

**SUBMITTERS PLEASE NOTE: For this legislation, the annual conference's Board of Church and Society and the UMW executive team should be consulted.**

**CHILD INCARCERATION, THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS,  
AND UMW PRIORITIES**

Whereas both the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church and the United Methodist Council of Bishops have commended the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard for all peoples and nations,<sup>1</sup> and

Whereas the Book of Discipline of the UMC explicitly affirms the rights of children,<sup>2</sup> and

Whereas the United Methodist Church has specifically affirmed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child,<sup>3</sup> which says “No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment” and that “No child shall be deprived of his or her liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily. The arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child shall be in conformity with the law and shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time,”<sup>4</sup> and

Whereas the Nobel Prize winning non-profit organization Human Rights Watch reports that the United States leads the industrialized world in the number and percentage of children in juvenile detention facilities,<sup>5</sup> and

Whereas Human Rights Watch also reports that children are routinely imprisoned in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Somalia, and Syria for alleged association with armed or extremist groups, and that Egypt and Israel imprison children through military rather than civilian courts,<sup>6</sup> and

Whereas the United Methodist Women have made the issue of incarceration of racial minorities and the well being of children and young people as two of their priorities for the 2016-2020 quadrennium,<sup>7</sup>

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the \_\_\_\_\_ Annual Conference of the UMC formally endorses the application of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as it relates to incarcerated children, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this annual conference charge its Board of Church and Society [or equivalent board or committee], along with representatives of the United Methodist Women, with considering how the conference should best respond to the issue of child incarceration, including:

- 1) How best to educate United Methodists;
- 2) Whether and how to interact with lawmakers about proposed legislation; and
- 3) Whether the conference should dissociate financially from entities at home or abroad that profit from child imprisonment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the considerations and any recommendations of the conference's Board of Church and Society [or equivalent board or committee] and representatives of the United Methodist Women be brought to the 2019 annual conference for review and/or action, including any recommendations that should be directed to the General Conference of the UMC in 2020.

- 1) 2016 Book of Discipline, Paragraph 162 “A” and <http://hrusa.org/advocacy/community-faith/methodist1.shtm> )
- 2) 2016 Book of Discipline, Paragraph 162 “C”
- 3) 2016 Book of Resolutions, 6025 “A”
- 4) United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Articles 37 A,B  
<http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>
- 5) <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2016/children-behind-bars>
- 6) <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2016/children-behind-bars>
- 7) <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/general-conference/issuepriorities2016-20.pdf>