



October 29, 2015

Welcome to the Women Legislators' Lobby's (WiLL) October 2015 e-newsletter:

### **Women at the Tables of Power**



The 2015 WiLL/WAND National Women's Leadership Conference, "Women at the Tables of Power," was a huge success! More than 100 women state legislators and community leaders from 34 states attended the conference in Washington, DC and heard addresses from leading Administration officials and Members of Congress, networked with women leaders from across the country, participated in intimate meetings with Members of Congress, learned about strategic communications, and attended small group networking dinners hosted in private homes on Capitol Hill.



**Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky (IL-9)** was presented with the 2015 WiLL/WAND Torchbearer Award by her colleague and 2013 WiLL/WAND Torchbearer

**Congresswoman Donna Edwards (MD-4)** and delivered an inspired speech about the importance of women's leadership. WAND, Inc. board member **Kelli Hunnicutt** was recognized as the Janice Kelly Volunteer of the Year. 9 women state legislators –

**Representative Jennifer DeChant (ME), Representative Crisanta Duran (CO), Representative Laura Hall (AL), Representative Dickey Lee Hullinghorst (CO), Senator Mattie Hunter (IN), Representative Tina Liebling (MN), Representative Melissa Sargent (WI), [Representative Gael Tarleton \(WA\)](#), and Representative Johnnie Turner (TN)** – were recognized as WiLL Pacesetters for their outstanding legislative service and commitment to sound, progressive policy.

On October 6, state delegations met with more than 95 Senators and Members of Congress or their staff on Capitol Hill, taking the message about advancing women's leadership, changing our federal budget priorities to better invest in our communities, and [the importance of diplomacy rather than war](#). During our Congressional Luncheon Open House, we were joined by **Congresswoman Karen Bass (CA-37), Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (DC), Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez (CA-46),**

**Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky (IL-9)**, and the staff of **Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi (CA-12)**, who all offered remarks about the importance of women as agents of change. Photos from the conference can be viewed here: [on.fb.me/1LvSVjg](https://on.fb.me/1LvSVjg)

## **WiLL in the News**

In response to an op-ed from Congressman Rick Nolan, **Representative Jennifer Schultz (MN)** called on Congress to [follow Congressman Nolan's lead](#) and stop spending endlessly on weapons and war.

We want to assist you with op-eds and letters-to-the-editor! Media placement ramps up your profile and educates your voters, with multiple chances share your message online. For assistance, please contact WiLL Vice President Senator Sandy Pappas ([sandy@wand.org](mailto:sandy@wand.org)).

## **Congratulations!**

**Representative Kay Khan (MA)** was recognized by the Massachusetts Women's Political Caucus during the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Tribute to Abigail Adams event on October 27. Award recipients are outstanding women leaders in Massachusetts who have worked to achieve parity for women and demonstrated through their work and/or their community activism a firm commitment to the realization of equal political, economic, and social rights for women.

## **Capitol Hill Update**

### **Budget Priorities**

Just in time to mark Halloween, White House and Congressional leaders struck a budget deal earlier this week and avoided a truly frightening debt default that could have tanked the U.S. and global economy. It is expected that the deal, which raises the debt limit through March 2017, will be approved by the House and Senate, prior to November 3 when the United States will reach the debt ceiling.

The budget deal also thwarted the spooky and severe sequestration budget axe threatening a myriad of programs with across-the-board cuts if Congress appropriated above legally-

binding spending caps enacted in 2011. Scarily enough, Congress would have been happy to raise just the Pentagon budget as the expense of social investments that keep our economy afloat.

However, the White House stood firm against this approach insisting on parity: if defense gets relief for its topline, so must domestic spending in equal amount. Days before the budget deal the President emphasized this position when [he vetoed the Defense Authorization bill](#) which relied on the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) slush fund to add dollars for Pentagon spending. For more details, [read here](#).

### **Nuclear Weapons**

Last week, Congress passed the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for fiscal year (FY) 2016 (H.R. 1753), which was vetoed by the President in an unprecedented event. The bill contained a number of provisions that stymie progress on curbing excessive nuclear weapons spending and reducing the number of nuclear weapons in the arsenal. Overall, the H.R. 1753 provides \$12.5 billion for nuclear weapons activities. That figure is on par with the Administration's request and approximately \$750 million (six percent) above the FY 2015 authorization. With the defense budget remaining roughly flat for fiscal year 2016, it is irresponsible to so significantly increase spending on nuclear weapons that do not provide real security for 21<sup>st</sup> century threats. We applaud President Obama for vetoing this bill and urge Congress to reduce nuclear weapons spending in the future.

### **15 Years of Women, Peace, and Security**

[United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325](#) on Women, Peace, and Security turns 15 years old this month. UNSCR 1325 is a landmark international policy agenda designed to address the changing nature of war and conflict as civilians are increasingly targeted and women continue to be excluded from participation in peace processes. This legal framework focuses specifically on the disproportionate impact of war on women and the essential role women should play in conflict management, conflict resolution, and peace-building.

On October 22, 2015 the results of a High Level Review of UNSCR 1325 were presented to the UN Security Council. After six follow up resolutions to UNSCR 1325, and two smaller studies pointing to best practice recommendations, there has been little measurable

improvement and some indicators are worse (especially around sexual assault); overall we must do better, globally and in the United States. [Continue reading this article here.](#)

In celebration of the 15 year anniversary of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, WAND along with *Futures Without Violence* and *Women for Women International* [released a Women, Peace, and Security Advocacy Tool Kit this month.](#) This resource was developed for peacebuilders and practitioners to effectively advocate for the passage of the Women, Peace, and Security Act (S.224) introduced in the Senate in January 2015. It is also designed to be easily applicable to the House legislation when it gets introduced later this month. Stay tuned for an e-announcement when that happens!

### **Connect with WiLL**

For the latest on WiLL events and news, be sure to follow [@WomenLegisLobby](#) on [Twitter](#) and friend WiLL on [Facebook](#).

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Sincerely,



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