



RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2022

Congratulations on being appointed/elected as your State Resolutions Committee Chairman. I know you will enjoy the work you will be involved in over the next two years.

During the past two years, the Resolutions Committee proposed changes to, and the convention assemblies agreed to amend, rescind, add new, and update, broaden, and consolidate into a more effective resolution all 168 GFWC Resolutions on the books prior to Convention 2021. The number of resolutions were reduced from 168 to 109, a 35% reduction.

The Resolutions Booklet has been completely reorganized and all resolutions have been renumbered with a new format. Sheila Shea, the immediate past Resolutions Chairman, presented the GFWC Executive Committee with the new booklet and, with Executive Committee approval, the Resolutions Booklet has been posted on the GFWC website under **Resources** in the **Member Portal/My Digital Library, "R"**.

Resolutions have also been added to the sections of the Club Manual where they are appropriate in the Community Service and Special Programs areas. Your State Chairmen in these areas will want to review the Resolutions, and if they have any questions or comments, please let the Resolutions Committee know.

As you may know, Resolutions provide the basis for any legislative alerts that GFWC sends via the Legislative Action Center. The Legislative Action Center has migrated to a new platform, and I would encourage each of you to check out the information provided on the GFWC website for Legislation and Public Policy, <https://www.gfwc.org/what-we-do/public-policy/>. Please encourage your members to sign up for alerts, even if they have signed up in the past, <https://www.votervoice.net/GFWC/home>. With the migration to the new platform, some contact information may have been lost.

Moving forward, and according to the GFWC Standing Rules, all resolutions which have been in force for four years shall be automatically reviewed by the Resolutions Committee for timeliness, change of opinion, etc. Part of the Resolutions that were approved at the 2021 Convention will be the first group of resolutions to come up for review, possibly as early as 2023.

Also, for your information, when we do receive a new resolution for review, we will take a look at the current resolutions to see if there is one with similar content. We could potentially revise a standing resolution to include the new proposed resolution. If you or

your state Federation is considering presentation of a new Resolution, be sure that you review the GFWC Bylaws and Standing Rules as it relates to Resolutions.

We have begun the process of reviewing new resolutions, and we look forward to presenting them to the GFWC Executive Committee in the near future, and I know that you will be excited to approve them at our next GFWC Convention.

Mary C. Powell, Chairman (SRC)

Patty Benskin (WSR)

Debbie Greider (SCR)

Kimberly Meyer (GLR)

Vicky Ann Trimmer (MAR)

Juliet Casper, *Legislation/Public Policy Chairman*

Debra Bryant, Consultant, Unified Solutions, LLC



HOW TO WRITE A RESOLUTION

A resolution is one continuous statement with a period only at the end of the last RESOLVED. It should have a title which is the subject of the resolution.

The title is followed by a suggested maximum of three "WHEREAS" statements which contain the reasons why the legislation or subject is needed. Each WHEREAS is a separate paragraph ending with a semicolon and, except the final one, the word "and". The last " WHEREAS " ends with a semicolon and the word "therefore". "Therefore" is followed by "RESOLVED" statements which contain the action that is desired. Each "RESOLVED" is a separate paragraph ending with a semicolon and, except the next to last and last, the word "and". The next to last "RESOLVED", is followed with a semicolon and the words "and further". The last "RESOLVED" ends with a period. There is a comma after each WHEREAS and RESOLVED, with the first word after the comma being capitalized.

For Example:

WHEREAS, (First statement of reason action is needed); and

WHEREAS, (Second statement of reason action is needed); and

WHEREAS, (Third statement of reason action is needed); therefore

RESOLVED, (First statement gives action desired); and

RESOLVED, (Second statement gives action desired); and

RESOLVED, (Third statement gives action desired); and further

RESOLVED, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs [or in the case of a state (name of state), a member of the General Federation of Women's Clubs,]..... **PLEASE NOTE:** GFWC has moved to a single (or multi) similar statement(s) urging its member clubs to act followed with a colon and then listing bullets. Each bullet is followed by a semi-colon, except the last that is followed by a period, thus reducing the number of repetitious RESOLVEDs in a resolution.

Sample Resolution:

170-090 Healthcare and Research (Convention 2017; Includes "Health Care," Convention 1993; and "Women's Health Research," Convention 1993; Amended 2021)

WHEREAS, Individuals need a basic knowledge and understanding of available healthcare options and the documents used to make personal decisions such as Advance Health Care Directives (Living Wills) and Health Care Powers of Attorney; and

WHEREAS, Healthcare insurance coverage and medical treatment should not discriminate based on pre-existing conditions, sex, gender, race, or ethnicity; and

WHEREAS, The inclusion of women and minorities in research studies is important for the generalization of results to the entire population, with data provided by sex, gender, race, or ethnicity; therefore

RESOLVED, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs urges its member clubs to support legislation that prohibits: • Discrimination in determining insurance eligibility and rates; • Discrimination in medical research; • Annual and lifetime coverage limits; and further

RESOLVED, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs urges its member clubs to support:

- Legislation that prohibits caps on annual and lifetime coverage limits and discrimination in determining insurance eligibility, insurance rates, and medical research;
- Improved accessibility, quality, and affordability of healthcare services and the availability of insurance for all;
- The use of Advance Health Care Directives (Living Wills) and Health Care Powers of Attorney;
- Continued funding of healthcare programs and research with the equal inclusion of women and minorities.

GENERAL FEDERATION of WOMEN'S CLUBS



HOW TO RESEARCH A RESOLUTION

A resolution on a public policy issue is a formal expression of the opinion of GFWC and guides the advocacy efforts of the organization's membership and leadership. GFWC Resolutions are used to educate and influence the decisions and actions of an elected body, including local governments such as town/city/county councils and school boards, state legislators, governors, or Congress and the Administration.

Identify the problem and the solutions. Make logical arguments expressing your position and urge action by those elected officials who have jurisdiction over the issue.

Research the issue – Is it local, state, or federal? Who has the responsibility to fix the problem? Your goal is to integrate information/findings from various sources, and translate them into a resolution stating the problems and calling for solutions.

If local or state issue, what are surrounding town councils or school boards doing? Does your governor's office, state association of municipalities, county commissioners, association of educators, police or sheriffs' association, parks and recreation directors, arts councils, domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions, or others have positions or recommendations on the issue? Sign up for their newsletters.

Identify national resources – Issue oriented non-profit organizations such as the National Parks Foundation, Environmental Defense Fund, National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence, and Everytown for Gun Safety are examples of organizations very active in the public policy arena. Also explore the websites of those organizations which might oppose your efforts. You must know and be able to answer the opposition.

Press – Are there national press stories from the Washington Post or New York Times? If there are local stories, provide those to your elected officials. The national press often identify the strongest advocates and opponents, and have the responsibility to explain difficult issues with examples of impact.

Federal Legislation – Search for current federal legislation on www.congress.gov. Often there are issue summaries prepared by the Congressional Research Service which provide excellent background information. If congressional committees have held hearings on the subject matter, the testimony of witnesses and committee report on a bill provide valuable information. The website of the member of Congress or congressional committee sponsoring the legislation offers important summaries and legislative updates.

Federal Agency – Identify the federal agency which has jurisdiction and resources available on their websites such as the Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

If the resolution sites numbers of incidents, then you must include the source. Again, this will result in the resolution becoming out-of-date about as soon as it makes its way through the GFWC process. Better to use generalities in the written resolution and use your statistics to urge adoption by GFWC during the convention.

Reminder that issue resolutions should not specifically include a bill number or specifically name the recipient who should receive the resolution because it states GFWC's policy recommendation as an organization and needs to be relevant to elected officials regardless of political party or current office holders.

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