



**November 11, 2016**

**To:**  
**Honorable Mayor Tina Harris- City of Erie**

**From: Sharon Simmons**

**Subject:** The Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and Cities for CEDAW (C4C)

I am writing to you today as President of Business and Professional Women of Boulder County (BPW Boulder), Legislative Committee Chair of BPW Colorado, and a member of both the National and International Federation of Business and Professional Women. BPW is one of the oldest and largest organizations for working women in the world. We also hold consultative status at the United Nations. I am sending this formal letter to secure an opportunity to speak with you or speak at your council meeting.

BPW women would like to see Erie adopt the principles under CEDAW. CEDAW stands for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. It is a *United Nations treaty* for women's equality. It is the only international human rights treaty that focuses exclusively on women's rights and provides a universal definition of discrimination against women so that those who would discriminate on the basis of gender can no longer make the claim that no clear definition exists. It also calls for action to eliminate discrimination in many areas including politics, law, employment, education and health care.

Adopted by many countries in 1979, CEDAW has been ratified by 186 of 193 United Nations member countries worldwide. The United States wrote most of this treaty. Although President Jimmy Carter signed this treaty in 1980, **the United States is one of the six member states, and the only developed nation, that has failed to ratify CEDAW, and is joined by Somalia, Sudan, Palau, Tonga and Iran.** Rather interesting and embarrassing facts. For more in-depth information you can also go to [www.citiesforcedaw.org](http://www.citiesforcedaw.org).

What we of Colorado Business and Professional Women decided to do is to work from the bottom up. We endorse, "Cities for CEDAW," a national Campaign to approach U.S. cities one by one and encourage them to sign a resolution of adherence to the principles of CEDAW. Once we have 100 cities or more, we intend to approach our government again in Washington D.C. for ratification of the international treaty.

San Francisco was the first in the United States to enact a C4C ordinance. You can go to <http://sfgov.org/dosw/cedaw-ordinance> for an example of their 2000 documents and what it entails. This of course, can be used as a starting point to create an ordinance tailored to your city's needs. We also will give you a copy of a smaller city's resolution that you can use to create your own, with any assistance requested of us.

Five U.S. cities have passed ordinances following CEDAW principles. They are: San Francisco, CA; Los Angeles, CA; Berkeley, CA; Honolulu, HI; and Miami-Dade County, FL. The cities that have resolutions are: Cincinnati, OH; Daly City CA; Edina, MN; Eugene, OR; Long Beach, CA; Louisville, KY; Minneapolis, MN; Kansas City, MO; Kentucky, KY; Salt Lake City, UT; Santa Monica, CA; St. Paul, MN; St. Petersburg, FL; Tampa, FL; University City, MO; Washington DC, Glendale, CA and West Hollywood, CA. There are 14 other cities still considering either an ordinance or resolution. We are also meeting with Cory Gardner and Michael Bennett to obtain possible state support from them prior to deploying to DC for the next Legislative session.

The Boulder Human Relations Commission was addressed at their monthly meeting on September 19, 2016 to start the process of discussing a resolution in anticipation of working towards an Ordinance to support Cities for CEDAW. Veronica Hrutkay from the United Nations Association-Boulder County gave an excellent presentation representing several of our non – profit groups in Boulder. We have that presentation should you wish to hear it.

Lafayette signed a Resolution on October 18, 2016. We would be happy to add your city to this rapidly growing list!

BPW Boulder (and Colorado) is asking that your great city adopt a resolution and/or an ordinance in support of this important issue for all women. It would give us all great pride if Erie were to come ~~jump~~ on board with us.

To achieve this goal more quickly, we of BPW Boulder would ask that you join and follow this grass-roots action on our website at [www.Cedaw-colorado.org](http://www.Cedaw-colorado.org).

Once you have read this letter, we would like to approach the City of Erie to hear more about our future here in Colorado for women!

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important issue. Please contact me at any time with questions. I am happy to address concerns, ideas, dates or any questions that you may have. We will contact the city at that time to learn how to get on the agenda.

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