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**SANDERS URGES BUSH TO SIGN U.N. CONVENTION ON RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
AND TO START ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF AMERICA'S CHILDREN**

Rep. Bernard Sanders, I-Vt., speaking with Vermont child advocates in Montpelier today, urged President Bush to sign and ratify the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child.

He announced that he has introduced House Resolution 515 which outlines the alarming status of children in the U.S. and implores the President to place the needs of the nation's children at the top of his national agenda by taking immediate action on the nearly three-year-old United Nations document.

The United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child codifies existing international law regarding children, and is often tagged the "Magna Carta" or "Bill of Rights" for kids. The convention recognizes society's responsibilities to children by setting minimum standards for the survival, health, and education of children. It also contains protections for kids against violence and exploitation. The United States is the only western industrialized nation in the world not to have signed the convention.

"It makes no sense to me that, with the end of the Cold War, we continue to have a defense budget in excess of \$270 billion, while our nation's children are suffering," said Sanders, who noted that one in five children live in poverty and 100,000 children go to sleep homeless every night in the U.S. "If there has ever been a time to rethink the priorities of this nation, the time is now. Our children can wait no longer," said Sanders following a meeting with representatives from the Vermont NEA, the Vermont AFL-CIO, the World Children's Center, Children's Forum, and other groups concerned about kids.

November 20, 1992 will mark the third anniversary of the unanimous adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Although the United States endorsed the Convention as a member of the General Assembly, to date, the U.S. has neither signed nor ratified the document.

"The Bush administration joins the governments of Iraq, Libya, Cambodia and South Africa as one of less than 30 countries that has neither signed nor ratified the treaty," Sanders said. "In order for the United States to improve the quality of life for children at home and abroad, it is imperative that the U.S. declare its support for these basic rights by ratifying the U.N.'s Convention on the Rights of the Child."

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