

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3905

April 3, 2008

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To Organizers and Participants in the Human Rights Torch Relay 5K Rally,

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights was created in 1948 as a standard of achievement for people of all nations to promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms. I commend your participation in the Rhode Island Human Rights Torch Relay 5K, which promotes those principles. This event is a statement that all people have a right to live their lives in freedom and dignity, regardless of color, sex, language, religion, political opinion, national or social origin, property, or place of birth.

As you carry the torch of freedom this Saturday, April 5, 2008, too many individuals throughout this world are being subjected to violations of their basic human rights. Today, millions of people around the world are denied their universal right not to be subjected to torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; their right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty; their freedom of movement; their right to live peaceably with their families without interference; their right to ownership of property; and their rights to freedom of religion and freedom of association.

Your commitment to universal human rights gives these people hope that those rights, which we regard as fundamental and inalienable, will someday be theirs. I urge you to continue to denounce both domestic and international violations of human rights to your elected officials and to take giant steps of expression like those you are taking today. When individuals take a stand, as you will do today, we help repair the moral standing of the United States in this world and work toward the standards set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Thank you for taking a stand.

Sincerely,



Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator