves to affirm and uphold the sexual and reproductive rights of all women, including their individual right to control their own reproductive lives free of coercion, violence, and harassment.

## **6. WORKPLACE RIGHTS**

We pledge to work for equal pay for work of comparable value and to end discriminatory hiring and sexual harassment. We support family-friendly work practices, job training, opportunities programs, affirmative action, and safe, healthy working environments.

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## **7. EDUCATIONAL EQUITY**

We pledge ourselves to educational equity for women and girls to create and strengthen gender-blind curricula and teaching techniques. We pledge equal opportunities and access for girls and women throughout their lives to education, sports, career development, training, scholarships, educational administration and policy making. We pledge our support for Title IX guarantees of equal funding of athletic programs for women and girls.

## **8. ENDING VIOLENCE**

We pledge ourselves to policies and programs to end violence in every form against women and children and to recognize that violence against women and children is a violation of their human rights and civil rights.

## **9. PROTECTING A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT**

We pledge ourselves to ending environmental degradation and threats to our health, communities, country, and planet. We uphold the active role of government along with the private sector for environmental protection programs.

## **10. WOMEN AS PEACEMAKERS**

We salute leadership by women in peace movements and conflict resolution, and pledge ourselves to the inclusion of women as policy makers to prevent wars, halt the arms trade, and eliminate nuclear testing and weapons.

## **11. HONOR COMMITMENTS AND RATIFY C.E.D.A.W.**

We pledge to support the commitments made by the United States government to implement the UN Platform for Action. We call on the United States Senate to ratify the Convention to Eliminate Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which the United States has signed.

## **12. PLAN TO ACHIEVE EQUALITY**

We who are State and federal policy makers pledge to work in partnership with women's organizations to develop and implement a long-term plan to achieve our goals of equality and empowerment for women. We support the re-establishment of a national Advisory Panel on Women. As Maryland women legislators, we will work to ensure that governments take the necessary steps to implement this Pledge.

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