

## RESOLUTION NO. 2021-49

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH  
(1) ANNOUNCING ITS COMMITMENT TO END CHILD MARRIAGE BY CALLING  
FOR AN "18 NO EXCEPTIONS" LAW; AND (2) AUTHORIZING THE CITY  
MANAGER AND AUTHORIZED CITY PERSONNEL TO PUBLISH ON THE CITY'S  
WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS NECESSARY INFORMATION  
PERTAINING TO ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE.

WHEREAS, each year minors are coerced and forced into marriages in cities across the United States.

WHEREAS, marriage license records from a sample of state health departments across the county reveal that, in a 15-year period between 2000 and 2015, well more than 200,000 minors were married in the United States, mostly girls married to adult men.<sup>1</sup>

WHEREAS, Child Marriage, a formal marriage or informal union where one or both parties is under the age of 18<sup>2</sup>, is defined as a human rights abuse by the Department of State<sup>3</sup>, UNICEF<sup>4</sup> and Human Rights Watch.<sup>5</sup>

WHEREAS, as a member of the United Nations, the United States adopted the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development including a commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development goals, including Goal 5 to "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls," and specifically target 5.3: "Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation."<sup>6</sup>

WHEREAS, the American Medical Association has called for an end to Child Marriage stating "Child marriage is associated with higher rates of sexually transmitted infections, early pregnancies, divorce, and intimate partner violence than women married at age 21."<sup>7</sup>

WHEREAS, the detrimental effects of Child Marriage are many, including but not limited to, an adverse effect on the child's health, education, and employment opportunities as proven by UN Women<sup>8</sup> and the World Bank.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://apps.frontline.org/child-marriage-by-the-numbers/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://2009-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/254904.pdf>, p.5

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/protection/child-marriage>; *see also*, <https://www.unisef.org/progection/unfpa-unicef-global-programme-end-child-marriage>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/03/27/us-massachusetts-should-end-child-marriage-0>; *see also*, <https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/childmarriage.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg5>

<sup>7</sup> American medical Association Resolution 011, <https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/2019-10-i19011.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2013/3.child-marriages-3900-every-day-more-than-140-million-girls-will-marry-between-2011-and-2020>

<sup>9</sup> <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/530891498511398503/pdf/116829-WP-P151842-PUBLIC-EICM-Global-Conference-Edition-June-27.pdf>

WHEREAS, minors in unwanted or abusive marriages suffer social isolation from their support networks like school, friends and family, which contributes to their poor mental health.<sup>10</sup>

WHEREAS, young women and girls ages 16-19 face intimate partner violence victimization rates almost three times the national average.<sup>11</sup>

WHEREAS, the majority (70%-80%) of Child Marriages end in divorce.<sup>12</sup>

WHEREAS, minors who marry early are more likely to "discontinue their formal educations prematurely, earn low wages, and live in poverty."<sup>13</sup> Girls who marry early are fifty percent more likely to drop out of high school and four times less likely to graduate from college.<sup>14</sup>

WHEREAS, a minor's understanding of their legal rights and access to practical resources to avoid or abandon an unwanted or abusive marriage are far more limited than adult men and women may have.

WHEREAS, in the state of California, there is no minimum age to marry and no restrictions on the age differences between the two parties (e.g., between adult men and minor girls).

WHEREAS, in the state of California, limited reporting on Child Marriage statistics from the majority of counties has hampered the state's ability to track the prevalence of Child Marriage.

WHEREAS, Child Marriage in the United States is not confined to any religious or cultural group. American children of all backgrounds are at risk in California cities because the law permits marriage before the age of majority.

WHEREAS, the overwhelming evidence of adverse effects on the minor's wellbeing and the remaining risk of abusive relationships with older men calls for an "End Child Marriage Under 18 No Exceptions" law.

WHEREAS, the states of Delaware, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey already passed laws ending Child Marriage for all minors, without exception.

WHEREAS, the City of Huntington Beach has determined that it is a moral imperative and undeniably in the best public interest of the City to protect all minors from Child Marriage.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.tahirih.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Child-Marriage-Impacts-One-Pager-updated-5>

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.lovisrespect.org/pdf/Dating\\_Abuse\\_Statistics.pdf](http://www.lovisrespect.org/pdf/Dating_Abuse_Statistics.pdf) (citing Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice and Statistics, Intimate Partner Violence in the United States, 1993-2004. Dec.2006).

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.tahirih.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Child-Marriage-Impacts-One-Pager-updated-5.8.-2-2--REGULAR-PRINT.pdf>. (citing college of William & Mary Law School Professor Vivian e. Hamilton, in "The Age of Marital Capacity: Reconsidering Civil Recognition of Adolescent Marriage" *Boston University Law Review* (December 2012) 92 B.U.L. Rev., 1820.)

<sup>13</sup> College of William & Mary Law School Professor Vivian E. Hamilton, in "The Age of Marital Capacity; Reconsidering Civil Recognition of Adolescent Marriage," *Boston University Law Review* (December 2012), 92 B.U.L. Rev., 1820.

<sup>14</sup> Gordon B. Dahl, "Early Teen Marriage and Future Poverty," *Demography* (August 2010: 47(3): 689-718), at 691, n.2., <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pms/articles/PMC3000061/>.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Huntington Beach as follows:

1. The above recitals are hereby adopted by the City Council of the City of Huntington Beach.
2. The City Council hereby calls on the California State Legislature (Senate, and Assembly) through a letter informing them of said resolution passed by the City of Huntington Beach and urging them to introduce and pass legislation to "End Child Marriage Under 18, No Exceptions".
3. The City Council hereby calls on other California municipalities to pass resolutions showing their commitment to end Child Marriage.
4. The City Council hereby calls on the Orange County Registrar/Recorder/ Clerk to proactively comply with Section 102356 of the California Health and Safety Code by sending aggregated data on all Child Marriages registered in the county each year to the State Registrar before January 31st of the following year; should there be no Child Marriages registered in the county, the City Council calls on the County Registrar/Recorder/Clerk to proactively confirm this with the State Registrar. The City Council also calls on the County Registrar/Recorder/Clerk to make statistics on Child Marriage available to the public upon request, including the total number of Child Marriages in the county, as well as the ages and genders of the parties to those marriages.
5. The City Council hereby authorizes and directs the City Manager and authorized city personnel to publish on the city's website educational information regarding opposing the practice of Child Marriage. In so far as is necessary, the city manager and city staff shall collaborate with human rights nonprofits and organizations specializing in the aforementioned cause to produce such educational content.
6. The City Council hereby authorizes and directs the City Manager and authorized city personnel to publish on the city's social media platforms the aforementioned content.
7. The City Council hereby authorizes and directs that the City Manager and authorized city personnel shall make known to city residents the availability of the letter-writing campaign, to "End Child Marriage Under 18, No Exceptions" in California sponsored by Global Hope 365.
8. The City Council hereby authorizes and directs that the City Manager and authorized city personnel shall make known to city residents the availability of other letter-writing campaigns designed to "End Child Marriage Under 18, No Exceptions" on a federal level.


PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Huntington Beach at a regular meeting thereof held on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2021.

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Mayor

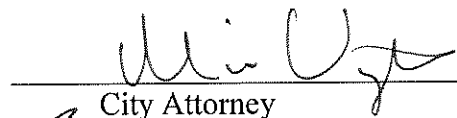
REVIEWED AND APPROVED:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Manager

INITIATED AND APPROVED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Assistant City Manager

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Attorney