

Florida Representatives Leading Women, Peace and Security Caucus Praise First Implementation Efforts

By **KEVIN DERBY**, 06.15.20

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Last week, the two members of the Florida delegation who lead the **Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Caucus** showcased their agenda, including the “importance of women’s inclusion in security efforts to maintain peace worldwide.”

Back in March, **U.S. Rep. Lois Frankel**, D-Fla., and **U.S. Rep. Michael Waltz**, R-Fla., formed the caucus “which will focus on the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and the importance of women’s inclusion in security efforts to maintain peace worldwide.”

“The bipartisan caucus aims to support the implementation of the WPS agenda and ensure the WPS goals are considered national security and foreign policy priorities for the United States. In 2000, the **United Nations Security Council** adopted resolution 1325, linking gender equality to the maintenance of international peace and security. Last Congress, the United States became the first country to put the priorities of the UN Resolution into law by passing the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Act of 2017 (P.L. 115-68). As directed through the WPS Act, the White House released the National Strategy last June

to achieve the policy goals set forth in the Act. The strategy aims to increase women's participation in political, civic and security endeavors to prevent and resolve conflicts and create conditions for long-term peace around the globe," Waltz's office noted when the caucus was formed in March

"Social and political marginalization of women strongly correlates with the likelihood a country will experience conflict. When girls and women are healthy, educated, and financially secure, their communities are more prosperous and peaceful," said Frankel at the caucus' launch. "As mothers, wives, women are uniquely situated to detect early signs of radicalization in youth. And research shows that when women and civil society groups participate in a peace process, the resulting agreement is much less likely to fail and more likely to last at least fifteen years."

"In societies where women thrive, governments, economies and communities are stronger," said Waltz. "As a Green Beret, I've seen the importance of women in peace processes all around the world. Peace agreements last longer when women are included in negotiations – and our world is ultimately a safer place because of gender equality."

Last week, the White House released its implementation plans for the **U.S. State, Defense and Homeland Security** departments and the **U.S. Agency for International Development**.

"As directed by the WPS Act of 2017, these Implementation Plans focus on increasing women's participation in political, civic and security endeavors within the departments and their global partnerships," Frankel's and Waltz's offices noted.

The two members of the Florida delegation released a joint statement praising these efforts.

“In societies where women are healthy, educated, thriving economically and participants in important decisions, their communities are safer and more secure. The Women, Peace and Security Caucus is grateful to see the United States proceed with implementing the Women, Peace and Security Act of 2017. We look forward to carefully reviewing these implementation plans to ensure that progress towards women’s empowerment and inclusion is a strong priority of U.S. foreign policy,” they said.

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