



**GENERAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS OF MASSACHUSETTS
RESOLUTIONS Updated October 25, 2021**

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I. ARTS AND CULTURE

1. Fine Arts

Whereas, The General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts believes the opportunity to be educated, to participate and to create in the various fields of Fine Arts is a basic need of life; and

Whereas, The General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts considers an appreciation of the Fine Arts an essential part in the development of our youth as well as for all ages; and

Whereas, The General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts believes that an individual's life is enriched mentally, physically, socially, emotionally and spirituality through the Arts; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts initiate, support and encourage programs to promote within the local school systems and within communities interest in, and an appreciation of art, crafts, dance, drama, literature, music and photography.

Fall Meeting 2019

2. Heritage Arts and Crafts

Whereas, Heritage arts and crafts reflect the culture, history and aesthetic values of society; and

Whereas, Continued and active practice is the only way these skills can be preserved for future generations; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges its members to preserve heritage arts and crafts by:

1. Researching the history and techniques;
2. Encouraging artisans to study and practice these skills;
3. Supporting programs that teach these skills both on the professional and amateur levels; and
4. Supporting programs that introduce these skills during early childhood development.

Fall Meeting 2020

II. CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

1. Child Safety

Whereas, Preventable injuries represent one of the greatest single health risk to children; and

Whereas, Common household items (e.g., cleaning agents, electrical outlets, hot liquids, medicines, plastic bags), furniture (e.g., bookcases, bureaus, television stands), and appliances (e.g., refrigerators, televisions) can pose great threats to children; and

Whereas, The improper use and lack of use of seatbelts and car seats by adults and children can lead to unnecessary injury when involved in motor vehicle accidents; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Club of Massachusetts supports research, education, public policy, and engineering advancements that help prevent childhood injuries; and

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Club of Massachusetts urges its member clubs to sponsor and promote community child safety programs and educational programs for parents and other caretakers of children; and further

Resolved, That the General Federal of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges its member clubs to support the use of seatbelts and properly installed car seats, to support safety programs, and to support state laws concerning seatbelt use and restraint of children in vehicles.

Fall Meeting 2021

2. Crime

Whereas, The crime rate continues to be a serious problem in all parts of the country; and

Whereas, To lower the crime rate depends upon the coordination of effort between the public in general, the police and all law enforcement agencies, the legislators, the courts and the correctional agencies; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges its members to do their duty as private citizens by reporting crimes promptly, by testifying in court when asked, by serving on jury duty when called, by taking steps to safeguard their property, and by refusing to patronize illegal activities; and

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges its members to support all laws and efforts which would lead to:

1. A higher degree of cooperation between the police and the public;
2. Clear definitions of the responsibilities and the roles of police, courts, and correction agencies;
3. Training for police officers to increase their competence in their areas of responsibility;
4. Criminal laws that are adequate for today's needs;
5. The best qualified personnel in police, court, correction, and legislative positions; and

further

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges its members to teach, by their own example, the meaning of family and community responsibility to its youth so that they will develop into responsible and law abiding citizens.

Annual Convention 2021

3. Electronic Billboards

Whereas, Distracted driving is an increasingly dangerous occurrence; and

Whereas, Billboards, especially electronic, (digital) billboards, are particularly distracting to drivers; and

Whereas, Billboards obscure the natural beauty of our scenic highways;

Whereas, The construction of billboards has a detrimental effect on the environment and habitats; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges its member clubs to work with local and state officials to enforce and carefully update existing sign ordinances agreement and limit new billboard construction.

Fall Meeting 2018

4. Government Involvement

Whereas, The members of the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts are concerned for responsibility, financial stability, and efficiency in local and state government; and

Whereas, Women have demonstrated their ability to meet the responsibilities of public office; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges women throughout the Commonwealth to:

1. Demand responsibility from their elected officials by email, postal mail, telephone, or personal contact;
2. Keep themselves informed and alert about the government issues of their community, state and nation;
3. Participate in public affairs by serving in elected or appointed positions; and
4. Exercise their vote and to encourage voter participation in their communities.

Fall Meeting 2017

5. Gun Control

Whereas, One of the most alarming crisis the nation faces today is the number of violent crimes involving firearms; and

Whereas, A waiting period and background check on purchases of handguns has reduced crime and violence by providing impetuous gun buyers a cooling off period; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts supports effective gun control legislation regulating the indiscriminate sale and possession of weapons including:

1. Mandatory waiting periods and gun safety education prior to purchase;

2. Improved licensing requirements for gun dealers;
3. Requirements that purchasers produce identification and bear the cost of a background check;
4. Requirements for background checks or a firearm owner's identification card to purchase a gun at gun shows and internet sales;
5. Increased penalties for the sale of firearms to minors; and

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts support legislation banning the importation, manufacture and sale of assault-style weapons; and

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts support legislation banning the modification of a firearm for the purpose of creating an assault-style weapon; and

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts supports mandatory penalties for anyone convicted of using firearms during the commission of a crime; and

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts supports the enforcement of existing gun laws and urges its members and clubs to work with their legislators and firearm authorities on all levels to implement improved methods of safe gun control; and further

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts supports legislation allowing law enforcement officials free access to Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms gun trace information.

Annual Convention 2021

6. Our American Heritage

Whereas, Many of our forefathers made the supreme sacrifice to establish this nation, to solidify its unity and to defend its principles; and

Whereas, The preservation of these principles of liberty, opportunity, and justice for all depend in the future upon an alert, informed, and patriotic electorate; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges its member clubs to emphasize the teaching of American history in our schools, increase support for the preservation of significant historical sites, enthusiastically participate in observances of national holidays and special patriotic events, encourage the prominent display of our American flag and encourage English as our national language.

Fall Meeting 2020

7. Rights and Responsibilities of the Individual

Whereas, Statistics show many people decline to participate in the democratic process at any level; therefore

Resolved, the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts encourages its members to participate in the voting process; and

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts recognizes the obligation of all citizens to participate actively in the democratic process at some level; and further

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges its member clubs to provide programs that promote civic engagement and voting.

Fall Meeting 2019

8. Runaway and Homeless Youth

Whereas, The problem of runaway and homeless youth is national in scope; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts encourages its members to:

1. Become involved in intervention and prevention services;
2. Work with established programs;
3. Develop awareness of the National Runaway Safeline (800-RUNAWAY, or Text 66008);
4. Support legislation for the well-being and safety of our youth;
5. Work with parents and family members to help monitor children's Internet activities; and
6. Encourage the use of Greyhound Bus Line's free ride home program for runaway youth.

Annual Convention 2021

9. Sexual Predators/Offenders

Whereas, Our children are frequently the object of sexual predators; and

Whereas, Sex offenders have the highest recidivism rate of any criminal category; and

Whereas, Unsuspecting young people are often victims of "those in authority" (e.g., clergy, coaches, teachers); therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Club of Massachusetts supports enforcement of existing laws that punish the violator; and

Resolved, That the General Federal of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges its member clubs to promote educational campaigns about sexual crimes, sex offenders, and their impact on the victims and their families; and

Resolved, That the General Federal of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges:

1. The enactment of statutes providing for incarceration and enforcement by the judicial system;
2. That the severity of the crime and its impact to the victim and the family be brought to the attention of the court before plea bargains are accepted and sentences imposed;
3. Strengthened requirements for medical and psychiatric treatment;
4. Public access to sex offender release and registration information allowing communities the opportunity to be informed by local law enforcement agencies on their rights and responsibilities; and

Resolved, That the General Federal of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts supports enactment of legislation whereby defendants convicted of a sexual offense against children be prohibited for life from participating in any occupation or volunteer activity involving children; and further

Resolved, That the General Federal of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts supports legislation which imposes penalties for crimes of a sexual nature committed using technology to create, distribute, or solicit child pornography.

Fall Meeting 2021

10. Susan B. Anthony Day

Whereas, Susan B. Anthony was born in Adams, Massachusetts on February 15, 1820; and

Whereas, Susan B. Anthony's life was dedicated to women's right to vote; and

Whereas, She promoted equal pay for equal work and lectured extensively against slavery and domestic violence; and

Whereas, The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has designated August 26th, known as Women's Equality Day, as a day to honor Susan B. Anthony for her role in securing ratification of the 19th amendment to the United States Constitution, securing for women the right to vote; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges its member clubs to recognize her contributions to women with suitable programs and activities on her birthday and on August 26th.

Fall Meeting 2017

11. War Veterans and Military Personnel

Whereas, The General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts is deeply concerned with all problems pertaining to our active duty military and war veterans; and

Whereas, Following every military conflict or time spent in service of our military, millions of military personnel and veterans are confronted with the problems of recovery as well as the problems accompanying transition from military to civilian life; and

Whereas, The need for volunteers in veterans hospitals to aid and assist patients is vital; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges its members to actively support legislation that would aid in the rehabilitation of all military personnel and veterans regardless of gender, and further

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Massachusetts urges its members to support and participate in programs assisting and honoring military families and veterans such as Veterans Administration Medical Centers, Fisher House-Boston, the USO and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Soldiers’ Homes.

Fall Meeting 2019

III. EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES

1. Income Tax Deduction for Tuition

Whereas, The financing of higher education will continue to be an increasing burden; and

Whereas, Students who must earn their way through school should be aided and encouraged to pursue higher education; and

Whereas, An income tax credit or deduction will encourage persons to help in financing the higher education of students; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Massachusetts supports existing laws and legislation which provide that tuition fees to higher educational institutions, accredited by State and regional associations be deductible from income before income taxes or qualify for credit against income tax liability.

Fall Meeting 2019

2. Volunteerism

Whereas, The General Federation of Women’s Clubs and the General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Massachusetts have supported volunteerism in the schools and libraries in many diverse ways for many years; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Massachusetts continues to promote programs and projects that enhance the value of our schools and libraries; and further

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Massachusetts urges its member clubs to continue to actively volunteer in their respective communities and to support projects and programs of the GFWC to broaden the opportunities and experiences of all citizens and exemplify responsible and valuable civic engagement activity.

Midwinter Meeting 2020

IV. ENVIRONMENT

1. Conservation of Recreation Areas

Whereas, The natural beauties of the Commonwealth should be available for the enjoyment of all its citizens; and

Whereas, Existing open areas of aesthetic and recreational value within many communities are now subject to legislative land taking for other uses; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Massachusetts urges its member clubs to work with local and state authorities for the protection of existing community parklands, wetlands, salt marshes, forests and recreation areas; and the replanting of forests and development and beautification of the roadside with special attention being given to the safety, facilities and maintenance of the travelers’ roadside rest areas as well as closed facilities.

Midwinter Meeting 2020

2. Ecological Effect of the MWRA Plan

Whereas, Cape Cod Bay and Massachusetts Bay are vital ecological resources for the entire Commonwealth of Massachusetts, impacting shellfish, fisheries, recreation, marine mammals, and boating; and

Whereas, In 2000, the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) completed the Deer Island Sewage Treatment Plant which will provide primary and secondary treatment of the wastewater from homes and businesses in 43 greater Boston communities; and

Whereas, The MWRA received a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit in 1999 and a modification in 2000 and 2003 that impose rigorous conditions to ensure the protection of Massachusetts and Cape Cod Bay; and

Whereas, This permit requires stringent limits and testing requirements for the wastewater discharge after full secondary treatment and a monitoring program with 43 stations around the ocean outfall locations in Cape Cod Bay and near the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary. The results of the monitoring are linked to a Contingency Plan and action to occur if thresholds are not met; and

Whereas, An Outfall Monitoring Science Advisory Panel will provide recommendations to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) based on data from the monitoring plan; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges its member clubs to continue to act as a catalyst in their communities to urge the public to remain vigilant to potential environmental dangers, as well as to monitor the data collected by the Outfall Monitoring Science Advisory Panel with regard to any adverse impact on Stellwagen Bank, a significant area of marine life; and further

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts supports the conditions in the MWRA's permit that require:

1. Continued release of comparative data via distribution on the Internet;
2. Encouraged efforts to prevent pollution at the source—industrial, commercial and residential; while
3. Maintaining reserve funds to address unexpected contingencies.

Midwinter Meeting 2018

3. Keep America Beautiful

Whereas, Preserving the beauty and environmental quality of communities is of enduring importance; and

Whereas, It is the responsibility of all citizens to motivate and educate others in their communities toward positive citizen action for community improvement, conservation, and local beautification; and

Whereas, Vandalism and abuse threaten the physical environment, natural resources, and heritage of our nation's public lands; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts supports the concept of keeping America beautiful; and

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges all club women to take responsibility to promote programs in schools, to educate and motivate action by their local citizenry on issues of community improvement, conservation and local beautification; and further

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges its member clubs to promote and participate in Public Lands Day, Arbor Day, Earth Day and Clean Water celebrations to work for improved volunteer actions all year long.

Fall Meeting 2020

4. Litter and Packaging Reduction

Whereas, The preservation of the natural beauty of our Commonwealth has always been of prime interest and concern to our membership; and

Whereas, Litter of all kinds including newspapers, bottles, aluminum cans, plastics, plastic bags, polystyrene packaging and products, waste oil, white goods (appliances), motor vehicle batteries and tires destroys the natural beauty of our environment and can be dangerous to the environment, wildlife, and marine life; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges its member clubs to activate programs that will encourage public interest in eliminating litter within their communities, promote the placing of trash receptacles in public areas, and encourage recycling of newspapers, bottles, aluminum tins and cans, plastics, plastic bags, polystyrene packaging and products, waste oil, white goods (appliances), motor vehicle batteries and tires; and

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Massachusetts request all state officials to work for the development of recycling facilities and with the placement of Material Recovery Facilities (MRF) in all regions of our Commonwealth; and further

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Massachusetts request all state and local law enforcement officials to aggressively enforce laws and regulations concerning the disposal of litter and recyclables along our highways and beaches, in parks, forest, waterways, and other public places.

Fall Meeting 2019

5. Regional and Metropolitan Planning

Whereas, Such environmental factors as highways, preservation of recreational facilities, transportation of people and the products of industry, rivers and water resources are of increasing concern to the General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Massachusetts; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Massachusetts urges its member clubs to work with their community and its regional planning agency as zoning changes and economic development may impact the physical and natural beauty of the environment; and further

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Massachusetts urges its members clubs to be involved as comprehensive regional and metropolitan planning is undertaken in their communities.

Fall Meeting 2021

6. Support of Coastal Wetland Restoration

Whereas, The coastal wetlands are irreplaceable and natural resources necessary to the conservation of wildlife and support almost 75% of the nation’s commercial fish and shellfish industries; and

Whereas, The inland and coastal wetlands are essential to public and private water supplies and for proper flood control; and

Whereas, Coastal wetlands provide storm protection with an acre of wetlands able to store 1 to 1.5 million gallons of floodwater; and

Whereas, These vital resources are being threatened with extinction or damaging encroachment by unreasonable and unnecessary exploitation; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Massachusetts urges its private industry and government agencies to work together to encourage research in finding ways to stop erosion and support the proper protection, development and rehabilitation of the national resources; and

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Massachusetts urges local conservation, state and federal regulatory agencies to strictly enforce the laws and regulations and seek further legislative measures necessary to preserve our rich environmental heritage; and

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Massachusetts strongly support funding for coastal restoration projects; and further

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women’s Clubs of Massachusetts encourage its members to stand ever vigilant and report to the proper authorities potential danger to the environment and sponsor environmental forums.

Fall Meeting 2017

V. HEALTH AND WELLNESS

1. Alzheimer’s Disease

Whereas, it is estimated that more than 5.5 million Americans have Alzheimer’s today, unless a cure or prevention is found that number will increase to 16 million by 2050; and

Whereas, Alzheimer’s affects approximately 200,000 individuals under the age of 65 who have younger-onset Alzheimer’s, up to 5.3 million people age 65 and over, and the disease significantly increases after age 85 ; and

Whereas, Women make up almost 2/3 of Americans with Alzheimer’s; and

Whereas, Direct and indirect costs of Alzheimer's and other dementia's amount to more than \$259 billion annually with expectations these costs could run as high as \$1.1 trillion by 2050; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges its member clubs to support health care initiatives, education, and legislative measures to find a cure.

Annual Meeting 2018

2. Child and Adult Abuse

Whereas, The physical and mental well-being of all our people is a matter of grave concern; and

Whereas, It is essential that every person has the right to a sound mind and body unscarred by willful abuse; and

Whereas, Bullying is defined as unwelcome written, electronic, verbal or physical acts or gestures where a child or adult feels coerced, intimidate, harassed or threatened; and

Whereas, Some people may be helpless to protect themselves; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges support of responsible action of doctors, health care personnel, teachers, police, and neighbors when reporting unexplainable injuries to the proper authorities; and further

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges its member clubs to support programs protecting against abuse.

Fall Meeting 2017

3. Improper Portrayal of Women

Whereas, it is evident that women are still commonly portrayed by media with negative and limiting images, and this can lead to the objectification of women; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges its member clubs to take a strong stand against exploitation of women in improper and questionable advertising and literature, unwholesome and violent programming in all media, including but not limited to, movies, television, videos, radio, music, video games, advertisements, and the Internet; and against the overall negative portrayal of women; and

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts strongly opposes the depiction of women in ways that perpetuate gender based discrimination and/or contribute to violence against women; and further

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts encourages its member clubs to challenge advertisers, broadcasters and producers to portray women in a positive manner.

Fall Meeting 2017

4. Intellectual Disability

Whereas, An intellectual disability is characterized by below-average intelligence or mental ability and a lack of skills necessary for day-to-day living is causing social, medical, educational, and economic problems knowing no boundaries of socio-economic status; and

Whereas, Those with an intellectual disability should receive an appropriate individualized education, be encouraged to participate in recreational activities, and have job opportunities appropriate for their disability; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts supports programs and legislation that impact the quality of life of the intellectually disabled and promotes education of the public to assure acceptance and support of those with an intellectual disability.

Fall Meeting 2017

5. Mental Health

Whereas, A sound, effective mental health program cannot be achieved without an organized and cooperative effort in which national, state, and local government, organizations, and individuals assume their share of responsibilities; and

Whereas, Success of such a program depends largely upon education and research, adequate facilities and trained professional personnel; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts urges its member clubs to support programs that will focus attention on:

1. Early recognition of symptoms including mental disturbance in youth;
2. Promotion of programs designed to interest young people in choosing this important field as their vocation;
3. Establishment of local halfway houses and mental health residences throughout the state;
4. Projects that will develop community understanding of the needs of the mentally ill;
5. Establishment of programs of one-to-one relationships in which mature, competent volunteers take as their own the interest of another person who is in some way developmentally impaired;
6. Keeping state institutions open for the mentally challenged;
7. Supporting the state initiative to keep a developmentally disabled individual in a home environment whenever possible; and
8. The right of individuals confined to state and/or private hospitals and residential facilities to breathe fresh outside air on a regular basis when approved by their treatment plan.

Fall Meeting 2017

6. National Women's Health Week

Whereas, National Women's Health Week was initiated in 2000 by an alliance of private organizations dedicated to raising awareness of women's health issues and is now led by the US Department of Health and Human Services Office on Women's Health; and

Whereas, National Women's Health Week begins on Sunday, Mother's Day, and continues through the following week; and

Whereas, National Women's Health Week serves as a time to help women understand what steps they can take to improve their health; and

Whereas, Federal partners and national supporters play a critical role in helping to celebrate National Women's Health Week; therefore

Resolved, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts:

1. Urges its member clubs to contact their local officials to promote Sunday, Mother's Day, and the following week as National Women's Health Week; and
2. Use the US Department of Health and Human Services Office on Women's Health, as a resource to learn about and to promote Health Awareness Seminars, Health Fairs, and other educational programs and share these events on social media using the Women's Health logo.

Fall Meeting 2017