



City of Pittsburgh

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Text File

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Committee: City Council

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WHEREAS, child marriage is often forced marriage, since children cannot be expected to retain legal counsel, locate safe housing, and file for divorce; and,

WHEREAS, nearly a quarter-million children were wed between the years 2000 and 2010; and,

WHEREAS, girls who marry before the age of 19 are 50 percent more likely to drop out of high school, and four times less likely to complete college than their unwed peers; and,

WHEREAS, women who married in their teenage years tend to have more children, more closely spaces, resulting in an inability to access educational opportunities; and,

WHEREAS, until very recently, child marriage was legal under federal law in all 50 states, until Delaware and New Jersey lead the nation to end this abuse of the human rights of children; and,

WHEREAS, the poverty, stress, and lack of education creates a 23 percent greater risk of serious health problems like heart attacks, diabetes, cancer, and strokes in those who were married as children; and,

WHEREAS, girls have a fundamental right to self-determination, safety, and education; and,

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania State Senate's SB81 and the State House's HB360 will end child marriage in Pennsylvania, becoming the third state to do so, granting the freedoms from abuse to all children; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh hereby urges the Pennsylvania legislature to urgently pass SB81 and HB360, to grant the right of self-determination to children.