



Why Has the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2015 Not Been Passed?

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Topic

224S. Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2015 was presented to the Senate by Sen. Barbara Boxer and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations for the fourth year in a row. The bill states that it is,

“To ensure that the United States promotes women’s meaningful inclusion and participation in mediation and negotiation processes undertaken in order to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflict and implements the United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (S.224).”

United States National Action Plan for Women, Peace, and Security Objectives and Action Framework (2011)

- Integration and institutionalization of a gender approach
- Participation in peace processes and decision-making
- Protection of women and girls from violence
- Women’s full participation in conflict prevention
- Women and girls access to relief and recovery

Goals

Identify the barriers causing the Women, Peace, and Security Act 2015 to become stymied in the Committee on Foreign Relations and present recommendations to overcome them.

Perform analysis of the barriers and their causes and create some viable options for confronting these issues by presenting tools for dismantling social inequities.

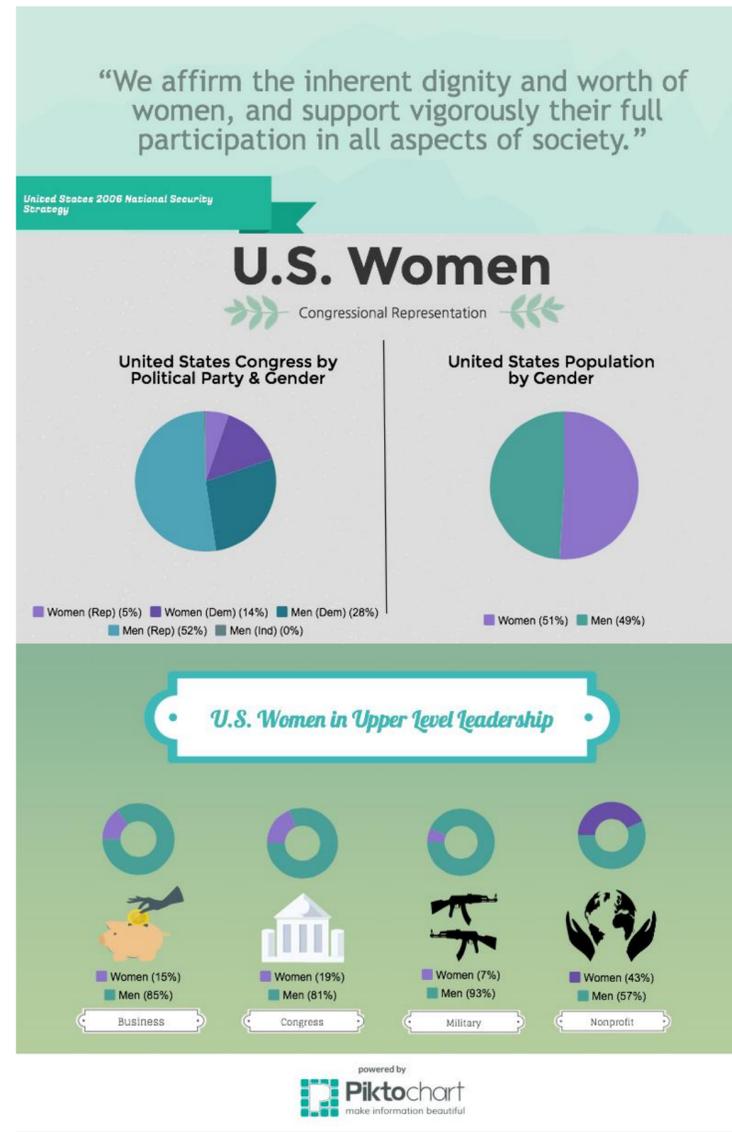
Create lobbying and informational materials to communicate the importance and urgency of S.224 especially considering the refugee crisis and spike in terrorist activity.

Methods

- Perform a literature review of women’s political participation and leadership as well as women’s leadership as a practice using transnationalism and intersectionality as an analytical framework.
- Collect statistical data and perform analysis on the percentage of women in leadership positions in government, nonprofit, the private sector, and the military in the United States & international governmental representation.
- Examine all United Nations and United States governmental documents relevant to this issue as well as organizational reports and policy papers.
- Research existing lobbying materials through online platforms, social media, and print materials to identify effective presentation of information.

Results and Analysis

Contradictions Expose Social Inequity in the U.S.



The Barriers

Sexism: The lack of women in upper leadership positions in the United States across sectors, public, private, and in civil society organizations is a barrier to political and social change and also a manifestation of social inequity between men and women overall.

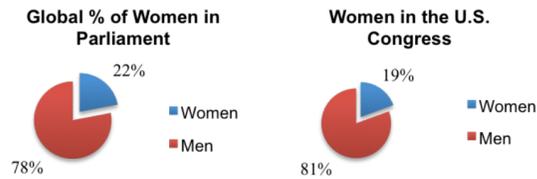
Committee Leadership: Although there is a greater presence of women on committees than before, they still lack committee leadership positions to move bills to vote. There are two women out of the nineteen members of the Committee on Foreign Relations and neither of them is the chair.

Party Ideology: Even when women are present, action on behalf of women’s issues and bipartisan cooperation are sometimes blocked by party interests.

Party Majority: Congress has a Republican Majority – they have been observed to let bills regarding women’s issues die in committee. Women in the party also experience pressure to exclude women’s issues.

Racism: Backlash President Obama as the first black president. Also, the majority of women and children served will be people of color.

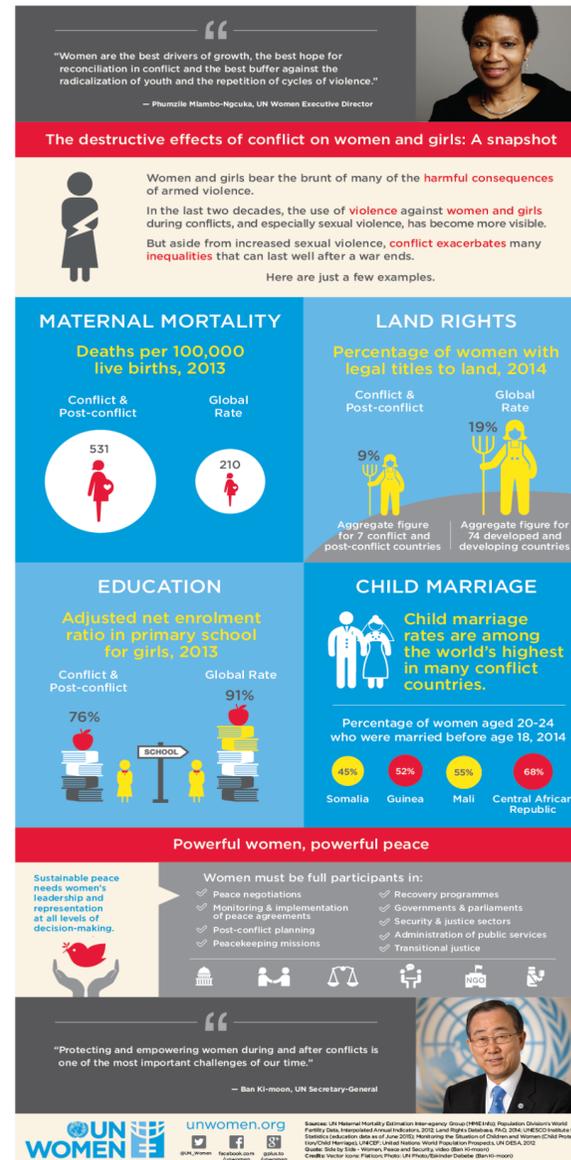
S.224 seeks to support and encourage the **full participation** of women in the **peacemaking process through meaningful inclusion** as all levels of the **decision-making process**. Quotas are suggested where necessary, so that the number of women is representative of the population. Yet, the United States Lags behind the Global Average Women’s Upper Level Governmental Representation and far from representative of the population of the country.



As a result of my data collection and analysis I created a number of informational lobbying materials including:

- Website containing information on the bill, links to all of the original documents, and connected organizations
- Fact Sheet containing all of the pertinent information on S.224
- A sample letter and email to your senator or representative
- Talking points for a meeting with your senator or representative
- A sample script for making a phone call to your senator or representative

WOMEN & ARMED CONFLICT



Recommendations

- The political will isn’t there, so public will needs to drive the passage of the bill.
- The barriers of sexism and racism need to be named and confronted if they are to be removed as obstacles.

Things men can do

- Be an ally! Speak up on behalf of the security of women and their specific needs in times of conflict. This is not a women’s issue, it is an issue of global security and conflict prevention.

Supporting Women Peacebuilders Can Prevent Terrorist Activity

“The Global Study explores how funding and support to women peacebuilders in contexts of rising extremism can play a critical role in ensuring that extremist ideologies neither survive nor thrive.”

- UN Women

Things everyone can do

“Political transformations are only possible when power and privilege are personally and politically acknowledged.” -Winch

So, start with yourself and then share with others.

- Write, email, and call your senator
- Write, email, and call all the members of the Committee on Foreign Relations
- Raise consciousness – tell everyone you know! Share posts through social media.
- Meet with a senator

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