



July 21, 2016

Welcome to the Women Legislators' Lobby's (WiLL) July 2016 e-newsletter:

WiLL Networking Reception



[Join WiLL for a cocktail hour reception](#) during this summer's National Conference of State Legislators (NCSL) Legislative Summit in Chicago. We hope to see you on Wednesday, August 10, 2016 from 4:30-6:00pm in the Chicago Room of the Palmer House Hilton as we mark the 25th anniversary of WiLL and celebrate 25 years of encouraging and enhancing women's leadership in public office. **Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle** will be the keynote speaker. We extend thanks to our generous reception sponsor Lockridge Grindal Nauen PLLP. For more information and to RSVP, please email WAND Senior Program Associate Adzi Vokhiwa at avokhiwa@wand.org.

Congratulations!

Montana **Senator Mary Caferro** was honored by Easterseals with the 2016 Outstanding Advocate Award on June 13, which recognizes public officials for their work to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities.

Previous Events

Carter Center Forum: A Time for Peace: Rejecting Violence to Secure Human Rights



From left to right: Kathy Robinson, Fatima Akilu, and Senator Orrock (GA).

WiLL President **Senator Nan Grogan Orrock** (GA) and WAND Senior Policy Director Kathy Robinson recently participated in a Carter Center Forum "A Time for Peace: Rejecting Violence

to Secure Human Rights,” interfacing with amazing women leaders, peace-makers, and human rights defenders who are on the front lines of building peace and security in their communities. [Kathy and Senator Orrock participated and spoke at the Forum.](#)

Webinar: The Iran Nuclear Deal After One Year

On June 28, Middle East policy experts, **Barbara Slavin** of the Atlantic Council and **Kate Gould** of Friends Committee on National Legislation, discussed successes and challenges to implementation of the Iran Deal in the year since six world powers and Iran signed a comprehensive nuclear agreement to curb Iran’s nuclear program. The agreement greatly reduced the chance of a military conflict between Iran and the United States or its allies.

This webinar covered what has happened since July 14, 2015 – the day the deal was signed – and potential challenges to further implementation, including geopolitics, compliance issues, and Congressional obstruction. View the recording [here](#).

Capitol Hill Update

What Happened In Turkey

Friday’s failed coup exposed the harsh realities of Turkey’s political situation and reminded the world that the United States still has approximately 50 nuclear weapons based in the unstable nation. Although security measures are in place, nuclear policy experts say that a motivated and hostile military government could bypass them.

Lee Hamilton, former Indiana Congressman and current Homeland Security Advisory Council member, wrote recently in the *Huffington Post*, “...we are in a high-risk era when the presence of nuclear weapons raises the stakes for global conflict, accidents and terrorism.” We must not forget that the Islamic State exists just over the Turkish border. These are the stakes to which Mr. Hamilton refers.

It is simply too dangerous to base nuclear weapons in any country that is unstable. [**If you agree, submit a letter-to-the-editor \(LTE\) asking for the removal of these nuclear weapons from Turkey!**](#)

Nuclear Weapons

July 14, 2016 marked the Iran Nuclear Agreement’s one-year anniversary. WAND and WiLL strongly support continued implementation of the agreement as the best option to prevent an Iranian nuclear weapon while also preventing war. [Read our full statement.](#)

Changes in Nuclear Weapons Policy Coming?

According to an article in the *Washington Post* on July 11, President Obama is reportedly mulling changes to his nuclear weapons policy in his waning days in office. In April and May, WAND hosted a [petition](#) — signed by over 2,000 people — that urged the President to take steps in his remaining days in office to make the country safer by reducing nuclear risks. In light of this, we would welcome any of the potential changes reportedly being considered, including:

- Rethinking the trillion-dollar upgrade to the nuclear arsenal.
- No first use: Changing current policy to state that nuclear weapons would only be used to defend against nuclear attacks.
- Taking weapons off hair-trigger alert: changing the launch status of nuclear weapons so that presidents would have more time to make decisions about using them (from minutes to hours or days).
- Reinforcing the moratorium on nuclear weapons testing by offering an anti-testing resolution at the United Nations.

Stay tuned for more in on this in the coming days and weeks!

Women, Peace, and Security

The House bipartisan Women, Peace, and Security Act (HR 5332) was [introduced](#) on May 25 by Congresswoman Kristi Noem (R-SD-At Large), Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky (D-IL-09), House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA-39), and Ranking Member Eliot Engel (D-NY-16). The bill was considered by the House Foreign Affairs Committee on June 16 and is now co-sponsored by 15 House members. Please look for more coming soon about what you can do to encourage both Republicans and Democrats to support the WPS Act.

The Senate also has its own version of the Women, Peace, and Security Act (S.228) sponsored by Senators Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Mark Kirk (R-IL), and Jean Shaheen (D-NH). We continue to encourage support for the [Senate WPS Act](#).

Why a WPS Act? In March, [the House Committee on Foreign Affairs held an historic briefing](#) on Women, Peace, and Security, at which an expert panel spoke to the Committee about how the United States can better support women's involvement in all aspects of working for peace. Research shows that when women are involved, outcomes for sustainable peace are more likely. Whether preventing and addressing violent extremism, meaningfully participating in peace negotiations, or playing leading roles in post-conflict society building, women make a big difference. Leadership in both political parties is recognizing this and taking this step to ensure that U.S. defense, security, and foreign policy recognizes and promotes women's engagement in all aspects of peace and security no matter who is in the White House or the next Congress.

Budget Priorities

Pentagon and war policy funding bills have been slowly moving through Congress, and will be settled on when the House and Senate return in September. The House and Senate have both considered their versions of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) setting policy and authorizing funding for the Pentagon, wars, and nuclear weapons. Now a House-Senate conference is meeting to resolve differences between the two bills.

On June 16, the House approved its version of the Defense Appropriations funding bill for the Department of Defense. The Senate had planned to take up its version of the Defense Appropriation bill before leaving on the long recess, but it now seems likely that the Senate will not consider the bill until September.

One big policy and funding issue is how much to add for Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) war spending, and whether to require a supplemental appropriation for war spending. Calls for additional military deployments in Afghanistan and Iraq have inflamed the debate, with Republican defense hawks calling for \$18 billion more for war spending along with demands that the President present a request for supplemental funding for war deployment.

During Senate consideration of the NDAA in June, efforts to add \$18 billion for weapons and war failed, and it provoked a debate about budget priorities. We need this debate to continue. We cannot afford to spend mindlessly on weapons and war, while our communities are threatened with crumbling roads and bridges, toxic water, lack of educational opportunity, and inadequate healthcare. It is not acceptable that we struggle to find funds to protect people from the Zika virus while still promoting costly, endless war. It's time that we fund diplomacy and development to prevent war and build sustainable peace.

On July 6, the President announced he would increase the number of U.S. troops remaining in Afghanistan beyond the end of the year to 8,400 – thus ensuring the continuation of this long-lasting war beyond 15 years. On July 11, Defense Secretary Ashton B. Carter announced that the President will deploy an additional 560 U.S. troops to Iraq.

We need to get serious about helping to forge political solutions to put Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria on the path to building a sustainable peace. We know that engaging and empowering women is a key ingredient to building that peace. In Iraq and Syria, we need alternatives to war. See the [Alternatives to Endless War: A Sustainable, Effective Response to ISIS](#) fact sheet developed by Win Without War.

Connect with WiLL

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