



CALIFORNIA
COALITION
TO END CHILD
MARRIAGE

Testimony of Rima Nashashibi, Founder and President of Global Hope 365 in support of HB2422.

Honorable Chair Barker, and distinguished members of the House Federal and State Affairs Committee. My name is Rima Nashashibi, I am the founder and president of Global Hope 365 rise to speak in support of HB2422, Global Hope is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of women and girls, locally and nationally, by advocating for their safety through raising awareness, education, and empowerment. Our focus is on ending harmful practices towards women and girls such as Child Marriage, Human Trafficking and other forms of domestic violence.

Child marriage remains a serious problem in present-day America. **Since 2000, well over 248,000 minors were married, most of them girls married to adult men.** Children lack the rights and resources of adults and are more vulnerable to coercion and predation. As a result, many child marriages are forced marriages, and/or are cover-ups for other abuse and exploitation and crimes such as statutory rape.

A number of Child Marriage Survivors we work with indicated Parental Consent is Parental Coersion.

U.S. Department of State has denounced child marriage as a Human Rights Abuse in other countries that contributes to economic hardship” in the words of a State Department document published in 2016. What about our country and our kids?

I submit to you that the **American Medical Association** has called for an end to Child Marriage stating “Child marriage is associated with higher rates of sexually transmitted infections, early pregnancies, divorce, and intimate partner violence than women married at age 21.” In addition to a higher rate of Infant and maternal mortality.

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The United Nations office on Drugs and Crime, issued a report recently on the interlinkages between Forced Child Marriage and Human Trafficking which we all know involves Fraud, force and Coersion and benefiting commercially by the receipt of payments from the use and abuse of another human being.

It was observed that marriage could be linked to each of the listed acts in the definition of trafficking, that is, recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring and receipt. More specifically, the act of recruitment in relation to marriage cases is often connected with deceptive means. Marriage can also be linked to the transportation or transfer of the victim, for example, by her family or third parties to the husband and his family, who then receive and harbour her. Marriage may also be used as a way to facilitate the transportation of a person to the country of destination, for example, in order to put the person into a situation of exploitation. Marriage was also observed to be connected to several different means listed in the Trafficking in Persons Protocol. It may be directly linked to kidnapping, fraud, deception, the abuse of a position of vulnerability and the receiving of payments or gifts.

This Bill harms no one but saves our children from this type of child abuse. I implore you to vote yes let's get rid of these loopholes.

Statistics Regarding Child Marriage

- Young women and girls ages 16-19 face intimate partner violence victimization rates almost three times the national average.
- The majority (70%-80%) of Child Marriages end in divorce.
- Minors who marry early are more likely to “discontinue their formal education prematurely, earn low wages, and live in poverty.” Girls who marry early are fifty

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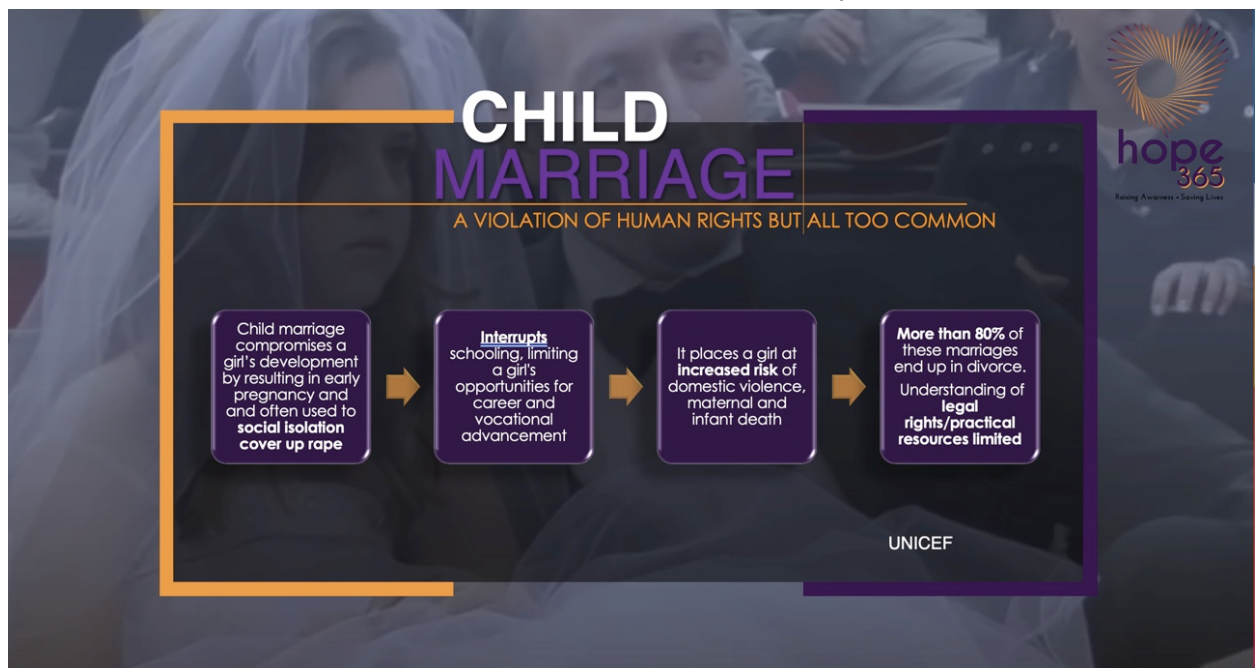


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percent more likely to drop out of high school and four times less likely to graduate from college.

Child Marriage is a Violation of Human Rights

- UNICEF: Child Marriage Marriage before the age of 18 is a fundamental violation of human rights.
- Child Marriage is a violation of article 16(2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- U.S. Department of State: The United States has denounced child marriage as a Human Rights Abuse in other countries that contributes to economic hardship” in the words of a State Department document published in 2016. What about our country and our kids?



Respectfully submitted,

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