

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-

panion 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 an 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

setting up the war crime tribunals for the Balkans and Rwanda, recognized rape as a war crime and a crime against humanity.

Finally, on February 22, 2001, following a period of inaction when it appeared that those indicted for perpetrating these crimes would not be brought to justice, the international tribunal in The Hague sentenced three Bosnian Serbs to prison for rape during the Bosnian war. I was very pleased the court took this step but we still have a long ways to go. Estimates are that up to 20,000 women in Yugoslavia were systematically raped as part of a policy of ethnic cleansing and genocide. Many perpetrators still remain at large.

Nevertheless, the court has stated loud and clear that those who use rape as an instrument of war will no longer be able to escape justice. They will be arrested, tried, and convicted. As Judge Florence Mumba of Zambia stated, "Lawless opportunists should expect no mercy, no matter how low their position in the chain of command may be."

I commend the victims who courageously came forward to confront their attackers and offer testimony that helped lead to the convictions. I am hopeful more will come forward. On International Women's Day, I urge the administration and the international community to join me in continuing the fight to end the practice of rape as an instrument of war, and to pursue justice for its victims.

For years when I addressed the condition of women and girls in Afghanistan, I did so with a sense of sadness, anger, and despair. I now do so with a sense of optimism, hope, and determination.

One of the great stories of our campaign against terrorism is the liberation of the women and girls of Afghanistan from the chains imposed on them by the Taliban regime. We all know the story of how women and girls were treated: banned from work and school, confined to their homes behind darkened windows, and required to wear full-length veils, or burka, and to be accompanied by a male relative when in public.

Now, the women of Afghanistan, who have suffered under brutal regimes and seen their families destroyed by war, are beginning to leave their homes without fear, earn a living, receive desperately needed medical attention, get an education, and participate in public life. I am especially pleased that Afghanistan's interim leader, Hamid Karzai, picked two women to serve in his Cabinet. It is a welcome change from the past and a step toward equal rights for all Afghans.

Clearly, there is much work to be done to improve the lives of women and girls in Afghanistan and the United States must be actively involved in that endeavor. I was proud to co-sponsor S. 1573, the "Afghan Women and Children Relief Act of 2001," which authorized the President to provide edu-

cational and health care assistance for the women and children living in Afghanistan and as refugees in neighboring countries. President Bush signed the bill into law on December 12, 2001. This is the first step of a long journey and I urge my colleagues to stay the course and support additional assistance in the coming years ahead.

On International Women's Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to a better future for the women and girls of Afghanistan. We must let them know that they are no longer alone, that we will stand by their side, and we will not abandon them again.

We must debate and ratify the convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. We must rededicate ourselves and our resources to international family planning programs. We must not ignore the use of rape as an instrument of war. We must help the women and girls of Afghanistan realize their hopes and dreams.

We cannot afford to remain silent. We cannot afford to place women's rights on a second tier of concern of U.S. foreign policy. On International Women's Day, the United States and the international community must take a strong stand and issue a clear warning to those who attempt to rob women of basic rights that the world's governments will no longer ignore these abuses, or allow them to continue without repercussion.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, as we celebrate National Women's History month, I rise to pay tribute to the extraordinary women, past and present, who have shaped the rich history of our great Nation.

The month of March has been designated as National Women's History month to celebrate the remarkable accomplishments of women throughout history. My distinguished colleagues, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI and Senator ORRIN HATCH, cosponsored legislation over 20 years ago declaring National Women's History Week. I salute my colleagues for their leadership in establishing this now month-long celebration of the many contributions made by women.

This year's national theme, "Women Sustaining the American Spirit," could not be more appropriate. Our Nation prides itself on the accomplishments of women and their ability to fully participate in our society. I have the distinct privilege of working with 13 women Senators who are powerful examples of the progress that our Nation has made. This spirit of democracy was tested on September 11, when we were reminded that our ideals continue to threaten those who fear the inevitability of progress.

As a consequence of these events, Americans were exposed to the disturbing plight of women in other parts of the world. We learned that under the oppressive Taliban regime, women could not work outside the home and were denied basic rights such as access

to education and health care. Not only were women precluded from contributing to society, but they were denied equal protection under the law.

The attacks faced by our country were aimed at undermining the great strides we have made in our history. Yet the rest of the world watched as our Nation united and demonstrated that even a devastating attack could not crush our spirit—an American spirit that has been molded by the accomplishments of women throughout our history, including the legacy left by a well-known Illinois woman.

Jane Addams of Chicago, IL, was a socially conscious community leader who worked tirelessly to sustain the American spirit. Addams founded the famous Hull House settlement in Chicago in 1889, where she and other residents provided services for the surrounding neighborhood. These vital services included kindergarten and daycare facilities for children of working mothers, an employment bureau, medical care, legal aid, and vocational skills. After a few short years, the settlement was serving over 2,000 people a week.

Despite the enormous success of her charitable efforts, Addams realized that real gains could not be achieved without working to change laws for the better. To achieve this goal, Addams lobbied the State of Illinois to examine laws governing child labor, the factory inspection system, and the juvenile justice system.

As we celebrate the contributions that women have made, the legacy of Jane Addams reminds us of the continuing need for improvement in the areas of social reform that she worked so tirelessly on several years ago. Today, parents rely on childcare arrangements more than ever. The Children's Defense Fund reports that an estimated 13 million children under the age of 6 spend part of their day in the care of someone other than their parents. In Illinois, 61 percent of all children under the age of 6 have working parents. Yet working families at all income levels still struggle to find the high-quality care their children need at a cost that is affordable. Full day care can cost between \$4,000 and \$10,000 per year, frequently surpassing average tuition costs for public universities. At the same time, the Children's Defense Fund reports that more than one out of four families with young children earns less than \$25,000 per year.

Today, parents also encounter a childcare system that is an uneven and inadequate patchwork of services. States and cities vary widely in the areas of provider education and training requirements, availability, and quality of programs. The gap between what we know is so important for children and what we put into practice is too large. As a nation, we have an interest in healthy, successful children who have the tools they need to learn in the classroom. We have an interest in improving child care so that more

families can move off welfare into a steady career. We have an interest in educating and training women so that they can get jobs with decent pay to support their families. As a nation, we should embrace the legacy that Jane Addams has left behind by working on these issues which are in desperate need of reform.

In this month of March, let us not only celebrate the accomplishments of the women who have shaped our Nation's rich history, but let us work to keep their vision alive by continuing to sustain the American spirit that these women helped define.

CELEBRATING NINETY YEARS OF GIRL SCOUTS

Mrs. CARNAHAN. Madam President, today I commend the Girl Scouts of America on the anniversary of its 90th year of operation.

The objective of the Girl Scouts is "to discover the fun, friendship, and power of girls together." Experiences such as field trips, community service, and working with others help them to develop their full potential. These actions are greatly needed in America and an amazing feat when you consider that 99 percent of all adults that participate in leading the Girl Scouts are volunteers. The effects of this organization extend not from one generation but to many, with the oldest active member being 97, and the youngest, the new Brownie, starting out at age 5.

The Girl Scouts is a quintessential American institution that has exported its successful strategy to 140 countries, and a worldwide family of 8.5 million girls. The Girl Scouts participate in cultural exchanges that allow many to gather worldwide experiences that they otherwise would not have been able to attain. There is even a bi-partisan Troop Capitol, made up of Congressional members from both the Senate and House. The women of the Senate have dedicated the book *Nine and Counting* to the girls of America, with some of the proceeds going to the Girl Scouts.

The GSA has spent much of its time teaching young women about professional fields that do not ordinarily attract women. The past year's focus was the field of engineering. The girls not only studied engineering but also had the opportunity for a hands-on approach, thanks to the Society of Women Engineers donating their time. Girls succeed when we set the bar high for them. The Girl Scouts gives them the skills, but more importantly the confidence, to reach these goals and beyond.

We must thank Juliette Gordon Low, who on this day in 1912 founded the Girl Scouts. Her desire and foresight to create an organization for young girls started with 18 girls and a budget that was funded by selling her pearl necklace. It has become one of the most recognized organizations in America.

Though some traditions thankfully remain steadfast, notably the excep-

tional Thin Mint cookies, the GSA has evolved to address the events of the day. From Women's Suffrage to Civil Rights to the environment, this organization has not backed away from taking a stand on the issues. They have an amazing past and a bright future. I am sure they will continue to be a force to be reckoned with, a positive force shaping the lives of tomorrow's leaders. Congratulations to the Girl Scouts and thank you to all those who have contributed their time, energy, and love to making this organization an American success story.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY CHEERLEADING SQUAD

• Mr. BUNNING. Madam President, today I have the privilege and honor of sharing with my fellow colleagues the most recent and astounding accomplishment of the University of Kentucky Cheerleading squad. This year the UK Cheerleaders won their eighth straight Universal Cheerleaders Association's, UCA's, National College Cheerleading Championship for NCAA Division 1-A schools. These young men and women deserve our recognition and admiration for their efforts.

The UK squad has now won UCA's National Championship an unprecedented twelve times, in 1985, 1987, 1988, 1992, and 1995-2002, more than any other Division 1-A school. In fact they are the only squad to ever win back to back championships twice and also the only team to win three, four, five, six, seven, and now eight titles in a row. They are widely recognized as the best of the best in the Cheerleading community and have been a key contributor to the University's athletic success. The Wildcat basketball team is arguably the most storied program in the Nation and much of their success can be attributed to the enthusiasm and spirit generated by the Cheerleading squad. For those who have never had the opportunity of seeing a game in Rupp Arena, I can tell you that the atmosphere is absolutely electric.

Besides the attention they receive on the court from the UK students and fans, the Cheerleading squad has also been covered by the national media. The squad has been featured on such programs as, "Evening News," Connie Chung's "Eye to Eye," and the "CBS Morning Show," as well as in "Southern Living," "Gentlemen's Quarterly," "ESPN the Magazine," and "Seventeen" magazines. This recognition does not come without a price however. These young men and women sacrifice a considerable amount of their time and energy practicing, learning, and mastering their extremely difficult routines. This often means long practices and endless hours in the weight room. These young men and women are athletes in every sense of the word.

I applaud the University of Kentucky Cheerleading squad for their commit-

ment and dedication to their goals and dreams. They represent the University and the Commonwealth of Kentucky in a classy and professional manner. I am proud of each and every one of them.●

ESSEX FELLS CELEBRATES CENTENNIAL

• Mr. CORZINE. Madam President, it is with great pride that I bring to your attention a lovely hamlet in Essex County, NJ, Essex Fells, which is celebrating its centennial year on March 31, 2002. Incorporated as a borough on March 31, 1902, it is governed by an elected body consisting of a mayor and six council members.

Essex Fells is the smallest community in Essex County, covering an area of a little more than 1.3 square miles. However, within the small confines of this bucolic community, Essex Fells maintains many areas for the enjoyment of its residents. The Glen is a green open space that contains native trees, shrubs, vines, and flowers. The Trotter Tract is an 83-acre area that is home to many species of flora and fauna and beautiful nature trails. Each autumn, the brook that runs through Essex Fells is dammed to create a skating pond. Grover Cleveland Park, a county park of approximately 42 acres of lush manicured lawns and large trees, borders Essex Fells and Caldwell, NJ.

Rich in history, the township was established in 1699 by Robert Treat and Jasper Crane and settled by people migrating from Connecticut. A land blessed with rolling farmland and wooded retreats, the acreage was originally named Newark after their home in England—Newark on Trent. Shortly after that, the settlers petitioned the crown for the title to their new homeland. It was granted and in 1701 the settlers purchased an additional 13,500 acres from the Native Americans for \$325,000. Realizing the value of this land, the Crown attempted to rescind the settlers' title and the colonists subsequently revolted earning the area the nickname, "the cockpit of the American Revolution."

In the late 1800s, Anthony J. Drexel, of the Philadelphia banking family, who had successfully developed other residential communities acquired the estate of General William Gould to form a planned residential community. Named for Drexel's son-in-law—John R. Fell and the county, Essex—Essex Fells developed as many turn of the century communities did, as a direct result of the growth of the railroad system. All the same, much care was given to maintain the tranquility and serenity of the original community.

One hundred years later, Essex Fells is still an ideal "small town community." The neighborhoods remain tree-lined and neighbors know each other. Most recently, citizens of Essex Fells were called into service following the horrific attacks on the World Trade Center. Fire Chief Rupert Hauser and