



## **Take Action to Prevent Child Marriage in North Carolina**

Child marriage doesn't happen in North Carolina, right?

Wrong, people actually travel to North Carolina to marry 14 year-old girls without parental consent. You read that correctly...a young woman can be forced to marry at the age of 14 in North Carolina.

Drew Reisinger Buncombe County Register of Deeds, raised the alarm after witnessing many young women being forced into marrying their abusers. The International Center for Research on Women found 3949 marriage license applications involving minors were filed in 50 counties in North Carolina between 2000 and 2019. Ninety three percent of those applications were between an adult and a minor.

In America it is estimated that 200,000 girls have been forced into marriage in the last 15 years alone.

North Carolina ranks as the fourth-highest state for child marriages, behind Texas, Florida, and Kentucky. What's more, the current NC marriage-age law sanctions sex that would otherwise be considered statutory rape. Most alarming, North Carolina has become a sanctuary state for child predators.

As a part of our advocacy mandate and in service to our mission of safe environments for girls and women, the Advocacy and Education Committee is demanding a change in this law **by raising the legal age of marriage in North Carolina to 18 years old without exception.**

Please send this information by copying the above letter with whatever changes that you wish and send it to your legislative representatives, share with other organizations, family, friends, and colleagues. You may find your legislators at <https://www.ncleg.gov/FindYourLegislators>.

No child should be forced to marry.

*Women for Women* was formed in 2005 to improve the lives of women and girls through effective charitable giving. An initiative of The Community Foundation of Western North Carolina, *Women for Women* has distributed more than \$4.1 million in grants.