



March 24, 2016

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

Regarding Recent Terrorist Attacks

We extend our thoughts and prayers to the people of Brussels and everyone affected by violence around the world. We resolve to continue connecting in communities with one another and working together to build peace.

WiLL in the News



Following the release of the President's budget request **Representative Cindy Rosenwald (NH)** wrote a [piece](#) scrutinizing wasteful nuclear weapons spending that could be used for state and local funding. **Representative Christine Greig (MI)** and William D. Hartung, Director of the Arms and Security Project at the Center for International Policy, [reminded](#) voters to choose candidates that will direct federal spending toward community needs.

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 to share your message online. For assistance, please contact WiLL Vice President Senator Sandy Pappas (sandy@wand.org).

Congratulations!

Senator Geraldine Thompson (FL) was recently [elected](#) as chair of the Florida Legislative Black Caucus.

Senator Cherie Buckner-Webb (ID) was instrumental in bringing to life the "Women of Idaho" exhibit, which features a pictorial timeline of women's suffrage from its origins to the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment and rarely-seen pictures and artifacts highlighting the achievements of Idaho women. The exhibition debuted on February 27 and is viewable until April 3 at the Idaho State Capitol.



WiLL/WAND Women Leaders Communications Training



On February 26-28, we welcomed women leaders from 11 states to Las Vegas, NV for intensive communications training. Trainers from the Center for American Progress (CAP) guided participants on messaging and storytelling, social media and digital technology, appropriate strategies for op-eds and letters-to-the-editor, public speaking and interview tips, federal and state initiatives to improve women's economic security, and connecting the dots between state and federal budgets. Former Las Vegas Mayor Jan Jones Blackhurst gave a keynote address during the welcome reception highlighting the importance of women's leadership and the need to continue working for women's political and economic equality. Activists from Battle Born Progress offered guidance and tips for engaging with ethnic and nontraditional media. Colleen McCarty, a former Las Vegas journalist with more than 20 years of experience, taught participants how to engage with the media and build relationships with journalists.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all of the speakers and participants at the event, as well as recognize our event sponsors AT&T Nevada, Employers Insurance Group, JK Belz & Associates, Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce, Las Vegas Paving Corporation, Lewis Roca Rothgerber Christie, Retail Association of Nevada, Teamsters Local 986, and Valley Health System. If you are interested in participating in future training opportunities, please contact Senior Program Associate Adzi Vokhiwa (avokhiwa@wand.org).

Capitol Hill Update

Urge Congress to Change Budget Priorities!

Last month, WiLL launched an [urgent letter to Congress](#), asking them to prioritize domestic needs and the priorities in our states as they consider the FY 2017 budget. We know all too well that women are disproportionately impacted by cuts to safety net programs and that too much money is being wasted on unneeded and ineffective weapons programs at the Pentagon. The safety of our nation is a top priority, but we cannot continue funding last century's weapons programs that are inappropriate for today's security threats. This letter sends an emphatic message to assign public funds wisely to sectors that build our economy, bolster our nation's security, and properly invest in the programs that our constituents depend on. [Add your name to the letter before April 1!](#)



Nuclear Weapons

In 2009, President Obama [pledged](#) to work toward the “peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons.” Unfortunately, his budget does not appear to follow this promise. The proposed FY2017 Budget is on track to allocate \$1 trillion over the next 30 years for nuclear weapons modernization programs. Conversely, nonproliferation programs that seek to reduce the risk of nuclear materials falling into the wrong hands will be cut. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the entire [cost](#) of the nuclear enterprise in FY2017 will be a whopping \$26.4 billion.

Women, Peace, and Security

March is Women’s History Month, and the U.S. State Department recently held a series of events with women in foreign policy. The most recent event in the series focused on controlling and preventing wartime sexual violence. WAND Women, Peace, and Security Fellow Lila O’Brien-Milne attended the event and [wrote a piece](#) describing the information presented.

On Tuesday, March 22, the House Foreign Affairs Committee held a hearing called “[Women Fighting for Peace: Lessons for Today’s Conflicts](#).” The hearing examined the critical role of women in resolving conflict and promoting security and featured testimony from two courageous women leaders who risked much to end violence in their respective countries, blazing a trail for women peacemakers to come. For more about this hearing, including important lessons impacting efforts to prevent conflict and counter violent extremism in many parts of the world, [see a summary here](#).

Join or Renew Your Membership in WiLL!



We invite you to [join the Women Legislators’ Lobby \(WiLL\)](#) or [renew your current membership](#) in WiLL and share our resources to support your effectiveness as a leader.

The Women Legislators’ Lobby (WiLL) is a national nonpartisan network of women state legislators who work together to influence federal policy and budget priorities. WiLL provides state legislators with valuable resources and services:

- WiLL shares timely materials with you about how critical state programs and services are affected by federal policy and budget decisions.
- WiLL provides simple, effective ways for you to influence federal decisions that will impact your constituents.
- WiLL offers highly-rated national conferences, policy briefings, communications trainings, and other professional development programs designed to help you become more effective in your leadership role.

When women state legislators join WiLL, we strengthen our ability to make our voices heard. We become more informed and more effective.

Connect with WiLL

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