

City Council Regular Meeting: August 25, 2015  
Agenda Item: 10.A

To: Mayor and City Council  
From: Karen Ginsberg, Director, Human Services (CCS)  
Subject: Receive the Commission the Status of Women "2015 Report on the Status of Women and Girls", Adopt a Resolution Supporting the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Initiative, and Delegate Responsibility to Oversee Local Implementation of CEDAW Principles to the Santa Monica Commission on the Status of Women

### **Recommended Action**

Staff recommends that the City Council:

1. Receive the Commission on the Status of Women "Report on the Status of Women in Santa Monica, 2015";
2. Adopt a resolution to support the local implementation of The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW);
3. Delegate responsibility to oversee local implementation of CEDAW principles to the Santa Monica Commission on the Status of Women.

### **Executive Summary**

In June 2014, the United States Conference of Mayors adopted a resolution encouraging cities to adopt The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), an international human rights treaty providing a universal definition of discrimination against women. There are three minimum requirements for successful implementation of CEDAW 1) completion of a gender analysis, 2) creation of an oversight body to monitor implementation of programming and policies, and 3) provision of funding to implement program and policy reforms as outlined by CEDAW.

Since 1981, the Santa Monica Commission on the Status of Women (COSW) as outlined in its charter (Chapter 2.56.050) has embraced many of the principles of CEDAW. The COSW "Report on the Status of Women and Girls in Santa Monica, 2015" includes a gender analysis of elected officials and residents in Santa Monica and fulfills this CEDAW requirement. The Commission already serves as an oversight body and receives financial support from the City to implement program and policy reforms as outlined by CEDAW. To fulfill the requirements of the treaty, City staff recommends that Council adopt a resolution to support the local implementation of CEDAW and receive the COSW's "Report on the Status of Women and Girls in Santa Monica, 2015".

## **Background**

### History and Purpose of CEDAW

On December 18, 1979, the United Nations General Assembly adopted CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women). In 1980 President Carter signed CEDAW; however, it has never been ratified by the U.S. Senate, despite on-going advocacy.

In 1998, San Francisco became the first municipality in the world to adopt a local ordinance reflecting the principles of CEDAW; and City of Los Angeles followed in 2006. Other U.S. cities including Portland, Oregon; Berkeley, California as well as the State of Hawaii, have also enacted similar initiatives.

The San Francisco and Los Angeles CEDAW ordinances focus on preventing discrimination and ensuring gender equality in government and the private sector. The ordinances cover health care, employment, economic development, education and violence against women and girls.

By adopting a resolution in support of CEDAW (Attachment A), the City of Santa Monica would increase awareness of the goals of CEDAW to achieve gender equity in the following areas: political participation and representation, income and earnings, access to healthcare, and public and personal safety.

### Commission on the Status of Women

The Commission on the Status of Women (COSW) was established by City Council in 1981 to enhance the status of women and girls in Santa Monica. The COSW promotes this through investigating, advocating for, and developing policy regarding issues relevant to women and girls in Santa Monica, and by identifying and publicizing leadership and career advancement opportunities for those women and girls. The COSW meets monthly and is supported by the City with an annual budget of approximately \$8,500, and annual City staff support.

The COSW's 2010-2015 Strategic Plan (Attachment B) identified and prioritized six goals with respect to policy and program development which align with the principles of CEDAW:

- Review and update “The Report on the Status of Women & Girls in Santa Monica 2004.”
- Raise awareness of and seek solutions for domestic violence and other safety issues impacting Santa Monica women and girls.
- Identify, publicize and support mentoring and leadership opportunities that serve the young women and girls of Santa Monica.
- Gain a better understanding about how lack of affordable housing affects the women of Santa Monica, and determine what role the COSW should play to address this issue.
- Foster career, political and volunteer advancement opportunities for Santa Monica women.
- Identify and publicize resources in Santa Monica that support the needs of women and girls.

The COSW has advanced issues of women and girls in these key areas by advocating for legislation in support of women and minorities, joining the Santa Monica Police Department to launch the Start by Believing Campaign, which focuses on promoting awareness on the public and criminal justice first response to victims of sexual violence, and through various collaborations with the Westside Domestic Violence Network (WDVN) and BRO or Brothers Respecting Others (formerly called the Male Violence Prevention Project) to support improved training on domestic and community violence.

The COSW also conducted community surveys and analyzed local and regional data to help drive program and policy reform to better the work/life benefits offered to women and girls in Santa Monica. Key findings and recommendations from this effort are set forth in their Report on the Status of Women and Girls in Santa Monica, 2015 (Attachment C).

## **Discussion**

### Local adoption of CEDAW

In order for successful implementation of CEDAW, there are three requirements that Santa Monica must fulfill: 1) completion of a gender analysis, 2) creation of an oversight body to monitor implementation of programming and policies and 3) funding to

implement program and policy reforms as outlined by CEDAW.

The COSW Report on the Status of Women and Girls in Santa Monica, 2015 examined gender in relation to how residents are currently faring in Santa Monica. The Report provides baseline data on women and girls in Santa Monica with a focus on income and earnings, employment, education, housing, personal safety, and women's leadership. Findings are based on data received or researched from key sources including: US Census, US Census Survey of Business Owners, American Community Survey, Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District), City of Santa Monica ActiveNet, FY 2013-14 Human Services Grants Program demographic data, and documents including the Youth Wellbeing Report Cards 2012-13 & 2014 and City of Santa Monica 2013-2021 Housing Element.

The Commissions on the Status of Women in both San Francisco and Los Angeles have been delegated to oversee the local implementation of CEDAW. The Santa Monica City Council could delegate the Santa Monica COSW as the local body since its powers and duties outlined in its charter align with CEDAW principles. Staff recommends Council designate the COSW as the appropriate body to oversee the local implementation of CEDAW principles.

Funding to implement program and policy reforms is another requirement to successfully implement CEDAW. The City's current budget allocation to the COSW staff support of ongoing operations, and key goals fulfills this requirement.

In implementing these activities, the City of Santa Monica joins both San Francisco and Los Angeles in their commitment to improve the lives of women and foster more transparent and accountable governance.

## Financial Impacts and Budget Actions

There is no immediate financial impact or budget action necessary as a result of the recommended action.

**Prepared By:** Julie Taren, Senior Administrative Analyst

**Approved**

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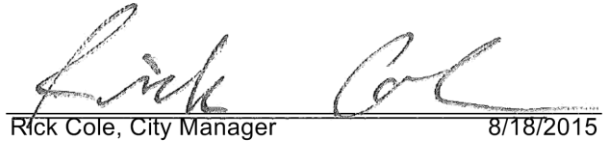


Karen Ginsberg, Director

8/12/2015

**Forwarded to Council**

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Rick Cole, City Manager

8/18/2015

### Attachments:

- A. Resolution
- B. COSW 2010-2015 Strategic Plan (web link)
- C. COSW Annual Report