

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia
Office of the Chief Clerk
Room 402, City Hall
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 090133)

RESOLUTION

Honoring Women's History Month, the 100th Anniversary of International Women's Day, and Declaring March 8, 2009 as "International Women's Day in Philadelphia."

WHEREAS, In 2009 the continuing struggle for women's rights and gender equality is increasingly global, yet it will always be rooted in our own communities; and

WHEREAS, The United Nations theme for International Women's Day 2009 is "Women and Men United to End Violence Against Women and Girls;" and

WHEREAS, Women and girls in Philadelphia continue to suffer at alarming rates from gender-based violence, as well as from economic and social inequalities; and

WHEREAS, Recent statistics show over 70,000 *reported* domestic-abuse cases in Philadelphia for one year. Historically the rate of domestic violence increases during economic recession; and

WHEREAS, Over half of non-rape sexual assault victims and almost 40% of rape victims are girls under age 18; and

WHEREAS, Lesbian, bisexual, and transgender women and girls face added discrimination and related issues that include violent hate crimes, bullying in schools, high rates of substance abuse, and suicide; and

WHEREAS, Our City's many undocumented immigrant women are especially vulnerable to violence and exploitation because of their lack of legal status and constant fear of deportation; and

WHEREAS, In the Philadelphia area women earn 76 cents for every dollar that men make, which is even less than the national average of 78 cents, and women remain concentrated in low-wage occupations; and

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 090133 continued

WHEREAS, Women are still disproportionately unpaid caregivers, both for children and for elders. This reality, in addition to insufficient economic supports such as child-care subsidies, negatively impacts women's paid employment and thus their struggles to attain economic self-sufficiency; and

WHEREAS, The growing housing and foreclosure crisis has hit women--particularly those of color, low income, and single heads of households--hardest in Philadelphia, which already faced an affordable-housing crisis; and

WHEREAS, Among Philadelphia's many serious health-care issues, especially for women of color, are lack of access to prenatal care, the closure of 15 hospital maternity units in the last twelve years and the growing number of HIV and AIDS cases among women; and

WHEREAS, Women and girls still face limitations on their reproductive freedom. Access to abortion and to contraception, particularly for poor women, is limited; and

WHEREAS, Incarceration rates for women have grown statewide by 50% over the last decade and continue to rise. A large percentage of those are young women who may also be mothers. Incarceration, which is often for nonviolent drug offenses, can be harmful to the health of women and the children they are separated from; and

WHEREAS, In spite of women's progress in the business world, for the Philadelphia metro area's largest public corporations women occupy less than 10% of top executive positions—less than the national average--and the most recent statistics showed women of color actually losing some ground; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania ranks 47th among all states in percentage of women elected to the State legislature with only 13.4%; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia's leadership in trade unionism has a long history and International Women's Day in the U.S. was born out of labor struggles; today women increasingly hold leadership roles in the labor movement, locally and nationally; and

WHEREAS, It is the policy of the City of Philadelphia to promote the equal rights of women to full equality and empowerment in all areas of life; and

WHEREAS, To meet the urgent needs of women in Philadelphia today, City Council recommends the Mayor reinstate the Mayor's Commission on Women which has been defunct since the 1980's; now therefore

RESOLVED, THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF PHILADELPHIA, Declares and recognizes March 8, 2009 as "International Women's Day" in the City of Philadelphia.

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 090133 continued

FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF PHILADELPHIA, Recognized the efforts of organizing the International Women's Day activities in our City which will focus local and worldwide attention on women's struggles for equality and economic empowerment in conjunction with the celebration of Women's History Month; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution will be presented to the Philadelphia International Women's Day Committee as evidence of the sincere sentiment of this legislative body.

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 090133 continued

CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the twenty-sixth of February, 2009.

Anna C. Verna
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Patricia Rafferty
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmembers Sanchez and Brown

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Reynolds Brown, Miller, Blackwell, Krajewski,
Tasco and Council President Verna