

# **CEDAW and I-VAWA:**

## **Promoting Family Break-up Around the World**

Democratic senator Joe Biden will soon be introducing two bills. One would subject American domestic policy to the scrutiny of a United Nations compliance committee, and the other would undermine families around the world.

The names of these bills are CEDAW and I-VAWA.

### **What is CEDAW?**

CEDAW is a treaty promoted by the United Nations. CEDAW stands for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

CEDAW has a committee of 23 U.N. “gender experts” that enforce compliance with the treaty. These are some of the enforcement actions the committee has taken in recent years:

- Told China to de-criminalize prostitution.
- Criticized Ireland for the role of religion in society.
- Censured Belarus for observing Mother’s Day.

Concerned Women for America warned, “CEDAW is fundamentally flawed...The United States should not give our prestige, nor subject our citizens, to CEDAW.”<sup>i</sup>

### **CEDAW: A Flawed Notion of Partner Abuse**

General Recommendation No. 19 of CEDAW addresses Violence Against Women. But research shows women commit domestic violence as often as men.

CEDAW wants to pretend that violent women and abused men simply don’t exist. That does a disservice to men and women alike.

### **I-VAWA: Bankrolling CEDAW Mandates**

Senator Biden’s companion bill is the International Violence Against Women Act – I-VAWA for short.

I-VAWA uses an innocent-sounding name to disguise a radical agenda.

According to its proponents, I-VAWA would take millions from the U.S. Treasury and funnel it to programs that would solidify “women’s access to reproductive health service” and “change social norms” – all in the name of stopping partner abuse.<sup>ii</sup>

### **What Others are Saying**

Many are speaking out against CEDAW and I-VAWA:

- *Focus on the Family*: CEDAW gives a “U.N. committee authority to dictate family policy.”
- *Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute*: “CEDAW is ‘a binding international treaty with a compliance committee that has pressured no less than 37 sovereign nations to liberalize their abortion laws.’”
- *Carey Roberts*: “Promoting abortions may seem easy, but breaking up the family, the foundational unit of society, is not. So feminists have seized on the issue of ‘domestic violence’ – and that’s where I-VAWA comes in.”
- *Phyllis Schlafly*: “A new feminist front group called the Women’s Edge Coalition is partnering with Amnesty International U.S. to lobby for congressional passage of I-VAWA, which would create millions of dollars of feminist pork.”
- *Concerned Women for America*: CEDAW is “A global tool that would harm women.”

### **Advocates Hide the Truth**

Nearly 200 studies show that intimate partner abuse is an equal opportunity problem – men and women are equally likely to be aggressive.<sup>iii</sup> This is what leading researchers are saying:

*“Differences were observed in the rates of male and female partner violence, with female violence occurring more frequently.” – Renee McDonald, PhD, Journal of Family Psychology, 2006*

*“Recent evidence from the best designed studies indicates that intimate partner violence is committed by both genders with often equal consequences.” – Donald Dutton, PhD, Aggression and Violent Behavior, 2006*

A recent survey of dating couples in 32 countries found that female-only violence is more common than male-only aggression.<sup>iv</sup>

But proponents of I-VAWA don’t acknowledge that abusive women may need to get help.

## **Intact Families are the Safest Place**

The Department of Justice reports that only 2% of aggressive incidents between partners involve married couples who live together.<sup>v</sup> The intact family is the safest place for women and men.<sup>vi</sup>

But the well-financed domestic violence industry wants you to believe the opposite – that *the best way to stop abuse is to break up families.*

## **Domestic Violence Programs De-Stabilize Families**

Most partner aggression is minor and can be resolved with couples counseling. But the DV industry now defines domestic “violence” to include almost anything, even a marital tiff or “harassment.”<sup>vii</sup>

*Talk-show host David Letterman was accused of committing domestic violence against a woman that he had never met or heard of. A New Mexico judge granted a restraining order against Letterman on the grounds that he had harassed the woman with mental telepathic messages and televised facial gestures. The case was eventually dismissed.*

Sweeping definitions open the door to heavy-handed state intrusion into private family matters. A recent report from RADAR – Respecting Accuracy in Domestic Abuse Reporting – documents how domestic violence programs escalate partner conflict, thwart reconciliation, and openly promote divorce.<sup>viii</sup>

No wonder Harvard law professor Jeannie Suk recently called our abuse laws a “government-imposed *de facto* divorce” system.


Our nation’s approach to solving the problem of partner abuse has proven to be ineffective, insensitive to the needs of victims, and in some cases, places persons at greater risk of harm.<sup>ix</sup>

## **Join the Growing Effort to Stop CEDAW and I-VAWA**

CEDAW and I-VAWA would be used to violate American sovereignty and force taxpayers to bankroll radical causes around the world.

**We invite your organization or group to join in this critical effort to protect families from the intrusions of an unaccountable United Nations oversight committee.**

For more information, contact:  
[info@mediaradar.org](mailto:info@mediaradar.org) .



**Respecting Accuracy in Domestic Abuse Reporting**

*The VAWA Reform Coalition, a group of organizations around the country, has come together to educate the public about partner abuse:*

[www.mediadarar.org/docs/VAWA-Reform-Coalition-Declaration.pdf](http://www.mediadarar.org/docs/VAWA-Reform-Coalition-Declaration.pdf)

*For more information, contact:*  
RADAR: Respecting Accuracy in Domestic Abuse Reporting  
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<sup>i</sup> Wright W. CEDAW: A Global Tool that would Harm Women. Concerned Women for America, 2007.

<sup>ii</sup> Family Violence Prevention Fund: New Legislation will Address Findings from WHO Study. June 9, 2006.

<sup>iii</sup> Fiebert M. References Examining Assaults by Women on their Spouses or Male Partners: An Annotated Bibliography. 2006.

<sup>iv</sup> Straus M. Dominance and Symmetry in Partner Violence by Male and Female University Students in 32 Nations. Presented at New York University, May 23, 2006.

<sup>v</sup> Catalano S. Intimate Partner Violence in the United States, Department of Justice, 2006.

<sup>vi</sup> Rector RE et al: Marriage: Still the Safest Place. Washington, DC: Heritage Foundation, 2004.

<sup>vii</sup> RADAR: Expanding Definitions of Domestic Violence, Vanishing Rule of Law. Rockville, MD, 2006.

<sup>viii</sup> RADAR: A Culture of False Allegations: How VAWA Harms Families and Children. Rockville, MD, 2007.

<sup>ix</sup> RADAR: Has VAWA Delivered on its Promises to Women? Rockville, MD, 2007.