



GFWC Advancement Plan Legislation and Public Policy

Chairman
Beth Lane



Resolutions Chairman
Helen Richie

For more than 100 years, GFWC members have raised awareness of issues requiring attention and support on a national level. Our advocacy efforts are practical not political.

During the 2020–2022 Administration, the Legislation/Public Policy Committee will be “Gathering Facts & Working for Change.” The goals of this Committee during this Administration include:

- Encouraging participation in the Legislative Action Center.
- Educating members about GFWC’s legislative priorities.
- Educating members about the local impact of civic engagement.
- Mobilizing our members to raise a united voice to advocate for GFWC and national priorities.
- Building relationships with the local, regional, and national decisions makers.
- Establishing the GFWC name as a brand that lawmakers and the community recognizes.

WHAT IS PUBLIC POLICY?

Examples of public policy are minimum wage laws, public assistance programs, safety in schools and domestic violence. The definition of public policy is the laws, priorities and governmental actions that reflect the attitudes and rules for the public.

WHAT IS A RESOLUTION?

A Resolution is a statement broken into sections for clarity. It should always have a title, usually the name of the bill if it pertains to a piece of legislation or the subject, if it does not. The title is followed by a maximum of three "WHEREAS" statements, which contain the reasons why the legislation or subject is needed. The text of the bill will usually have a statement at the end providing the information needed. The "RESOLVED" statements provide the action desired.

WHY DO WE NEED RESOLUTIONS?

Adopted resolutions show an agreement by the membership on a viewpoint of an issue. Resolutions can be used as tools for advocating important issues at the local, state, and national levels.

WHAT IS LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY?

Legislative advocacy refers to efforts to influence the introduction, enactment, or modification of legislation. The most common means of legislative advocacy involves contacting a legislator, sharing your views on an issue, and asking him or her to vote a specific way on a bill. To participate, sign up for the GFWC Legislative Action Center. Go to the GFWC website and look for the Legislative Action Center. Get involved!

WHY ADVOCACY?

One of the most important aspects of our system of government is that it is representative—those who make our laws represent us. But how can they represent us unless we let them know what we are thinking? We can and should remind leaders of their responsibilities to their constituents and offer them constructive ideas. If we do, we can bring about public policy changes.

DOES ADVOCACY WORK?

Recent research by the Congressional Management Foundation confirms that advocacy does make a difference. Legislative staffs reported that if a legislator had not reached a firm decision on an issue, individualized contacts would have “a lot” of influence. Together we can make our voices heard.

HOW CAN YOUR CLUB BE INVOLVED?

1. Appoint a Legislation/Public Policy Chairman.
2. Have the Chairman give a report at each meeting on current state and national legislation of interest to your members. Track the number of contacts made and responses received from legislators.
3. Encourage 100% enrollment by members in the GFWC Legislative Action Center. Visit www.GFWC.org for details. Sign up can be completed by members on their smart phones in 5 minutes at a club meeting.
4. Educate club members on GFWC and GFWC-NC Resolutions.
5. Involve club members in developing GFWC and GFWC-NC policy positions by participating in the resolutions process. Read and discuss proposed resolutions and amendments published in the Calls to the GFWC and GFWC-NC Conventions.
6. Send a club delegate to meet with your elected State Officials about positions on public policy issues.

Legislation Information:

- To view a specific state bill and its status, search '(name of state) legislature'. You will find a link to Bills. Follow the link; in the search line state the bill number, name or subject. Or you will find a telephone number that can be called to obtain the same information.
- To view the status of federal legislation, call 202-225-1772 or 202-224-3121 or online at www.congress.gov or www.statusclerk.house.gov. Tracking a bill's status at www.govtrack.us.
- For a State bill/subject contact the Governor; Lt. Governor; President of Senate; Speaker of the House; Senate & House Majority and Minority Leaders; House; Chairman and members of the Committee to which the bill has been referred; the legislators from your area or district, the legislators who sponsored the bill; and the GFWC Resolutions Chairman.
- For a Federal bill/subject contact the President; President of Senate (Vice President of the US); Speaker of the House; Senate & House Majority and Minority Leaders; Chairman and members of the Committee to which the bill has been referred; the legislators from your area or district, the legislators who sponsored the bill; and the GFWC Resolutions Chairman.
- HOW TO WRITE A RESOLUTION

A Resolution is really a motion, so it is one continuous statement with a period only at the end of the last RESOLVED. It should always have a title, usually the name of the bill if it pertains to a piece of legislation or the subject, if it does not. The title is followed by a maximum of three "WHEREAS" statements, which contain the reasons why it is needed. The text of the bill will usually have a statement at the end providing the information 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."

WHEREAS, (first statement of reason legislation); and

WHEREAS, (second statement of reason legislation); and

WHEREAS, (third statement of reason legislation); therefore

Be it resolved; The first " RESOLVED" statement gives the action desired and ends with a semicolon and the word "and further".

The second " RESOLVED " states who will receive a copy of the Resolution and ends with a period.
RESOLVED, That (name of club), a member of the General Federation of Women's Clubs with (number members) concerned women strongly urges the adoption of (bill number and name, or the cause); and further RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution be forwarded to (names of those receiving resolution).

For additional information refer to the Legislation and Public Policy Advancement Plan in the GFWC Club Manual.

AWARDS FOR LEGISLATION & PUBLIC POLICY ADVANCEMENT PLAN:

- One overall award is given from all club entries
- One Club Creativity Project award is given from all club entries