

we can change hearts and minds as well.

CHILDREN AND HEALTHCARE WEEK

Mr. HOLLINGS. Madam President, each day many of our Nation's children face illnesses that require a doctor's office or hospital visit. This can be a frightening experience, and underscores the need to provide quality pediatric health services, while easing the stress children and their families feel. The week of March 18th in Greenville, SC, The Greenville Hospital System Children's Hospital is celebrating Children and Healthcare Week with a number of valuable activities for health care professionals, parents, and community partners.

The activities are aimed at increasing public, parental, and professional knowledge of the improvements that can be made in pediatric health care. In particular, it stresses new ways to meet the emotional and developmental needs of children in health care settings. Among the scheduled events are: continuing education classes for medical residents and support staff, an awards ceremony to honor local individuals who have dedicated their lives to pediatric care, a special tribute service to honor children, and a family event for employees. Lack of quality health care should never be an impediment to the long-term success of our nation's children, and I commend Greenville's dedication to Children and Healthcare Week.

RECOGNITION OF WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. SARBANES. Madam President, I rise today in recognition of Women's History Month. This time has been appropriately designated to reflect upon the important contributions and heroic sacrifices that women have made to our Nation and to consider the challenges they continue to face. Throughout our history, women have been at the forefront of every important movement for a better and more just society, and they have been the foundation of our families and communities.

In Maryland, we are proud to honor those women who have given so much to improve our lives. Their achievements illustrate their courage and tenacity in conquering overwhelming obstacles. They include Margaret Brent, who became America's first woman lawyer and landholder, and Harriet Tubman, who risked her own life to lead hundreds of slaves to freedom through the Underground Railroad. Dr. Helen Taussig, another great Marylander, developed the first successful medical procedure to save "blue babies" by repairing heart birth defects. Her efforts laid the groundwork for modern heart surgery. We are all indebted to Mary Elizabeth Garrett and Martha Carey Thomas who donated money to create Johns Hopkins Med-

ical School on the condition that women be admitted. And jazz music would not be complete without the unforgettable voice of jazz singer Billie Holiday who also hailed from Baltimore City. Their accomplishments and talent provide inspiration not only to Marylanders, but to people all over the globe.

My good friend and colleague from Maryland, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, is a tremendous example of the commitment and dedication women give to public service. From her background as a social worker to her election to the U.S. Senate, Senator MIKULSKI, who has served longer than any other woman currently in the Senate has always worked to ensure all people are treated fairly. She appropriately played a key role in establishing this month when in 1981, she cosponsored a resolution establishing National Women's History Week, a predecessor to Women's History Month. Today, I wish to honor her dedication and service to the people of Maryland and this Nation.

While we recognize famous women, it is important that we acknowledge the contributions of others who daily touch our lives: Our favorite teacher who gives us the confidence and knowledge to know that we were capable of success; the single mother or grandmother who toiled at a low-paying job for years to guarantee that the next generation in her family received better education and career opportunities; and the professional women who volunteer the little spare time they have to read to children or speak to student groups, inspiring young people to aim for goals beyond what they may have otherwise imagined.

Women's History Month is a fitting time to honor the women of the Armed Services who risk their lives in our fight against terrorism. From the American Revolution and the Civil War through modern day armed conflict, American women have sacrificed next to their husbands, sons, brothers and fathers to preserve the freedom upon which this Nation was founded. Currently, more than 6,000 women in the Armed Services are courageously fighting in our war against terrorism and almost 15 percent of the 1.4 million soldiers volunteering in our military are women. These modern day heroines, giving of their time, knowledge, and lives should not be taken for granted.

Women have made great strides in overcoming historic adversity and bias but they still face many obstacles. Unequal pay, poverty, inadequate access to healthcare and violent crime are among the challenges that continue to disproportionately affect women. Working women earn 74 cents to every dollar earned by men. What is more troubling is that the more education a woman has, the wider the wage gap. According to a recent Census Bureau report, the average American woman loses approximately \$523,000 in wages and benefits over a lifetime because of

wage inequality. Families with a female head of household have the highest poverty rate and comprise the majority of poor families.

Women continue to be under-represented in high-paying professions and lag significantly behind men in enrollment in science programs. A recent General Accounting Office study found that, after controlling for education, age and race, women managers still earned less than full-time male managers. Increasing the number of senior level women in all fields begins with encouraging girls' interest and awareness in school illustrating that their options are limitless.

As our population ages, we must also address the special challenges of older women. Women live an average of 6 years longer than men. Consequently, their reduced pay is even more detrimental given their increased life expectancy as they are forced to live on less money for a longer period of time. In addition, more women over age 65 tend to live alone at a time when illness and accidents due to decreased mobility are more likely. For these women, it is imperative that we guarantee that Social Security and Medicare remain solvent for future generations.

I believe we should use this month as an opportunity to reflect not only on the achievements and challenges of American women, but to recognize those of women internationally. We know that a variety of ills hinder the potential of women in many parts of the world, labor practices that oppress women and girls, the rapid spread of HIV and AIDS, and limited or non-existence suffrage rights. We must broaden access to education, the political process, and reproductive health globally so that girls and women everywhere can maximize their options. To have a credible voice in the international arena, the United States must lead by example, showing that American women enjoy these rights fully.

During my service in Congress, I have strongly supported efforts to address women's issues and eradicate gender discrimination and inequality. I have co-sponsored the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would provide more effective remedies to victims of wage discrimination on the basis of sex. I have also supported the Equity in Prescription Insurance and Contraceptive Coverage Act, which would prohibit health insurance plans from excluding or restricting benefits for prescription contraception if the plan covers other prescription drugs. In order to build a national repository of the contributions of women to our Nation's history, I co-sponsored legislation to establish a National Museum of Women's History Advisory Committee. In addition, I remain a consistent supporter of an equal rights amendment to the Constitution. I am proud of these efforts and I will continue my commitment to bring fuller equality to all women.

While obstacles remain, women have achieved impressive progress. This

good news includes a decline in the poverty rate for single women and an increase in those holding advanced degrees. Recent figures show women received approximately 45 percent of law and 42 percent of medical degrees awarded in this country. This is a dramatic improvement from a few decades ago and should continue as more and more women enter professional programs.

In my home State of Maryland, as in the Nation, women are a guiding force and a major presence in our national business sector. From 1987 to 1999, the number of women-owned firms in the United States grew by 103 percent. Women were responsible for 80 percent of the total enrollment growth at Maryland colleges and universities throughout the last two decades.

Indeed women continue to make great progress. As we highlight their accomplishments in history this month, I believe it is also important to educate present and future generations about gender discrimination so that we do not repeat past mistakes. America must remain vigilant in eradicating these injustices. I am confident that the women of America will lead this journey and continue to exemplify and advocate for those values and ideals which are at the heart of a decent, caring and fair society.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, history has shown us that a Nation dedicated to equal rights for women and girls is a more prosperous Nation, a healthier Nation, a more educated Nation, a more just Nation, a more peaceful Nation, and a more democratic Nation. Today I rise once again to add my voice and stand in solidarity with women and girls around the world in their struggle for basic human rights. I rise to commemorate March 8, 2002, International Women's Day.

Until the entire world recognizes the simple fact expressed by my friend and colleague, Senator CLINTON, that "women's rights are human rights" we must continue to raise awareness about the plight of women and girls around the world and in our own country. Indeed, while I have been encouraged by the gains made since the United Nations first designated March 8 as International Women's Day in 1975, there is still a great deal of work ahead of us and I would like to take this time to discuss several critical issues that I believe are vital to the lives of women and girls and require U.S. leadership: international family planning assistance, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, CEDAW, rape as an instrument of war, and the plight of women in Afghanistan.

Each of us, I believe, understands very well the issue of United States assistance to international family planning organizations. There have been few issues in recent years that have

been more debated, with people of good intentions on both sides of the issue. Consequently, I was dismayed that the Bush Administration considered withholding the \$34 million U.S. contribution to the United Nations Population Fund, UNFPA, an amount allocated to it by law and, after months of negotiations, and with bipartisan support. I wrote to President Bush urging him not to withhold the funds as such a decision would be a serious mistake and a blow to U.S. leadership in combating overpopulation.

You simply cannot deny the importance of family planning assistance, especially for the very poor. There are now more than 6 billion people on this Earth. The United Nations estimates this figure could be 12 billion by the year 2050. Almost all of this growth will occur in the places least able to bear up under the pressures of massive population increases. The brunt will be in developing countries lacking the resources needed to provide basic health or education services.

Let us strive to ensure that women have access to the educational and medical resources they need to control their reproductive destinies and their health so that they will be able to better their own lives and the lives of their families.

Everyone should recognize that international family planning programs reduce poverty, improve health, and raise living standards around the world; they enhance the ability of couples and individuals to determine the number and spacing of their children.

We must counter the attacks made by the anti-choice wing of the Republican party in recent years and make it perfectly clear that no U.S. international family planning funds are spent on international abortion.

It is worth noting that the Department of State recognized the vital role of the UNFPA in family planning assistance and provided \$600,000 to the Fund for sanitary supplies, clean undergarments, and emergency infant delivery kits for Afghan refugees in Iran, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. This is just one of many examples of UNFPA's commitment to bettering the lives of women and children around the world.

Since the debate is unlikely to end, we must work harder to ensure that the United States reclaims its leadership role on international family planning and reproductive issues. On International Women's Day, I urge my colleagues to support full funding for the UNFPA and other international family planning programs.

Another year has gone by and I am saddened and disappointed to note that the Senate still has not acted on the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. It has been more than twenty years since the United States actively participated in drafting the Convention and President Carter signed it on July 17, 1980. Yet, we are still waiting for the United States, the lone superpower and cham-

pion of democracy and human rights, to take a stand for the rights of women and girls and ratify the convention.

Notably absent from the list of 161 countries who have ratified the convention, the United States joins a rather dubious club of non-ratifiers: Iran, North Korea, and Sudan. Surely this is not the company we want to keep. Surely we want to be known as a leader when it comes to defending the human rights of women and girl who are unable to defend themselves.

Do we want to be the lone democracy not to ratify? Do we want to watch China, the People's Republic of Laos, and Iraq, countries we regularly censure for human rights abuses and who have either signed or agreed in principle, pass us by?

There is no reasonable justification for our failure to act. Is the convention a technically demanding agreement requiring years of study and investigation? Does it ask the United States to go far beyond our own goals and ideals? Nothing could be further from the truth.

Here is what the convention says: It requires States to take all appropriate steps to eliminate discrimination against women in political and public life, law, education, employment, health care, commercial transactions, and domestic relations. Nothing more, nothing less. Simplicity is the hallmark of this agreement.

Every day that goes by without ratification, we further risk losing our moral right to lead in the human rights revolution. By ratifying the convention, we will demonstrate our commitment to promoting equality and to protecting women's rights throughout the world. By ratifying the convention, we will send a strong message to the international community that the U.S. understands the problems posed by discrimination against women, and we will not abide by it. By ratifying the convention, we reestablish our credentials as a leader on human rights and women's rights.

As we commemorate International Women's Day, I call on my colleagues in the Senate to move forward and ratify the convention on discrimination against women.

Eliminating the use of rape as an instrument of war must be a high priority for the United States and the international community. It is an issue that continues to cause me great concern.

We have seen in recent years how rape has moved from being an isolated by-product of war to a tool used to advance war aims. In Bosnia, Rwanda, and East Timor soldiers and militiamen used rape on a organized, systematic, and sustained basis to further their goal of ethnic cleansing. In some cases, women were kidnaped, interned in camps and houses, forced to do labor, and subjected frequent rape and sexual assault.

Something had to be done and so I was pleased that the United Nations, in