

STATE SENATOR • MARTHA G. SCOTT • 2ND DISTRICT

Scott Press Release

P.O. Box 30036 • Lansing • Michigan • 48909-7536 • 517-373-7748 • Fax: 517-373-1387
E-mail: senmscott@senate.michigan.gov • www.senate.mi.gov/scott



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Contact: Sen Martha G. Scott
Phone: (517) 373-7748

SENATOR SCOTT JOINS WITH WOMEN LEGISLATORS FROM ACROSS NATION TO CHANGE NATIONAL PRIORITIES

Conference issues call to action for a more secure and peaceful world

LANSING, Michigan –State Senator Martha G. Scott (D-Highland Park) recently returned from a national conference in Washington, DC, where she joined more than 100 leaders strategizing about how women can help change our national priorities and build a better world.

“Women at the Table of Power” brought together luminaries, state legislators and activists, all working to empower women to step up to the tables of power and make our country safer, more democratic, and more respected.

The conference focused on several peace and security issues, especially the window of opportunity that President Obama has opened for nuclear disarmament. When the women headed to Capitol Hill on October 6, they urged their members of Congress to support treaties that would stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons and they encouraged Senators to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

“The conference was so exciting and energizing,” Senator Scott said. “And then to come home and hear about the Nobel Peace Prize going to President Obama for the same issues that we’d been learning about! When he called the prize a ‘call to action,’ I felt privileged to have been part of that action on Capitol Hill.”

Senator Scott spoke with Congressman Sandy Levin and I met with the Chiefs of Staff of Congressmen Mark Schauer and Gary Peters and shared information about a new study on job creation from money invested in the military vs. money invested in other programs (such as healthcare or clean energy or education).

“Of course we need to invest in the economy, and create new jobs, but we need to be smart about where we put our money,” Senator Scott said. “We can do better by spending our money in sectors other than the military. And we will build a more peaceful foundation for our country, and our world.”

Conference delegates met with more than 100 members of Congress, including Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (NV), Senator Robert Bennett (UT), Congressman Jim McGovern (MA), Congresswoman Betty McCollum (MN), and others. Also speaking at

the conference were: Congresswoman Judy Chu (CA), Congresswoman Donna Edwards (MD), and Congresswomen Barbara Lee (CA).

In addition, the day after the conference, six legislators from five states met with U.S. Department of Labor officials to provide them with an update to the job study. Department of Labor staff participating in the meeting were Bill Spriggs, President Obama's nominee for Assistant Secretary for Policy; Katherine Archuleta, Chief of Staff; Mary Beth Maxwell, Senior Advisor to the Secretary; and Noelle Lee, Department of Labor liaison to the White House Council on Women and Girls. The legislators and Department of Labor officials exchanged information about labor-related developments in their states and Administration initiatives.

The biennial conference is a project of Women's Action for New Directions (WAND) and Women Legislators' Lobby (WiLL). These organizations encourage women to run for office and provide them with vital tools and information.

The conference explored how the federal budget allocates tax dollars – toward the Pentagon, away from citizens in need. And not toward the military, meaning our men and women in uniform.

“When we say the Pentagon, we mean programs the funnel billions of dollars toward outmoded weapons that were originally intended to fight the Cold War,” said Georgia State Senator and WiLL President Nan Grogan Orrock. “We can pinpoint extremes in wasteful expenditures that do nothing to make us safer! We could cut these programs and send that money toward real people in real need.”

“We are the wealthiest nation in the world. It's unconscionable we don't pay attention to those in real need,” Senator Scott said. “We need to think of government as a vehicle for the common good, not as a war machine.”

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Women at the Table of Power took place October 4-6, 2009, on Capitol Hill. More information is available at www.willconference.org.

Women's Action for New Directions (WAND) empowers women to act politically to reduce violence and militarism, and redirect excessive military resources toward unmet human and environmental needs.

Women Legislators' Lobby (WiLL) is a national non-partisan network of women state legislators who work together to influence federal policy and budget priorities. www.willwand.org

Senator Scott represents the 2nd Senate District, which includes areas of Detroit and the cities of Hamtramck, Harper Woods, Highland Park and all of the Grosse Pointes. She serves on the Senate Appropriations Committee.