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Protecting the rights of older citizens and legal residents against discrimination

- 1 WHEREAS our society tends to hold negative perceptions of the value, worth, and productivity of older persons, and these negative images are so subtly imbedded into the structure of our society that they are seldom recognized;
- 2 WHEREAS discrimination against older women places them in double jeopardy, and older minority women are confronted with triple jeopardy;
- 3 WHEREAS employment discrimination on any basis has an intergenerational impact, as older persons with reduced resources require greater support from family members;
- 4 WHEREAS current research confirms the existence of a glass ceiling that discriminates especially against older women and minorities, thereby preventing their advancement in the workplace;
- 5 WHEREAS many workers over age 40 are not aware of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) passed in 1967, which prohibits mandatory retirement for most workers and other forms of age discrimination;
- 6 WHEREAS ADEA does not conform with Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, which permits unnamed persons to participate in class action suits;
- 7 WHEREAS the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is charged to enforce the ADEA and provide leadership to other Federal agencies that oversee equal employment opportunity laws;
- 8 WHEREAS proposed legislation is anti-family and discriminates against aged legal residents who would otherwise be eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and other benefits; and
- 9 WHEREAS this country has been founded and greatly enriched by immigrants, through their many significant contributions and their taxes;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the 1995 White House Conference on Aging to support policies that:

- 10 Encourage civic, social, ethnic, cultural, and religious leaders to sensitize their communities and organizations to the subtlety of racial, age, and sexual orientation discrimination and the social and financial costs of such practices;

Appendix D: Text of the Resolutions

- 11 Require employers and labor unions to inform employees of their rights under ADEA and establish penalties for failure to do so;
- 12 Amend the ADEA to conform to Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, which permits unnamed members of the class to participate in a law suit;
- 13 Mandate, with adequate resources, the EEOC's active prosecution of cases in which discrimination has been alleged, and interpret ADEA regulations to protect its intended beneficiaries sufficiently;
- 14 Amend the Civil Rights Act of 1991 to include older people as a protected class;
- 15 Require Federal agencies with enforcement responsibility for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to ensure that protection of the ADA is extended to older Americans with disabilities;
- 16 Maintain the residency requirements for citizenship examinations to 5 years for all persons;
- 17 Maintain eligibility to all public services, including SSI, for all legal immigrants.

