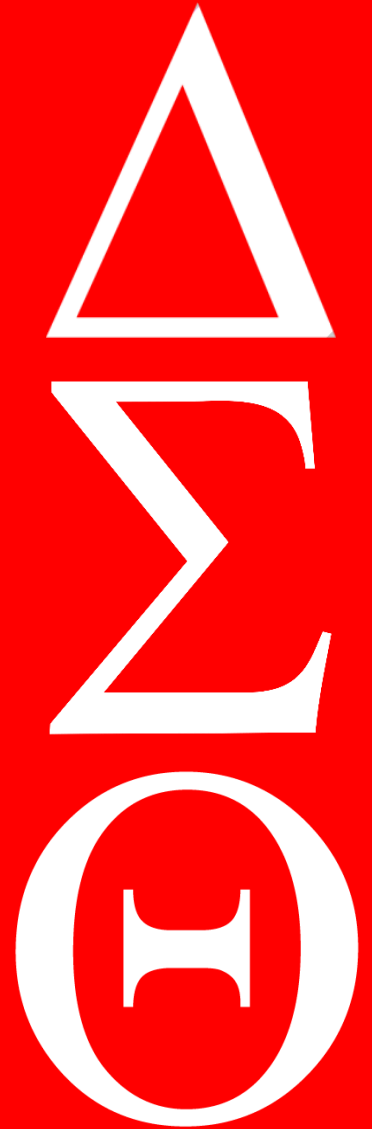




*Proposed
Resolutions*





Resolutions for Consideration

The Resolutions Committee (a subcommittee of the Social Action Commission) reviewed all resolutions submitted by chapters by the deadline date. In addition to the proposed resolutions from Chapters, input was received from National Officers, Committees and Task Forces, members of the National Social Action Commission and national staff. The Committee deliberated and drafted the proposed resolutions which are posted in the 53rd National Convention App.

Resolutions for Consideration

Proposed resolutions shall be reported to the convention by the Resolutions Committee on Tuesday, August 8, 2017 during Plenary Session XI, at which time all voting on the resolutions will take place. Delegates will have the opportunity to discuss the proposed resolutions, recommend changes and, if necessary, propose additional resolutions in critical issue areas.



Proposed Resolutions for the 53rd National Convention (2017)

- I. CIVIL RIGHTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS
 - △ Ban the Box for Returning Citizens
 - △ Calling for an End to Unfair Asset Forfeiture Practices
 - △ Freedom and Justice for All
 - △ Missing Children of Color: Elimination of Disparities in Enforcement of the Law
 - △ Protecting the Image and Lives of African American Males
 - △ Recognizing the Positive Impact of Immigrants on America and Supporting Comprehensive Immigration Reform
 - △ Reformation of the Electoral College
 - △ Restoration of Voting Rights Act of 1965 Section 4 (B)
 - △ Sentencing Reform: Eliminating Racial Disparities in the Criminal Justice System
 - △ Support of Equity and Inclusion for African Americans in the United States
- II. CRIME AND VIOLENCE
 - △ Addressing the Criminalization of Black Women and Girls
 - △ Expansion of Support for Victims of Domestic Violence
 - △ Improving the Prevention and Protection of Students from sexual Assault and Rape on College Campuses
 - △ Lethal Force: Last Resort
 - △ Rape Survivor Family Protection
- III. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
 - △ Closing the Gender Diversity Gap in American Corporate Leadership
 - △ Gender Pay Equity
- IV. EDUCATION
 - △ Ending "Pushout" Discipline Practices in Elementary Schools
 - △ Preparing Black Males for Educational Success: Reducing the High Rate of School Expulsions and Suspensions of Black Males in Southern States
 - △ Voting Rights Education for High School Students
- V. HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE
 - △ 2020 Census
 - △ A Resolution in Opposition to the Abdominal Shackling of Pregnant Inmates
 - △ Family Leave Policy
 - △ The Fight Against Alzheimer Disease, Especially in Women
 - △ A Resolution to Support State and Local Efforts to Restrict the Sale of Menthol Cigarettes and Other Flavored Tobacco Products
- VI. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
 - △ South Sudan Famine Relief
- VII. MISCELLANEOUS
 - △ Restitution for the Henrietta Lacks Family



BAN THE BOX FOR RETURNING CITIZENS

WHEREAS, according to the Prison Policy Initiative, a non-partisan, non-profit initiative which documents and publicizes the negative effects of mass incarceration on our entire society, every year 636,000 people walk out of prison gates. Rehabilitation and Corrections experts have long recognized that despite Returning Citizens' best intentions, and the insights and skills they may have acquired through prison-based programming, they are likely to recidivate unless there is community support. Chief among the variables that aid in the successful assimilation of a Returning Citizen is the ability to obtain gainful employment.

WHEREAS, Returning Citizens are often ill-equipped, ill-prepared to make a successful transition. Across the country, organizations such as the Ohio Justice and Policy Center (OJPC) are strong advocates for employment opportunities for Returning Citizens in order to remove barriers from successful re-entry. OJPC successfully pushed for legislation in the state of Ohio - HB 56: the Ohio Fair Hiring Act – which “Bans the Box” for all local government jobs in the state; and

WHEREAS, Ban the Box is the name of an international campaign by civil rights groups and advocates for Returning Citizens, aimed at requiring and persuading employers to remove from their hiring applications the check box that asks if applicants have a criminal record. Banning the Box enables Returning Citizens to demonstrate their qualifications during the hiring process before being asked about their criminal records. The premise of the campaign is that anything that makes it harder for Returning Citizens to find a job makes it likelier that they will recidivate, which is bad for society; and

WHEREAS, despite the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's regulation that requires all employers to consider whether a criminal record is relevant before rejecting a candidate, Returning Citizens still face substantial hurdles in attempting to obtain gainful employment; and

WHEREAS, the social action goals and objectives of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. aim to help increase its membership's knowledge of this campaign locally and nationally, so that every Delta will be informed and can effectively advocate, and influence the enactment of regulations and legislation, nationally and locally in support of this initiative.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., opposes efforts to dilute or reverse EEOC Enforcement Guidance Number 915.002 on the Consideration of Arrest and Conviction Records in Employment Decisions under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta supports efforts to “Ban the Box” and other hiring practices that make it easier for Returning Citizens to obtain gainful employment; and, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. advocates for legislation that promotes gainful employment of Returning Citizens at the local, state and federal level, and empowers these citizens to successfully integrate into their communities.



Proposed Resolutions

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. supports organizations that engage in fair hiring practices for Returning Citizens by banning the box, conducting background checks later in the hiring process and rejecting applicants only if their prior offense is related to the job which they are seeking.

Submitted by: Cincinnati Alumnae Chapter for presentation at the 2017 National Convention



CALLING FOR AN END TO UNFAIR ASSET FORFEITURE PRACTICES

WHEREAS, in 1970, Congress passed the Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act which included the power to seize private property and which was later expanded in 1984 to allow the government to seize private property regardless of whether the owner was arrested, charged or convicted of a crime; and

WHEREAS, it has been well documented that the war on drugs has been a war on Black and Brown communities leading to an era of unprecedented growth in mass incarceration robbing these communities of talent, potential, and wealth; and

WHEREAS, civil forfeiture is a proceeding brought against the property rather than against the person who committed the offense and civil forfeiture does not require either criminal charges against the owner of the property or a criminal conviction; and

WHEREAS, each year billions of dollars worth of assets are seized and never returned to individuals who were never convicted of criminal wrongdoing and federal, state and local police departments profit unfairly from the proceeds of these seizures; and

WHEREAS, today's civil asset forfeiture system raises several Constitutional issues including violation of the U.S. Constitution's Appropriations Clause, federalism concerns, deprivation of owners chance to challenge the forfeiture in a proceeding and serious due process concerns; and

WHEREAS, the Act was expanded in 1984 when Congress passed the Comprehensive Forfeiture Act which greatly expanded the federal government's forfeiture powers and enabled equitable sharing of the proceeds between the federal, state and local government law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, due to serious concerns, in 2000, the Civil Asset Forfeiture Reform Act (CAFRA) was passed which provided some improved due process, yet these reforms did not address the most glaring issues with this practice; and

WHEREAS, numerous examples of police misconduct and abuse of communities are documented including the use of military-style equipment purchased by departments with the funds received through asset forfeiture; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the shortcomings and abuses of asset forfeiture laws, former Attorney General Eric Holder introduced significant reforms in 2015 to limit the circumstances where seizure of property without evidence of a crime can occur, however, Congress failed to enact these reforms; and

WHEREAS, such asset forfeiture practices are inherently unconstitutional, unfairly target Black and Brown communities, facilitate the system of mass incarceration and "The New Jim Crow" and deprive innocent citizens of their property rights;



Proposed Resolutions

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. seeks to restrict civil asset forfeiture to circumstances where individuals have been convicted of a crime and the asset was involved in the commission of the crime or is the result of the proceeds of the crime; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. calls for an end to civil asset forfeiture against individuals who are not charged nor convicted of a related criminal action; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. calls for reparations for individuals whose assets are wrongly seized in asset forfeiture proceedings.

Submitted by: New Haven Alumnae Chapter for presentation at the 2017 National Convention



FREEDOM AND JUSTICE FOR ALL

WHEREAS, the Emancipation Proclamation ended chattel slavery in those areas where it applied, and;

WHEREAS, a variety of devices have been enacted which disproportionately criminalize persons of African descent, including the Black Codes, vagrancy laws, convict leasing programs and Jim Crow laws, and;

WHEREAS, despite the equal protections clause in the 14th Amendment, and the enactments of the Civil Rights Act of 1865, the Reconstruction Acts of 1867 and 1868, the Enforcement Acts of 1870 and 1871, the Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871, the Civil Rights Acts of 1875, 1957, 1960, 1964, and the Civil Rights Acts of 1968, 1982, and 1991 the United States has government has failed to completely eradicate and prevent systematic discrimination against African-Americans, and;

WHEREAS, despite the fact that the 15th Amendment declares the right of African-American men to vote, the enactment of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the numerous provisions regarding voting rights included in the pieces of legislation listed above, African-Americans continue to be targets of voter suppression and systematic disenfranchisement, and;

WHEREAS, the United Nations' Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, made an official visit to the Washington D.C., Baltimore, Jackson-Mississippi, Chicago and New York City in January, 2016 in order to gather information and assess the situation of African Americans and people of African descent "on the forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, Afrophobia and related intolerance that they face", and;

WHEREAS, The United Nations' Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, after hearing evidence from U.S. government officials and NGO's reached the following conclusions: The colonial history, the legacy of enslavement, racial subordination and segregation, racial terrorism, and racial inequality in the US remains a serious challenge as there has been no real commitment to reparations and to truth and reconciliation for people of African descent. Despite substantial changes since the end of the enforcement of Jim Crow and the fight for civil rights, ideology ensuring the domination of one group over another, continues to negatively impact the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of African Americans today. The dangerous ideology of white supremacy inhibits social cohesion amongst the US population. Lynching was a form of racial terrorism that has contributed to a legacy of racial inequality that the US must address. Thousands of people of African descent were killed in violent public acts of racial control and domination and the perpetrators were never held accountable. Contemporary police killings and the trauma it creates are reminiscent of the racial terror lynching of the past. Impunity for state violence has resulted in the current human rights crisis and must be addressed as a matter of urgency.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. proactively participate in human rights mechanisms of the United Nations to raise awareness of human rights abuses and potential solutions among the members of the sorority, with U.S. elected officials, the general public and the international community, and;



Proposed Resolutions

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. work in conjunction with the United Nations, and the NAACP LDF to seek sanctions against all companies currently profiting through the prison industrial complex, and;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Social Action Commission of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., spearhead an initiative to establish a victim impact fund similar to the fund created for the victims of 911 terrorism to ameliorate the current and past effects of systemic racial discrimination.

Submitted by: Nassau (NY) Alumnae Chapter for presentation at the 2017 National Convention



**MISSING CHILDREN OF COLOR: ELIMINATION OF
DISPARITIES IN ENFORCEMENT OF THE LAW**

WHEREAS, the Declaration of Independence and the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution state that all persons, including children under the age of 18, are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness and no state shall deny any person the equal protection of the laws including discrimination against people belonging to various groups; and

WHEREAS, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children reports that about 35 percent of missing children are black and an additional 20 percent are Latino; and

WHEREAS, the Black and Missing Foundation, states in a recent report that people of color account for 40 percent of all missing persons in the United States, with many being forced into the sex trade; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Bureau of Investigations, statistics indicate that a total of 242,295 minorities were reported missing in the United States out of total of 647,435 persons from all races; and

WHEREAS, the number of missing children of color is disproportionately higher than the total number of white children who are reported missing; and

WHEREAS, the Congressional Black Caucus has requested the United States Attorney General and the FBI Director to investigate the trend of missing girls of color.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., work to increase the awareness and involvement of its' membership in the education of the citizens in their respective local communities on the crisis of missing children of color, and how they can help in the prevention of this crime. For every Delta should be informed and effective citizen, prepared to advocate for and to influence the enactment of legislation of particular interest to African Americans and their children.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., supports this effort with particular emphasis on children of color to eliminate the disproportionate number of minority children who are reported missing yearly in all local jurisdictions throughout the United States; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. advocate for legislative changes where necessary on this issue at local, state, and federal level to protect the rights of children of color; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. support organizations that provide resources for families of missing children of color that include emergency services, counseling, financial resources, education, and legal representation in order to secure their survival and restoration to their children.

Submitted by: Nassau (NY) Alumnae Chapter for presentation at the 2017 National Convention



PROTECTING THE IMAGE AND LIVES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES

WHEREAS, African American males are among the most stigmatized ethnic groups in the United States and they remain one of the least understood populations among the major racial groups; and

WHEREAS, African American males are being challenged in almost every category of survival: incarceration, homicide, school dropout rates, fatherless homes, drug addiction, sexually transmitted diseases, high unemployment, police brutality and poverty; and

WHEREAS, socially-driven mindsets and behaviors result in African American males being disproportionately disconnected from mainstream society and unfairly portrayed by media outlets; and

WHEREAS, the social institution of the African American family (including women and children) is impacted by negative images, perceptions and the plight of African American males and the challenging reality they face today; and

WHEREAS, African American males should be treated fairly, equally and not only presented in a negative light in the media; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. acknowledges that the image and trajectory of African American males is marred by serious social, educational, and systematic challenges; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. will continue to utilize programs and collaborations with other African American male mentor programs to further engage, support, strengthen, encourage, educate, and train young African American males; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. advocates for racial justice, and pursues policies to make America recognize the value of African American males and reject prejudices that unfairly present black males as people who are inherently frightening; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. supports organizations, businesses, campaigns and community initiatives that positively position and brand the image of African American males.

Submitted by: Southern Region Social Action Committee for consideration at the 2017 National Convention



RECOGNIZING THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF IMMIGRANTS ON AMERICA AND SUPPORTING COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

WHEREAS, America is a nation of immigrants and immigrants have made significant contributions to American culture and the American economy and have had a measurable positive impact on the overall success and productivity of America; and

WHEREAS, according to the Small Business Administration, immigrants are 30% more likely to start businesses in the United States than non-immigrants and 18% of all small business owners in the United States are immigrants; and

WHEREAS, immigrant-owned businesses create jobs for American workers. According to the Fiscal Policy Institute, small businesses owned by immigrants employed an estimated 4.7 million people in 2007, and according to the latest estimates, these small businesses generated more than \$776 billion annually; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Venture Capital Association, immigrants have started 25 percent of the public U. S. companies that were backed by venture capital investors. This list includes Google, eBay, Yahoo!, Sun Microsystems, and Intel; and

WHEREAS, according to the Census Bureau, despite making up only 16 percent of the resident population holding a bachelor's degree or higher, immigrants represent 33 percent of engineers, 27 percent of mathematicians, statisticians, and computer scientist, and 24 percent of physical scientists; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the contributions of immigrants to the overall success and productivity to the American society is paramount to creating effective comprehensive immigration reform.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated supports comprehensive immigration reform that allows for and supports the fair treatment and handling of immigrants in America while recognizing the extensive contributions that immigrants make to the American culture and economy; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. is opposed to using any taxes or public funds to build a wall to stop entry to the United States by immigrants.

Submitted by: Southern Region Social Action Committee and Alabama State Social Action Committee for presentation at the 2017 National Convention



REFORMATION OF THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

WHEREAS, many Americans are outraged that for the second time in five elections, the presidential candidate who won the most popular votes lost the election.

WHEREAS, every presidential election, candidates are forced to only compete in a handful of swing states, and effectively ignore voters in every other state in the union.

WHEREAS, the winner-take-all Electoral College system that led to this anti-democratic outcome must be changed so that voters in all 50 states have a say in choosing our president.

WHEREAS, the United States Electoral College is the mechanism established by the United States Constitution for the indirect election of the President of the United States and Vice President of the United States. Citizens of the United States vote in each state at a general election to choose a slate of "electors" pledged to vote for a party's candidate.

WHEREAS, the Twelfth Amendment requires each elector to cast one vote for President and another vote for vice president.

WHEREAS, In a representative democracy, the popular vote is the total number or percentage of votes received by a party, candidate or group of candidates, as opposed to the number of seats they win in the representative assembly or, as in the United States, in the Electoral College in a presidential election.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. urge Congress to reform the Electoral College and to create an equitable election process allowing for a truly representative democracy for the election of the President of the United States and the Vice President of the United States.

Submitted by: Southern Region Social Action Committee and Georgia Social Action Committee for presentation at the 2017 National Convention



RESTORATION OF VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 1965 SECTION 4 (B)

WHEREAS, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was passed “to address entrenched racial discrimination in voting, ‘an insidious and pervasive evil which had been perpetuated in certain parts of our country through unremitting and ingenious defiance of the Constitution.” *Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder*, 133 S. Ct. 2612, 2615 (2013); and

WHEREAS, in *Shelby County, Alabama v Holder*, the United States Supreme Court declared that the coverage formula established in Section 4(b) of the Voting Rights Act, which was used to determine the state and local governments subject to Section 5 preclearance, was unconstitutional; and

WHEREAS, in reaching its decision in *Shelby County, Alabama v Holder*, the United States Supreme Court noted that “[n]early 50 years later, things have changed dramatically. Largely because of the Voting Rights Act, ‘[v]oter turnout and registration rates’ in covered jurisdictions ‘now approach parity...’” *Shelby County*, 133 S. Ct. at 2616; and

WHEREAS, discriminatory tactics still exist to deny African Americans and other minorities the right to vote and federal intervention is necessary to continue the approach to parity, as evidenced by the following examples:

The United States Justice Department’s reliance on Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act to object to a 2011 attempt by the City of Natchez, Adams County, Mississippi, to implement a redistricting plan that reduced the percentage of African American voters in one ward from 53 percent to 47 percent. (*Testimony Sherrilyn Ifill; Fact Sheet*, Leadership Conference Education Fund)

In 2012, the City of Clinton, Mississippi, proposed a districting plan for its six-member council that did not include a single ward where African-Americans voters had the power to elect their candidate of choice, despite the fact that 34% of the city’s population is African-American. The Justice Department objected to the proposed district lines and the City of Clinton re-drew the lines, creating for the first time a ward where African-Americans voters would have the opportunity to elect their preferred candidate. (*Testimony Sherrilyn Ifill*;

About 34 percent of all Mississippi counties surveyed have closed polling places since Shelby, resulting in at least 44 fewer polling places for the 2016 election. (Ari Berman, *The Nation*, November 4, 2014); and

WHEREAS, research shows that photo ID laws, such as Mississippi’s Voter ID Law, bear more heavily on voters of color, who are less likely to own government-issued photo ID (disparate impact) and much more likely to be asked by poll officials to show ID before voting (disparate treatment).

WHEREAS, to combat the effect of Shelby, the Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2015 was introduced in the United States House of Representatives which, “[a]mends the Voting Rights Act of 1965 with respect to the requirement that a federal court retain jurisdiction for an appropriate period to prevent commencement of new devices to deny or abridge the right to vote. Expands the types of violations triggering the authority of a court to retain such jurisdiction to include certain violations of the Act as well as violations of any federal voting rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or membership in a language minority group,” and



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WHEREAS, requirements that an individual provide a photo identification as a condition of receiving a ballot for voting in a federal, state, or local election often result in a denial or abridgment of the right to vote, and

WHEREAS, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., has from its inception been committed to fighting the social injustices that exist in this country including finding ways to ensure that all citizens have an opportunity to exercise their right to vote.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., supports ways to improve opportunities for all citizens to exercise their right to vote free of discriminatory practices of state and local governments, opposes enactment of voter ID laws and/or the elimination of voting precincts in predominately African American communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., advocates for the implementation of legislation to combat the devastating effects that Shelby has had on minorities rights to vote; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., supports the passage of the Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2015 to restore and strengthen Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Voter Empowerment Act of 2015.

Submitted by: Southern Region Social Action Committee and Mississippi State Social Action Committee to be presented at the 2017 National Convention



**SENTENCING REFORM: ELIMINATING RACIAL DISPARITIES IN THE
CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM**

WHEREAS, approximately 2 million people are incarcerated in federal, state, or local prisons and jails per the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

WHEREAS, African Americans constitute 13% of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau); yet they are nearly 40% of the total 2 million incarcerated population per the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

WHEREAS, African American males are 6 times more likely to be incarcerated than white males and 2.5 times more likely than Hispanic males per the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

WHEREAS, 1 of every 3 African American males born since 2001 can expect to be incarcerated in his lifetime; 1 of every 17 white American males born today can expect to go to prison in his lifetime per the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

WHEREAS, 1 of every 18 African American women born since 2001 can expect to be incarcerated in her lifetime; 1 of every 111 white American women born today can expect to go to prison in her lifetime per the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

WHEREAS, Racial minorities are more likely than white Americans to be arrested; once arrested, they are more likely to be convicted; and once convicted, they are more likely to face stiff sentences per the Bureau of Justice Statistics

WHEREAS, current criminal justice system policies and practices contribute to racial disparities in sentencing per the Sentencing Project and the National Association for the Advancement of Color People (NAACP)

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. stands for responsible criminal justice policies and support efforts that will end racial disparities in sentencing while respecting public safety.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. advocates for correctional and sentencing reform legislation, regulation, and policy at the local, state and federal levels.

Submitted by: Marietta-Roswell Alumnae Chapter for presentation at the 2017 National Convention



SUPPORT OF EQUITY AND INCLUSION FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE UNITED STATES

WHEREAS, equity is defined as “the state, quality or ideal of being just, impartial and fair.” The concept of equity is synonymous with fairness and justice. Equity needs to be thought of as a structural and systemic concept; and

WHEREAS, equity is a complex combination of interrelated elements consciously designed to create, support and sustain social justice. It is a robust system and dynamic process that reinforces and replicates equitable ideas, power, resources, strategies, conditions, habits and outcomes; and

WHEREAS, Inclusion is the action or state of including or of being included within a group or structure of inclusion involves authentic and empowered participation and a true sense of belonging; and

WHEREAS, African Americans have often been in a consistent state of exclusion, recipients of injustices and as a race are not present in any considerations of fairness; and

WHEREAS, new manifestations of racism continue to emerge and outpace equity mechanisms and capacities to solve them.

WHEREAS, the new Civil Rights Movement in this country must demand “equity and inclusion” for African Americans, especially when statistics continue to reflect the decline and denial of access in a systemic and structural manner to all aspects of American society, and continues each year to keep and push a significant portion of our race and people further behind; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. urge the enforcement of all existing legislation, policies, and procedures that promote within its framework the concept of equitable and just treatment of African Americans in the United States. As well as, advocate where necessary for the passage of supporting legislation.

Submitted by: Southern Region Social Action Committee and Georgia Social Action Committee for presentation at the 2017 National Convention



ADDRESSING THE CRIMINALIZATION OF BLACK WOMEN AND GIRLS

WHEREAS, although the United States accounts for only 5% of the world's female population, women comprise 30% of the incarceration rate totaling 7% of the prison population, an 800% imprisonment increase since the 1980s; and

WHEREAS, Blacks constitute 14 percent of U.S. population, but comprise 33.2 percent of girls detained and committed in the juvenile justice system. In 2013, Black girls and girls of color were more than three times as likely as white girls to be confined in residential placements (123 per 100,000 vs. 37 per 100,000); and

WHEREAS, while there are many more men in prison than women, the rate of growth for women's imprisonment continues to outpace that of men's by more than 50% with 1.2 million women under the supervision of the criminal justice system due largely to expansive law enforcement efforts, stiffer drug sentencing laws, historical perceptions and post-conviction barriers to reentry that uniquely affect women; and,

WHEREAS, in 2014, the imprisonment rate of Black women (109 per 100,000) was twice that of white women (53 per 100,000), and in 2014 the imprisonment rate of Black girls (123 per 100,000) was more than three times that of white girls (37 of 100,000); hence, Black girls are more likely to be placed in juvenile detention facilities (1.7% rate and over 4 times more often than white girls) fueling the school-to-prison pipeline; and,

WHEREAS, Black children are increasingly pushed out of school into the prison system and while black students (of any gender) represent 16% of student enrollment, they represent 27% of students referred to law enforcement and 31% of students subjected to a school-related arrest. Black girls in public schools nationwide were suspended at a rate of 12 percent, compared with a rate of just 2 percent for white girls, and more than girls of any other race or ethnicity. Within minoritized groups, darker-skinned girls are disciplined more harshly than lighter-skinned girls; and

WHEREAS, Black girls are more likely to be confined for low-level crimes such as misdemeanors, status offenses, and technical violations. They also receive more severe sentences when they enter the juvenile justice system. The enforcement of policies that reinforce stereotypes about femininity have a particularly devastating effect on Black girls, who also experience school discipline at higher rates than any other girls by race/ethnicity; and

WHEREAS, a disproportionate number of imprisoned Black girls have experienced one or more forms of sexual abuse; as many as 60 percent of Black girls report experiencing sexual abuse before the age of 18, and many Black girls are incarcerated because of behaviors based on their reaction to that trauma; and

WHEREAS, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and gender nonconforming girls, in particular, are involved in the juvenile justice system at an even higher rate. A survey of 1,400 girls across seven jurisdictions found that 40 percent of girls in the juvenile justice system are LGBT/GNC (compared to 14 percent of boys); and



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WHEREAS, Black women's treatment in the criminal justice system mirrors the social and historical experiences of Black women in the United States; therefore, as an offender, Black women are viewed as (1) strong and needing minimal or no protection, yet as the victim, they are unbelievable and vindictive, (2) deserving of harsher dispositions because of their perceived inherent violence and treachery, and (3) unbreakable, possessing heroic qualities to endure incarceration, further perpetuating stereotypes that devalue Black women and justify the current sentencing disparity; and

WHEREAS, incarcerated Black women are likely to lose family connection, face labor exploitation, sexual victimization, over- medication and assault; and

WHEREAS, more than 60% of women in state prisons are mothers with children under the age of 18 who are five times more likely than the children of imprisoned fathers to be placed in foster care; and,

WHEREAS, a disproportionate number of incarcerated Black women and girls have experienced one or more forms of sexual abuse and although the precise findings of rates of sexual abuse vary, all studies find higher rates of victimization for incarcerated women than men and many Black women and girls are incarcerated because of behaviors based on their reaction to trauma; and

WHEREAS, because Black women with a criminal record experience 50% fewer callbacks from prospective employers than white women, and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. actively encourage efforts to disaggregate and study demographic statistics to determine the actual numbers of Black women and girls who are under incarcerated or under criminal justice supervision and the effects of those statistics on the Black community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. urge state and federal legislators to allocate funds to programs that emphasize dismantling barriers to reentry for women and investing in more halfway houses and other alternatives to incarceration for women and girls and their children; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. urge its chapters to host community forums, discussions and viewings of Ava Duvernay's *13th* to provide a deeper understanding of how the "13th Amendment loophole" is especially damaging for Black women; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. address incarceration and the criminalization of traumas experienced by Black women's and girl's traumas have laid the foundation for a \$180 billion industry and societal avoidance of comprehensive solutions to structural, social and medical issues such as poverty and violence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. urge its chapters to create a national grassroots movement to dismantle arcane and ineffective sentencing guidelines currently utilized to incarcerate and criminalize non-violent behavior; and



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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. specifically address the skyrocketing confinement rates of Black women and girls by actively supporting research on the experiences of justice involved Black girls and women and actively working to dismantle the sex abuse to confinement pipeline through advocacy and action that aims to specifically address the ways in which Black girls are impacted by unfair discipline practices; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. urge state and federal legislators to require mental health screenings and counseling be made available for all justice-involved girls with a history of sexual abuse or relationship violence and require states to screen children at intake for commercial sexual exploitation and divert identified victims away from the juvenile justice system when possible; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. establish educational programs for parents of Black children providing them with information on how to advocate and intervene when their children are suspended, expelled, or referred to law enforcement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. encourage chapters to make *PUSHOUT: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools* by Soror Monique E. Morris a common reading selection and develop programs to discuss and address the criminalization of Black girls, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. interrogate the myriad of societal stigmas and lapses in social and emotional support that result in the intersection of the criminalization of Black women and girls, sexual abuse and exploitation, and unfair school discipline policies; and

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. fully support the strengthening and enforcement of the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) to provide youth with timely access to emergency medical and crisis intervention services if victimized while in custody, screening and prevention services for all youth entering facilities, and a private right of action to allow for litigation to enforce the PREA's provisions; and

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta, Sorority, Inc. immediately encourage restorative justice practices in lieu of punitive school discipline, confinement and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta, Sorority, Inc. urgently promote fairness and equality in sentencing and the closing of all private prisons where the sexual assault rates of women are 1 in every 4 as compared to 1 in 10 in federal and state facilities.

Submitted by: Knightdale-Wake Forest Alumnae Chapter for presentation at the 2017 National Convention



EXPANSION OF SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

WHEREAS, according to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, domestic violence is, “the willful intimidation, physical assault, battery, sexual assault, and/or other abusive behavior as part of a systematic pattern of power and control perpetrated by one intimate partner against another. It includes physical violence, sexual violence, threats, and emotional or psychological abuse;” and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in collaboration with the National Institutes of Justice, and the Department of Defense conducted the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence (NISVS) telephone survey in 50 states and the District of Columbia in 2011. Nationally, approximately 1.9 million women were raped twelve months before taking the survey; 11.4 percent of multiracial women, 9.6 percent of non-Hispanic white women, 8.8% of non-Hispanic black women, and 6.2 percent Hispanic women were raped by an intimate partner during their lifetime; and

WHEREAS, violence starts early. Before the age of eighteen, 8.5 million women first experienced rape, and 1 in 4 women have experienced severe physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime; and

WHEREAS, for women of color, socioeconomic challenges, lack of education, diminished employment opportunities, language challenges, and fears of deportation increase the difficulty of seeking resources to combat domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 29.1 percent of African American females are victimized by intimate partner violence through rape, physical assault, or stalking in their lifetimes. African American females experience intimate partner violence at a rate that is 35 percent higher than that of white females and about 2.5 times the rate of women of other races; African American women experience higher rates of intimate partner homicide when compared to their white counterparts; and

WHEREAS, domestic violence continues to affect women of all races. The devastation African American women experience from intimate partner relationship violence is compounded because of historical and present day racism, discrimination, the vulnerability of African American men to police brutality, and negative stereotyping; and

WHEREAS, a key component of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated’s mission is to address issues that impact the communities we serve, domestic violence obliterates the wellbeing of women which in turn leads to the destruction of the family unit, which affects the mental, emotional, and physical functioning of women, men, and children; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that all chapters of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated expand collaborative partnerships with community-based organizations working to eradicate domestic violence through advocacy efforts; and



Proposed Resolutions

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated will utilize Delta Days events in all seven regions as an opportunity to urge legislators to expand programs, safe houses, available financial assistance, and emotional support to victims of domestic violence.

*Submitted by: San Bernardino-Riverside Area Alumnae Chapter for presentation at the
2017 National Convention*



IMPROVING THE PREVENTION AND PROTECTION OF STUDENTS FROM SEXUAL ASSAULT AND RAPE ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

WHEREAS, according to statistics on sexual violence from the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, one in five women and one in 16 men are sexually assaulted in college, more than 90% of sexual assault victims on college campuses do not report the assault, and 63.3% of men at one university who self-reported acts that qualify as rape or attempted rape admitted to committing repeated rapes; and

WHEREAS, according to a special report released in December 2014 by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), rape and sexual assault are defined as including “completed and attempted rape, completed and attempted sexual assault, and threats of rape”. It further states that during the period of 1995-2013, females ages 18-24 consistently had the highest rate of rape and sexual assault victimizations compared to females in all other age groups, and fewer than 1 in 5 female students received assistance from a victim service agency; and

WHEREAS, in January 2014, President Barack Obama and Vice President Joseph Biden issued a Presidential Memorandum creating the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault to focus on the seriousness and urgency of colleges and universities addressing sexual misconduct, which found that sexual assault most often happens in a young woman’s freshman or sophomore year, and in most cases the attacker is known to her. Further, many are survivors of “incapacitated assault,” often blame themselves, and may be unaware of their school’s adjudication process; and

WHEREAS, according to a study by the Association of University Professors, the detrimental effects of sexual assault on campus may be physical injury, emotional damage (may require medical treatment and/or counseling), pregnancy, and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs/HIV), and impact on scholastic achievement as college students surviving sexual assault rarely perform at their prior academic levels. There are times victims are unable to carry a normal course load, skip classes or drop courses altogether, ultimately leaving the school, or transferring; and

WHEREAS, according to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, schools that receive federal funding have an obligation and responsibility to address the problems identified by sexual assault, students who report sexual violence have a right to expect the school to take steps to protect and support them. Schools that fail to provide such protections could risk disciplinary action, inclusive of loss of federal funding. However, the U.S. Department of Education has never taken away federal funds from any school involved in sexual assault or harassment cases since Title IX was signed into law in 1972; and the number of complaints filed has increased 80% over the past 30 years; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. advocates for and supports mandates that require college campuses to implement a comprehensive prevention, response, and survivor program that includes an education component defining “consent” and risk factors presented by alcohol and drugs; the laws regarding sexual assault; violence and rape; the engagement of young men as allies; and that supports and assists all students; and



Proposed Resolutions

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. advocates a national strategy that colleges and universities provide a culture, climate, and environment of zero tolerance that seeks to eradicate incidences of sexual assault and rape of college students on college campuses.

Submitted by: Annapolis Alumnae Chapter for consideration at the 2017 National Convention



LETHAL FORCE: LAST RESORT

WHEREAS, the March 2017 Ruderman Family Foundation Report stated that disabled persons and those with disabilities make up a third to one-half of all people fatally killed by law enforcement officers, and in many instances their hands were raised in surrender; and

WHEREAS, the first response to any perceived danger to the officer is the use of a lethal weapon, which in many instances escalates into a fatal shooting or procedures that result in death. This is illustrated by the cases of Ethan Saylor with Downs Syndrome who was dragged from a movie theater and forcibly restrained until he died of asphyxiation; Michelle Cusseaux diagnosed with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder fatally shot dead when she allegedly charged at an officer with a hammer; and deaf Daniel Harris was shot and killed almost immediately after exiting his vehicle while trying to communicate in sign language; and

WHEREAS, Charles Kinsey, autistic caretaker, was trying to explain to the police his patient's condition, the policeman shot at the patient who he believed posed a danger and accidentally hit the caretaker. There are other cases documented by Innocent Down, an organization which holds an annual vigil for presumed innocent victims of police violence; and

WHEREAS, current practices place the highest priority on keeping law officers safe, but do not adequately address non-life threatening situations that involve, mental health issues and other disabilities, even when family members or others explain; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that training for law enforcement include a disability curriculum including mental health, physical disabilities, autism, and other developmental, intellectual and cognitive disabilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that law enforcement at every level train and deploy, whenever feasible, crisis teams when situations are identified as disability related; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Social Action Committees of local chapters establish a liaison by August 2018 with their local police so there can be community forums for families to aid them in assisting disabled family members in the appropriate behavior should there be an encounter with law enforcement.

Submitted by: Chester (SC) Alumnae Chapter for consideration at the 2017 National Convention



RAPE SURVIVOR FAMILY PROTECTION

WHEREAS, the federal 2015 Rape Survivor Child Custody Act encouraged States to enact laws regarding termination of parental rights of rapists but there are still seven states without laws preventing rapists from gaining custody of children conceived without consent and the rapist has the same rights as any other biological father; and

WHEREAS, the federal law, 42 USCA §14043h, incentivizes states to pass laws permitting rape survivors to “seek court-ordered termination of the parental rights of her rapist with regard to that child, which the court is authorized to grant upon clear and convincing evidence of rape” and which do not require a conviction; and

WHEREAS, forty-three states and the District of Columbia have legislation that offers at least some protection to prevent rape victims from facing their attackers over parental rights, but these legislative protections vary greatly where some states require publication of a rape victim’s and child’s name and dates of birth when the rapist is unknown or cannot be served; and

WHEREAS, according to the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology, 5% of rape victims of reproductive age (age 12-45) became pregnant as a result of rape, with the majority of pregnancies in adolescents and of these: 5.9% placed the child for adoption, 32.2% kept the child, 50% terminated the pregnancy, 11.8% miscarried; and

WHEREAS, the rights of a parent may be terminated based on the standard of proof of clear and convincing evidence, a higher standard of proof than other family law issues and no criminal conviction is required in other cases involving terminating parental rights as a result of conduct that is also classified as criminal, such as child abuse; and

WHEREAS, only 2.2% of rapes result in conviction and incarceration, yet in nearly half the states that have legislation meant to prevent rapists from claiming parental rights, a victim may still be forced to interact with the person who raped her if the State did not obtain a conviction in her case.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. will vigorously advocate for the enactment or strengthening of local, state and federal legislation that addresses the issue of parental rights and custody of children conceived as a result of sexual assault; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. supports legislative measures that seek to protect vulnerable mothers and children from harm and that promote their mental, physical and emotional well-being; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. will, partner and collaborate with organizations that provide mental health, legal and advocacy assistance to sexual assault survivors who wish to end the parental rights of rapists when their child was conceived through rape and a court has made a finding that the rape occurred based on clear and convincing evidence.

Submitted by: Maryland State Social Action Committee for presentation at the 2017 National Convention



CLOSING THE GENDER DIVERSITY GAP IN AMERICAN CORPORATE LEADERSHIP

WHEREAS, the gender diversity gap exists within leadership roles and/or positions in the corporate/business sector. The gap exists in the position of CEOs, board members and staff of Fortune 500 companies; and

WHEREAS, research conducted by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) found that women in leadership positions within businesses are a minority; and

WHEREAS, less than five (5) percent of the companies in the Standard and Poor's 500 (S&P 500) index had female chief executive officers; and

WHEREAS, women made up less than five (5) percent of the CEOs of S&P 500 companies. Fewer than three (3) percent of Asian, African-American and Hispanic women are board directors. This disparity is also found at the staff level. Asian, African-American, and Hispanic women make up 17 percent of the workforce in S&P 500 companies but fewer than four (4) percent of them are executive officials and managers.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated supports efforts to mitigate the gender diversity gap in corporate leadership roles; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated advocates for legislative changes to enhance the balance of power as it relates to fair and equal opportunity to support women in leadership roles and positions; and

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated advocates for the incorporation of diversity training in all Fortune 500 companies and Standard and Poor's 500 companies, to include the completion of a gap analysis to determine what strategies /initiatives can be implemented to decrease this imbalance in the workplace; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated supports organizations that provide resources for women pursuing leadership roles and positions that include training, counseling, coaching, and mentoring to secure and/or be recommended for non-positional and positional leadership roles.

Submitted by: Fort Valley Alumnae Chapter for presentation at the 2017 National Convention



GENDER PAY EQUITY

WHEREAS, American women who work full-time year-round are paid only 80 cents for every dollar paid to men; and

WHEREAS, this wage gap translates into a loss of \$10,470 in median earnings every year; and

WHEREAS, over a 40-year career black women typically earn \$840,040.00 less than white men; Native American women \$934,240.00 less than white men; and Latinas earn \$1 million less than white men; and

WHEREAS, women of color would have to work well into their 80s or 90s in order to catch up to what a white, non-Hispanic male made by age 60; and

WHEREAS, according to Pew Research, even though women have increased their presence in higher-paying jobs traditionally dominated by men such as professional and managerial positions, women as a whole continue to be overrepresented in lower-paying occupations, and this may also contribute to gender differences in pay; and

WHEREAS, as a result of a recent Federal Court ruling from the 9th Circuit, employers can legally pay women less than men for the same work based on previous differences in the worker's salaries as long as they apply it reasonably and have a business policy to justify it; and

WHEREAS, the 45th President of the United States signed an executive order revoking a 2014 executive order created by President Barak Obama that ensured businesses that receive federal contracts to do a better job of adhering to labor and civil rights laws. As a result of the order by President Donald Trump, businesses are no longer required to provide wage transparency and can include forced arbitration clauses to resolve sexual harassment claims; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated is an organization of women who are consistently facing and dealing with issues related to wage discrimination based on both gender and race.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated supports initiatives, the passage of local and federal laws, and programs that seek to illuminate the gap in wages paid to women based on gender and race.

Submitted by: Southern Region Social Action Committee and Alabama Social Action Committee for presentation at the 2017 National Convention



ENDING “PUSHOUT” DISCIPLINE PRACTICES IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

WHEREAS, the public school system is unable to meet the holistic needs of African-American girls due to inadequate socio-emotional learning opportunities, and a shortage of educators who are culturally competent. African American girls develop a negative self-image during elementary school years, which is often associated with their academic identity. As a result of low motivation and expectations, they become vulnerable to internal as well as external stressors. They experience dilemmas including low self-esteem, trauma, underachievement, pregnancy, and bullying which distract them from the attainment of the most valuable resource: an education.

WHEREAS, the National Women’s Law Center, through its 2016 “Let Her Learn Campaign”, popularized the term *pushout*, referring to racial and gender biased school and discipline practices that render school an unwelcoming environment, as a major barrier for girls of color in completing K-12 education; and

WHEREAS, according to the United States Department of Education, African-American girls on average received out-of-school suspensions six times more often than white girls in the 2013-2014 school year; *pushout* through inequitable discipline occurs in all 50 United States, with the highest rates in the District of Columbia, where for each white girl suspended, seventeen (17) African-American girls are forced to spend time away from instruction; and

WHEREAS, social and psychological research links negative relationships with schools to poor self-image; developmental theories point to late childhood and pre-adolescence as the period when girls develop self-confidence, a value system, and sense of purpose. This is also the stage in which many maladaptive emotional and behavioral patterns originate leading to criminal delinquency and deviant sexual behaviors; and

WHEREAS, several local, state, and national initiatives have been utilized to provide mentorship for boys of all ages, and for ‘at risk’ teen girls. Elementary age girls are systematically overlooked when planning programs to prevent detrimental social outcomes; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. seeks to promote scholarship and constructive development of African American females, through exemplary leadership and by using our influence to a change unjust practices, as a means to empowering the African-American community to thrive socially and economically.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. will be intentional about stopping *pushout* using our presence and support to impact, mentor, and advocate for African American girls in elementary schools both nationally and internationally.

Submitted by: Oklahoma Sooner City Alumnae Chapter for presentation at the 2017 National Convention



PREPARING BLACK MALES FOR EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS: REDUCING THE HIGH RATE OF SCHOOL EXPULSIONS AND SUSPENSIONS OF BLACK MALES IN SOUTHERN STATES

WHEREAS, Nationally, 1.2 million Black students were suspended from K-12 public schools in a single academic year per the U.S. Department of Education’s Civil Rights Data Collection.

WHEREAS, 55% of those suspensions occurred in 13 Southern states per the U.S. Department of Education.

WHEREAS, Boys were 65% of Black students suspended from K-12 public schools in the 13 southern states per a report titled, “Disproportionate Impact of K-12 School Suspension and Expulsion on Black Students in Southern States.”

WHEREAS, Blacks males were disproportionately suspended at rates five times or higher than their representation in the student population in Southern States per the U.S. Department of Education.

WHEREAS, positioning young people to secure a high school diploma which prepares them for post-secondary training and education creates a clear pathway out of poverty and the cradle to prison pipeline.

WHEREAS, despite efforts by a number of organizations and groups, implicit bias still exists that continues to perpetuate racial inequities in school discipline.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. supports efforts to raise awareness about implicit biases that cyclically reproduce racial inequities in school discipline of black males in Southern states; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. advocates for legislative changes at the local, state and federal levels that require schools to provide positive alternatives to out-of-school suspensions and expulsions of black males in Southern states; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. will support organizations that help school districts and schools in Southern states reduce expulsions and suspensions and improve school discipline practices and policies.

Submitted by: Marietta-Roswell Alumnae Chapter for presentation at the 2017 National Convention



VOTING RIGHTS/EDUCATION FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

WHEREAS, Congress enacted the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (also known as the "NVRA" and the "Motor Voter Act"), to enhance voting opportunities for every American. The Act has made it easier for all Americans to register to vote and to maintain their registration.

WHEREAS, in light of the low African American voter turnout in the federal elections in 2016 in key states, we feel it is necessary to consistently encourage our African American population about the critical importance of voting. It is especially important to ensure that our eligible teens by the age of 17 are thoroughly educated on voting, the Electoral College and other areas of civic engagement and that they are persuaded to register and vote.

WHEREAS, some African Americans are failing to vote at robust levels across the nation due to lower voter enthusiasm and newly enacted impediments to voting. This was evident by the sharply lower voter participation in some of the key states such as Texas, Florida, Ohio, Michigan, and others.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. should continue our efforts on voter education, registration, and mobilization. Therefore, it is a critical need to focus on registering eligible high school students to vote. This can be done twice a year during the National Voter Registration Day effort (September) and at the end of the year prior to them graduating. Houston Metropolitan Alumnae Chapter's "Salute to Seniors" will equip them with a voter registration card along with their high school diploma. Our next year seniors will be educated on voting registration, the Electoral College process, and taken to the polls to early vote.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. should support efforts in the various states such as pre-voter registration at age 17, automatic voter registration at age 18, deputizing high school principals as voter registrars, and providing same day onsite registration to encourage voter participation.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. should adopt this program and institute it in all of our chapters via education, advocacy, registration, and mobilization.

Submitted by: Houston Metropolitan Alumnae Chapter for consideration at the 2017 National Convention



2020 CENSUS

WHEREAS, Article 1, Section 2 of the United States Constitution requires an actual enumeration of the inhabitants of the United States every ten years for the purpose of apportionment of the U.S. House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, data collected by the decennial census is used for the redistricting of state and local governments, and schools districts; and is also used for making informed public policy and the distribution of billions of dollars to local communities. The Census data also determines economic development decisions; investments, job creation, allocation of resources, benchmarks for civil rights, anti-discrimination laws, and court decisions; and

WHEREAS, coverage measurements of the 2000 and 2010 Censuses by the U.S. Census Bureau found an undercount of the Black population of 1.8 percent and 2.1 percent, respectively; and of the Hispanic population of 0.7 percent and 1.5 percent, respectively; and

WHEREAS, the current political climate has created a greater risk for further undercounting and inefficiencies due to the very real likely hood of insufficient funds being provided at the federal level as a result, the U.S. Census Bureau now faces the l challenge of getting an accurate count with fewer dollars than in the 2010 census; and

WHEREAS, research indicates that proposals exist to create the option of administering the 2020 Census via computer and allowing inhabitants to submit the form online. While not yet approved, clearly the implementation of a digital census threatens to ostracize already marginalized communities. Low-income households, older, rural, and many African Americans and other ethnic minority inhabitants that do not have access to the internet will be affected by this digital divide and further exacerbate the undercount issue.

WHEREAS, understanding the necessity of a obtaining the most accurate count possible of African Americans and other minorities, the U.S. Census Bureau has partnered with national, state, local and tribal organizations in an effort to motivate people to respond to the decennial census and to reduce population undercounts.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. make improving the accuracy of the decennial census a permanent social action agenda item by:

- Establishing a Census Task Force within the National Social Action Commission to advise the Commission, National Executive Board and chapters on the sorority's involvement in the planning, execution, and evaluation of the decennial census and the American Community Survey;
- Designating the National Social Action Commission to make and receive nominations of qualified individuals to serve on committees that advise the Secretary of Commerce and the Census Director on statistical issues related to African Americans and other minority groups;
- Urging chapters and members to serve on Complete Count Committees for the 2020 Census;
- Working with other organizations with common interests in federal statistics on research and evaluation.

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED THAT, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., work with the U.S. Census Bureau to establish internships for students of Historically Black Colleges and Universities to increase the number of African American statisticians and demographers; and



Proposed Resolutions

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. work diligently to ensure that African Americans and other underrepresented populations are accurately counted in federal statistical programs.

Submitted by: Potomac Valley and Queens Alumnae Chapters for presentation at the 2017 National Convention



A RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO THE ABDOMINAL SHACKLING OF PREGNANT INMATES

WHEREAS, the American Civil Liberties Union and (ACLU), the National Women’s Law Center and the Rebecca Project for Human Rights, report that five percent (5%) of women enter state prisons pregnant with six percent (6%) entering jails pregnant; and

WHEREAS, the medical community condemns the “barbaric practice” of shackling with several medical organizations such as the American Medical Association, the American College of Nurse-Midwives, and the American College of Obstetricians Gynecologists arguing that shackling during labor and delivery is detrimental to the well-being of the mothers and their babies; and

WHEREAS, although twenty-three (23) states and the District of Columbia in total have adopted policies outlining limitations on the use of restraints on incarcerated pregnant women, with the Federal Bureau of Prisons in 2008, prohibiting the shackling of pregnant mothers in all but the most extreme circumstances; and

WHEREAS, the current patchwork system of laws, regulations, written, and unwritten policies have created an atmosphere of confusion and noncompliance even in states with legislative bans on this unconstitutional practice, there is continued reporting of women being shackled during labor and delivery; and

WHEREAS, women of color are overrepresented in American prisons and jails, and the shackling of incarcerated women is more often than not the shackling of women of color with the attendant detriment to their newborn babies, an already marginalized population in the United States.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. advocate for the enactment of federal legislation prohibiting the practice of belly shackling once a pregnancy determination is made, as well as during the second and third trimesters of pregnancy, during labor and delivery, and for six weeks postpartum, including any time in transport to medical facilities or court; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. urge state and federal legislators to create federal and state oversight bodies to ensure that regulations, laws, and practices are followed and reports are timely received on the investigations of shackling incidents; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. urge its chapters during its legislative days to encourage legislators to enact specific legislation as it relates to reproductive issues and healthcare for pregnant incarcerated women; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta, Sorority, Inc. support the Anti-Shackling Coalition and work toward ending the practice of shackling incarcerated mothers during transport, labor, delivery, and post-delivery in state prisons and jails and all immigration facilities.

Submitted by: Knightdale-Wake Forest Alumnae Chapter for presentation at the 53rd National Convention



FAMILY LEAVE POLICY

WHEREAS, according to the Pew Research Center, studies finds that Americans largely support paid leave, and most supporters say, employers, rather than the federal or state government, should cover the costs. When Australia passed its parental leave law in 2010, it left the U.S. as the only industrialized nation not to mandate paid leave for the mothers of newborns which put America on par with Lesotho, Swaziland, and Papua New Guinea—the only countries in the entire world that do not provide paid maternity leave; and

WHEREAS, according to the paper prepared by the Institute for Women’s Policy Research (IWPR), the 1963 report of the President’s Commission on the Status of Women recommended that: “Paid maternity leave or comparable insurance benefits should be provided for women workers; employers, unions, and government should explore the best means of accomplishing this purpose.” Over 50 years later, access to paid family and medical leave of any kind, including maternity leave, is far from universal, and only a few states and no federal law provide a mechanism for mothers or fathers to take paid parental leave. One thing that has changed, however, is that due to shifting societal norms, attitudes, and policy knowledge if the 1963 report were to be written today, it would surely recommend that fathers, as well as mothers, receive access to paid parental leave; and

WHEREAS, according to PLOS Medicine (Public Library of Science), each additional month of paid maternity was associated with 7.9 fewer infant deaths per 1,000 live births, reflecting a 13% relative reduction. Reductions in infant mortality associated with increases in the duration of paid maternity leave were concentrated in the post-neonatal period; and

WHEREAS, according to the article published by the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), most women and mothers are working or attached to the workforce while a few still choose to exit at the time of birth, for the vast majority, not working is not a choice at the time of birth. For a vast majority of families depend on the incomes provided by both parents to meet their financial needs and to provide children the resources they need to grow. This is especially true of single mothers, who tend to have lower average incomes and few fall back options if they do not work. For working parents, paid leave and other workplace policies that recognize this reality are critical.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that paid parental leave not be viewed as a political or partisan issue. However, as one of common sense because an overwhelming majority of Americans support paid family leave; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., as proven social action agents, advocates for legislative changes on the local, state, and federal level to establish paid family leave policies throughout these United States.

Submitted by: Warner Robins Alumnae Chapter for presentation at the 2017 National Convention



THE FIGHT AGAINST ALZHEIMER DISEASE, ESPECIALLY IN WOMEN

WHEREAS, women are at a higher risk of developing Alzheimer's than men, out of the 5 million people living with Alzheimer's in the United States, 3.2 million are women and given this information and knowing that Alzheimer's is still one of the most misunderstood and underreported diseases, we must take action.

WHEREAS, 1 out of 6 women over the age of 60 will develop Alzheimer's, compared to 1 out of 11 men. Women in their 60s are twice as likely to develop Alzheimer's than they are to develop breast cancer.

WHEREAS, the main reason that women are more likely to develop the neurological disease is simply that women live longer than men and that age is still the number one risk factor for developing Alzheimer's.

WHEREAS, Caregiving at home almost always affects work and other responsibilities, and A Woman's Nation Takes on Alzheimer's finds that working women feel they get less support for elder care than they do for child care. Almost half of women caregivers report they have tried to get time off from work for their caregiving duties, but couldn't get it.

WHEREAS, the economic impact of Alzheimer's disease—on government, families, and business—totals about \$300 billion per year in the United States. The cost of caring for a single person with Alzheimer's is a whopping \$56,800 a year, the bulk of it borne by each family. And all of these numbers are about to explode. With the baby boomers entering their mid-60s, an Alzheimer's tsunami is about to hit, with the number of people with the disease expected to triple to 16 million by 2050.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated supports efforts in the fight against Alzheimer's disease by raising awareness specifically for the African American community and targeting women.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated advocates for legislative support on the local, state and federal levels that continues and increases the funding for Alzheimer's research.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated supports the many efforts in the fight against Alzheimer's by raising awareness through public forms, participating in annual community walks, and raising funds to support research to help eradicate the disease.

Submitted by: Atlanta Alumnae Chapter for presentation at the 2017 National Convention



A RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT STATE AND LOCAL EFFORTS TO RESTRICT THE SALE OF MENTHOL CIGARETTES AND OTHER FLAVORED TOBACCO PRODUCTS

WHEREAS, tobacco use claims 45,000 African American lives a year, killing more African Americans than murders, AIDS, illegal drug use, alcohol use, suicides, and car accidents COMBINED;

WHEREAS, predatory marketing of tobacco to the African American Community continues to cause tobacco-related disparities;

WHEREAS, the tobacco industry has a well-documented history of targeting African Americans with “culturally friendly” advertising of menthol cigarettes, perpetuating the tobacco industry’s historic practices of targeting vulnerable populations, which a tobacco industry executive dismissingly described as “the young, the poor, the black and stupid;”

WHEREAS, some 85% of African American smokers 12 years of age and older use menthol cigarettes (as opposed to 29% of white smokers);

WHEREAS, tobacco manufacturers add menthol to cigarettes to mask the harsh taste of tobacco and alleviate the irritating effects of nicotine, making menthol cigarettes particularly attractive to kids;

WHEREAS, the number of menthol cigarette advertisements in a store is proportional to the number of African American students at the nearby school;

WHEREAS, Newport cigarettes, the most aggressively marketed menthol cigarette brand, are significantly less expensive in predominantly black neighborhoods;

WHEREAS, according to the 2012 Surgeon General report on the prevention of tobacco use, adolescent and young adult smokers smoke menthol cigarettes at a higher percentage than any other age group, and menthol cigarettes are especially popular among African American youth who smoke;

WHEREAS, non-mentholated cigarettes have declined in popularity in the U.S., yet menthol cigarette usage has remained constant, with the result that even as per capita cigarette usage has declined by 7% from 1965 to 2009, it has increased by 14% in the African American Community;

WHEREAS, the 2009 Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act prohibited candy and fruit-flavored cigarettes because of their power to pull youth into nicotine addiction, yet excluded menthol from the list of banned flavors, despite the threat that menthol cigarettes pose to the African American Community;

WHEREAS, the tobacco industry strategically uses flavored little cigars and cigarillos to replace the banned flavored cigarette market; which are packaged as cheaply as 3 for 99 cents and available in flavors such as bubblegum, cotton candy, grape, vanilla, chocolate, and “chicken and waffles,” with some flavored tobacco products sharing the names, packaging, and logos as popular candy brands like Jolly Rancher, Kool-Aid, and Life Savers;



Proposed Resolutions

WHEREAS, nearly 9 out of 10 cigarette smokers in the U.S. start smoking by age 18, and flavored tobacco products, including little cigars, cigarillos, and electronic smoking devices (which can deliver nicotine in a flavored juice), are a gateway for youth to become regular smokers;

WHEREAS, existing age restrictions, such as the new Tobacco 21 laws in some states, are inadequate protections to keep flavored tobacco products out of the hands of youth, given that nearly two-thirds (63.3%) of 12- to 17-year olds who had smoked in the last month had given money to others to buy cigarettes for them, one-third (30.5%) had purchased cigarettes from a friend, family member or someone at school, and six out of ten (62%) had “bummed” cigarettes from others;

WHEREAS, federal courts have upheld the authority of state and local governments to restrict the sale of flavored tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes;

WHEREAS, numerous jurisdictions across the U.S. have taken aim at the pernicious influence of flavored tobacco by banning the sale of menthol cigarettes and/or other flavored tobacco products;

WHEREAS, a ban on flavored tobacco products can drastically reduce flavored tobacco sales, and more importantly, reduce the first time use of flavored tobacco among teens by 37%, and a 28% lower chance of teens using any type of tobacco product, even when surrounding jurisdictions do not also ban flavored tobacco;

WHEREAS, 75.8% of African Americans support a ban on menthol cigarettes and 43.8% of African American menthol smokers report they would quit smoking if menthol cigarettes were no longer available; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated is committed to the health and wellbeing of the African American Community;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.:

1. urges state and local governments to exercise their authorities to enact ordinances that would restrict the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes;
2. supports community engagement by encouraging community-based organizations to work in partnership to educate community residents about the harms of flavored tobacco products and the need to regulate these products at the state level or within local jurisdictions; and
3. endorses the observance of *NoMenthol Sunday*, which is a faith-based initiative that commemorates “World No Tobacco Day” (held annually on May 31st) in the African American Community.



SOUTH SUDAN FAMINE RELIEF

WHEREAS, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. is a public service organization committed to International Awareness and Involvement, Political Awareness and Involvement, addressing injustices wherever they may exist and strives to make a difference in the lives of those that are socially disadvantaged; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations (U.N.) formally declared a famine in parts of South Sudan. While many people around the world find it difficult to access food and nutrients, conditions rarely meet the official criteria for a famine. According to the United Nations, “A famine can be declared only when certain measures of mortality, malnutrition, and hunger are met. At least 20 percent of households in an area face extreme food shortages with a limited ability to cope; acute malnutrition rates exceed 30 percent, and the death rate exceeds two persons per day per 10,000 persons.” In parts of South Sudan, intense fighting and displacement have made it difficult to harvest crops. An estimated five million people (about 50% of the South Sudanese population) have been affected by food shortages, which are expected to spread by the middle of the year; and

WHEREAS, Entire generations are at risk of lasting damage stemming from the vicious cycle of greed, hate, hunger and violence that produces these famines; children are always the most affected, even those who survive may be mentally and physically stunted for life; and

WHEREAS, February 2017, the United Nations declared a famine in South Sudan’s Mayendit and Leer counties. It was the world’s first famine declaration since 2011, in Somalia. Due to massive shortages, the U.N. Security Council describes the food crisis in South Sudan as the worst in the world. Despite a peace accord signed in August 2015, South Sudan remains on the verge of economic collapse and continues to struggle with widespread food insecurity.

WHEREAS, since 2013, armies and allied militias have swept through this area time and again, razing and burning entire villages, slaughtering and raping as they go. Thousands of people have drowned in the state’s rivers and swamps as they fled. Relentless war has rendered just about all aspects of daily life unsafe; and

WHEREAS, Getting aid to those most in need might be difficult because of both the rebels and Sudanese governments actions of bribery, prohibition of UN flight drops, and aid worker murders; and

WHEREAS, there is also a severe shortage of health care services and professionals (one doctor for every 100,000 people). Medical facilities are under-equipped and unhygienic. Since many South Sudanese do not have access to clean water, deadly diseases such as malaria continue to spread; and

WHEREAS, Women and girls, in particular, are most vulnerable due to the crisis, as many are facing violence, abuse and exploitation daily. Thousands lack the care they need to cope with unwanted pregnancies and pregnancy complications; and

WHEREAS, during this time of unprecedented need, the world’s largest supplier of humanitarian relief, the United States, under the direction of President Donald Trump is preparing to eliminate much of the funding toward humanitarian aid in the proposed budget; and



Proposed Resolutions

WHEREAS, Humanitarian aid makes up a small fraction of the U.S. government spending — less than 1 percent. Although the cuts would have to withstand bipartisan opposition, the State Department and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) could see their budgets reduced by more than a third. U.S. funding to the United Nations might drop by more than half; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations were unsuccessful in their efforts to raise \$4.4 billion by the end of March 2017 for emergency hunger relief operations, a number of worldwide agencies working are providing relief in the area; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Grand Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. calls on the power of its membership to take immediate action to support relief efforts, which will address the many needs of the people of South Sudan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. shall identify an organization to partner with, with a proven track record of getting the most relief to areas most in need; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. communicate with the office of the President of the United States, and implore restoration of funding for those in need inside and outside of the United States; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that we begin these efforts immediately so that people who are suffering may benefit as soon as possible.

Submitted by Baltimore Alumnae Chapter for presentation at the 2017 National Convention



RESTITUTION FOR THE HENRIETTA LACKS FAMILY

WHEREAS, according to the documented accounts of journalist and author Rebecca Skloot in the Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, the story of cancer patient Henrietta Lacks of Baltimore, MD who died of cervical cancer in 1951 at Johns Hopkins Hospital and;

WHEREAS, these accounts indicate that doctors at Johns Hopkins Hospital removed and cultivated cells from the cervical tissue of Mrs. Lacks without her consent or the knowledge of the Lacks Family; and

WHEREAS, the several decades of study and research of those cells, dubbed HeLa cells, ultimately resulted in major medical advances worldwide, including but not limited to: polio, Parkinson's Disease, leukemia, hemophilia, influenza, cancer, HIV, and aging; and

WHEREAS, according to Author Skloot's research of the Henrietta Lacks case, it is illegal to sell human organs and tissue for research, but legal to charge fees for collecting and processing of human tissue and cells, thereby commercializing their use; and

WHEREAS, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks revealed that Johns Hopkins Hospital made cells available across the globe upon request and continuously benefitted monetarily and;

WHEREAS, it is fair, just, and humane, that the Lacks Family be granted monetary compensation or restitution in view of monetary benefits attained by Johns Hopkins Hospital;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. advocate for restitution of the Lacks Family and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. join with policy analysts, scientists, philosophers, and ethicists who have suggested that a system in which donors of human specimen e.g. tissues and cells are entitled to increase levels of compensation; particularly as the specimen yield continuous benefit to science and to medicine and;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. monitor advocacy efforts and legislation that could result from those efforts on behalf of donors and their families in being compensated.

Submitted by: North Arundel County Alumnae Chapter for presentation at the 2017 National Convention

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