

ALL INDIA INSURANCE EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION
LIC BUILDING SECRETARIAT ROAD HYDERABAD 500 063

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9th March 2010

To all the Zonal/Divisional/State/Regional Units:

A GIANT STEP FORWARD

**RAJYA SABHA ADOPTS THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT BILL ON
RESERVATION FOR WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT AND THE ASSEMBLIES**

On the occasion of the Centenary Year Celebrations of International Women's Day, AIIEA joined the other organisations in calling for a sustained pressure on the government for enacting the Constitutional amendment allowing 33% of reservation for women for representation in the Parliament and the Assemblies.

The 108th Constitutional Amendment Bill as the Women's Reservation Bill is known, stands passed in the Rajya Sabha with 186 votes in favour and one against. It has thus secured the required 2/3rd s majority for adopting the Bill.

Late in the evening at 7.21 PM on 9th March 2010 when the Rajya Sabha passed the Women's Bill, the first step in the direction of empowering women to participate in the law making process has been taken. Now it has to be approved by the Lok Sabha and thereafter fifty percent of the states have to ratify it before it comes on to the statute book.

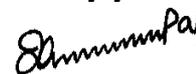
This is the first step of the process, but a historic one. While the nature of what is unfolding is yet to be seen, there is no question that this particular legislation when it is finally enacted will set in motion a process that will help in empowerment of women. Currently women constitute little more than 8 per cent of MPs, which is less than half of what it was twenty years ago. When numbers increase beyond such a small percentage, the dynamics can change in favour of gender sensitive legislations. In a society plagued by gender inequality and discrimination this is a progressive step.

Now the government should ensure early passage of the Bill in the Lok Sabha so that it can be taken up by the states for ratification.

AIIEA and its units which have been in the forefront of the demand for enactment of the Bill have all the reason to rejoice.

AIIEA congratulates the people of the country and the women particularly for this giant leap forward. AIIEA also thinks that the intensity of the demand should continue till the Bill is passed in the Lok Sabha and is set on further course towards its final enactment.

Comradely yours,



General Secretary.