

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 17, 2010

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 21, 2010

**Senate Joint Resolution**

**No. 24**

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**Introduced by Senator Yee**

**(Coauthors: Senators Correa, DeSaulnier, Kehoe, Liu, and Padilla)**

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Blumenfield, Brownley, Davis, Gilmore, Hall, Hill, Jones, Lieu, Monning, Nava, ~~and Saldana~~ *Saldana, Adams, Arambula, Beall, Block, Bradford, Buchanan, Caballero, Carter, Chesbro, Cook, Coto, De La Torre, Eng, Evans, Feuer, Fletcher, Fong, Fuentes, Fuller, Furutani, Gatto, Hayashi, Hernandez, Huber, Huffman, Bonnie Lowenthal, Ma, Mendoza, Miller, Nielsen, John A. Perez, V. Manuel Perez, Portantino, Ruskin, Salas, Skinner, Solorio, Audra Strickland, Swanson, Torlakson, Torres, Tran and Yamada*)

February 22, 2010

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Senate Joint Resolution No. 24—Relative to violence against women.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 24, as amended, Yee. Proposed federal International Violence Against Women Act.

This measure would urge the United States Congress to pass the International Violence Against Women Act, and establish the offices and policies therein.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Violence against women and girls is rooted in  
2 multiple causes and takes many forms, including physical, sexual,  
3 and psychological. It affects all countries, social groups, ethnicities,  
4 religions, and socioeconomic classes and is a global health,

1 economic development, and human rights problem of epidemic  
2 proportions; and

3 WHEREAS, According to the World Health Organization,  
4 approximately one in three women in the world will experience  
5 violence in her lifetime, with rates of up to 70 percent in some  
6 countries, and one in five of the women in the world will be the  
7 victim of rape or attempted rape in her lifetime; and

8 WHEREAS, According to the 2006 United Nations Secretary  
9 General's report entitled Ending Violence Against Women, 102  
10 member states have no specific laws on domestic violence; and

11 WHEREAS, Women and girls face many different types of  
12 gender-based violence, including forced or child marriage, so-called  
13 "honor killings," dowry-related murder, human trafficking, and  
14 female genital mutilation. The United Nations estimates that at  
15 least 5,000 so-called "honor killings" take place each year around  
16 the world and that more than 130 million girls and young women  
17 worldwide have been subjected to female genital mutilation; and

18 WHEREAS, The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief  
19 2006 Report on Gender-Based Violence and HIV/AIDS reports  
20 that violence against women is a public health and development  
21 problem that significantly increases susceptibility to HIV/AIDS.  
22 A United Nations study on the global AIDS epidemic found that  
23 in sub-Saharan Africa, women who are 15 to 24 years of age can  
24 be infected at rates that are up to six times higher than men of the  
25 same age; and

26 WHEREAS, Recent studies in Africa indicate that many girls  
27 in primary and secondary school report sexual abuse or harassment  
28 by male teachers or classmates. Girls who experience sexual  
29 violence at school are also more likely to experience unintended  
30 pregnancies or become infected with a sexually transmitted  
31 infection, including HIV/AIDS; and

32 WHEREAS, Rape and sexual assault are weapons of war used  
33 to torture, intimidate, and terrorize women and communities.  
34 Amnesty International reports that women have suffered from  
35 sexual violence during conflicts in Rwanda, the former Yugoslavia,  
36 Sierra Leone, and most recently in the Democratic Republic of the  
37 Congo, where women have suffered from brutal and systematic  
38 sexual assaults; and

39 WHEREAS, Displaced, refugee, and stateless women and girls  
40 in humanitarian emergencies, conflict settings, and natural disasters

1 face extreme violence and threats because of power inequities,  
2 including being forced to exchange sex for food and humanitarian  
3 supplies, and being at increased risk of rape, sexual exploitation,  
4 and abuse; and

5 WHEREAS, According to the United States Agency for  
6 International Development (USAID): 70 percent of the 1.3 billion  
7 people worldwide living in poverty are women and children,  
8 two-thirds of the 876 million illiterate adults in the world are  
9 women, two-thirds of the 125 million schoolaged children who  
10 are not in school are girls, more than three-quarters of the 27  
11 million refugees in the world are women and children, and 1,600  
12 women die unnecessarily every day during pregnancy and  
13 childbirth; and

14 WHEREAS, In 2003, the United Nations Special Rapporteur  
15 on Violence Against Women concluded that violence against  
16 women violates the basic human rights of women, results in  
17 “devastating consequences for women who experience it, traumatic  
18 impact on those who witness it, de-legitimization of states that fail  
19 to prevent it and the impoverishment of entire societies that tolerate  
20 it”; and

21 WHEREAS, Violence against women is an impediment to the  
22 health, opportunity, and development of women and society.  
23 According to an October 2006 study of the United Nations  
24 Secretary General entitled Ending Violence Against Women,  
25 “Violence against women impoverishes women, their families,  
26 communities and nations. It lowers economic production, drains  
27 resources from public services and employers, and reduces human  
28 capital formation”; and

29 WHEREAS, The World Bank recognizes that women’s health,  
30 education, and economic opportunities directly impact the  
31 development and well-being of their families and society. A 2001  
32 World Bank Report, entitled Engendering Development, reports  
33 that greater gender equality leads to improved nutrition, lower  
34 child mortality, less government corruption, higher productivity,  
35 and reduced HIV infection rates; and

36 WHEREAS, Increased access to economic opportunities is  
37 crucial to the prevention of and response to domestic and sexual  
38 violence. Both microfinance-based interventions and increased  
39 asset control have been shown to reduce levels of intimate partner

1 violence in addition to providing economic independence for  
2 survivors; and

3 WHEREAS, Campaigns to change social norms, including  
4 community organizing, media campaigns, and efforts to engage  
5 and educate men and boys, have been shown to change attitudes  
6 that condone and tolerate violence against women and girls and  
7 reduce violence and abuse; and

8 WHEREAS, The International Violence Against Women Act  
9 would create within the United States Agency for International  
10 Development, the Office of Women’s Global Development, and  
11 would establish the Office of Women’s Global Initiatives and the  
12 Advisory Commission on International Violence Against Women  
13 within the U.S. Department of State, to develop a strategy and  
14 direct resources to prevent and respond to violence against women  
15 and girls throughout the world; and

16 WHEREAS, The act would establish policies to prevent and  
17 respond to violence against women, including directing the  
18 preparation of a five-year international strategy to prevent and  
19 respond to violence against women and girls internationally,  
20 collecting data and conducting research about efforts to prevent  
21 and respond to violence, including information on violence against  
22 women and girls in human rights reports, enhancing the training  
23 of foreign military and police forces on violence against women  
24 and girls, and authorizing the appropriation of \$5,000,000 annually  
25 through fiscal year 2012 to support the United Nations  
26 Development Fund for Women Trust Fund in Support of Actions  
27 to Eliminate Violence Against Women; now, therefore, be it

28 *Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of*  
29 *California, jointly,* That the Legislature of the State of California  
30 hereby urges the United States Congress to pass the International  
31 Violence Against Women Act, and establish the offices and policies  
32 therein; and be it further

33 *Resolved,* That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of  
34 this resolution to each Senator and Representative from California  
35 in the United States Congress, and to the author for appropriate  
36 distribution.

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