

July 29, 2002

The Honorable Sam Brownback  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Brownback,

I am writing today to urge your support for the ratification of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Senator Joseph R. Biden Jr. has rescheduled a vote of the full Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the CEDAW Treaty for the Rights of Women for Tuesday, July 30 at 9:30 a.m.

As I am sure you know, women around the world are fleeing their home countries and coming to the United States because of poverty, gender-based discrimination and violence against women. Just last month, the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration of the U.S. Department of State asked its international and NGO partners to submit proposals for the FY 2002 refugee assistance program, which focuses on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) initiatives. As a cosponsor of the "Unaccompanied Alien Child Protection Act," we believe that you, too, have recognized that there are unaccompanied foreign-born children in the United States who are victims of trafficking, street abuses, poverty and violence. Women of all ages around the world need the United States to ratify CEDAW and to be a stronger support in their struggle against gender discrimination.

We ask that you stand in solidarity with those who are deprived of their human rights, to advocate social justice and to work for an end to discrimination, whether by race, creed, tribe or gender. Without justice, there is a broken global community and a violation of those whose dignity is denied. To this end, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) urges you to support the ratification of CEDAW.

Since 1987, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has spoken affirmatively of the ratification of CEDAW. CEDAW is the first and only international tool that addresses women's issues comprehensively. The statement regarding CEDAW, adopted by the General Assembly, is the official position of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It urges the United States Senate to support the treaty.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is composed of 2.5 million members and 11, 500 congregations, including more than 40,000 members in Kansas.

Sincerely,

Rev. Elenora Giddings Ivory  
Director  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Washington Office