



## RIGHTFULLY HERS AMERICAN WOMEN AND THE VOTE

### **An Open Letter to America's Women and Girls:**

One hundred years ago, a diverse and ever-expanding group of American women vehemently opposed to the status quo finally saw their message of equality succeed not only in town halls and state capitals but also on the national stage. A seed of discontent planted decades prior had finally grown into tangible movement - the 19th Amendment was ratified. Women organized; they marched, they rallied, they picketed, they petitioned. And they won.

On May 10, the National Archives opens its Washington, D.C. exhibit and nationwide initiative, Rightfully Hers: American Women and the Vote. The initiative honors the millions of women who fought the decades-long battle for the right to vote.

Suffrage activists met implacable resistance, from public mockery to editorial shaming. The opposition included politicians, private citizens, and, for a time, a majority of women. During the final days, some in the nation's capital who dared raise their voices faced violence, intimidation and even imprisonment. But they never let up, organizing campaigns that confronted several decades of national party conventions and showing up in Washington, D.C. to press every single session of Congress until the Nineteenth Amendment was sent to the states for ratification.

Undeterred, these women spoke up on street corners, atop soap boxes, and in domed legislatures.

The result was far from perfect. African American women in the South and women from a broad range of minority groups were left behind, but they continued to agitate for voting rights in the decades to come, many to this very day. The Nineteenth Amendment represented one significant milestone in the ongoing struggle for a more democratic America.

On this anniversary, we salute their courage, their tenacity and their unshakable voices as they fought to participate in democracy. And we salute every woman and girl who stands up, who raises her voice, who will not be cowed in pursuit of her rights.

We see you – in the classroom, the boardroom, the courtroom. We know how brave you are, in factories, in legislative races, in protests, and on sports fields. Each day you set an example for people of every race, creed and gender.

Rightfully hers, rightfully ours, rightfully yours. Let us never fail to be part of the democratic process.



## RIGHTFULLY HERS

### AMERICAN WOMEN AND THE VOTE

The Undersigned National Archives Foundation Rightfully Hers Honorary Committee Members:

U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi  
First Lady Rosalynn Carter  
The Hon. Hillary Rodham Clinton  
First Lady Laura Bush  
Amb. Fay Hartog-Levin (Ret.)  
Amb. Melanne Vermeer (Ret.)  
The Hon. Madeleine K. Albright  
U.S. Sen. Susan Collins  
U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow  
U.S. Sen. Maria Cantwell  
U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski  
U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen  
U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren  
U.S. Sen. Shelley Moore Capito  
U.S. Sen. Kamala D. Harris  
U.S. Sen. Tina Smith  
U.S. Sen. Marsha Blackburn  
U.S. Sen. Jacky Rosen  
The Hon. Eddie Bernice Johnson  
The Hon. Nydua Velázquez  
The Hon. Lucille Roybal-Allard  
The Hon. Kay Granger  
The Hon. Barbara Lee  
The Hon. Jan Schakowsky  
The Hon. Virginia Foxx  
The Hon. Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
The Hon. Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
The Hon. Doris O. Matsui  
The Hon. Jackie Speier  
The Hon. Judy Chu  
The Hon. Dina Titus  
The Hon. Lois Frankel  
The Hon. Alma Adams  
The Hon. Debbie Dingell  
The Hon. Brenda Lawrence  
The Hon. Debbie Lesko  
The Hon. Sylvia R. Garcia  
The Hon. Deb Haaland  
The Hon. Susie Lee  
The Hon. Haley M. Stevens

The Hon. Jenniffer González-Colón  
The Hon. Janet L. Yellen  
Postmaster Gen. Megan J. Brennan  
The Hon. Mayor Muriel Bowser  
Honey B. Alexander  
Dr. Jean Baker  
Janet Blanchard  
A'Lelia Bundles  
Kathy Calvin  
Dr. Sara Evans  
Denise Gwyn Ferguson  
Nancy Folger  
Michelle Freeman  
Melinda Gates  
Dr. Ann D. Gordon  
Dr. Elisabeth Griffith  
Dr. Fruzsina M. Harsanyi  
Susan N. Herman  
Sharron L. Hunt  
Jo Ann Jenkins  
Mary Lynn Kotz  
Zina Kramer  
Jacqueline B. Mars  
Mary C. Moynihan  
Dr. Robyn Muncy  
Soledad O'Brien  
Lucinda Robb  
Cokie Roberts  
Dr. Mary P. Ryan  
Deborah Ratner Salzberg  
Lynn Sherr  
Maria Shriver  
Amanda Sourry  
Diana K. Spencer  
Dr. Marjorie Spruill  
Dr. Kathryn Sullivan  
Dr. Susan Ware  
Linda Davis Watters  
Dr. Marilyn Wood Hill