



FIGURE 1: SUFFRAGETTE PICKETS

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CENTENNIAL COMMISSION

November 5, 2018

FIRST REPORT TO CONGRESS AND THE WHITE HOUSE

Lt. Governor Rebecca Kleefisch, Chair
Kay Coles James, Vice Chair

INTRODUCTION

In March of 1918, **Anne Henrietta Martin** became the first woman to run for U.S. Senate. A 44-year-old suffragist from Nevada, Martin was unsuccessful in her run for office. She lost twice – once in 1918 and again in 1920.ⁱ

But Martin’s legacy was greater than her political aspirations. She was an ardent supporter of women’s suffrage, an advocate for equality for all Americans under the law and a brilliant writer and scholar.

Anne Henrietta Martin’s name is seldom one in the history books. In fact, few of the countless thousands of bright women who fought for a woman’s voice at the ballot box are remembered today. But Martin, like the other sometimes faceless American mothers, daughters, sisters and wives who earned for the vote, supported a cause larger than herself and larger than any single woman. The women’s suffrage movement in the United States succeeded on the backs of these Americans and more famous suffragettes like Susan B. Anthony and Lucretia Mott. In 1920, American women earned the right to vote because of the power of women coming together: women of diverse political, economic, racial



FIGURE 2: THE AWAKENING

and geographic backgrounds all pulled in the same direction...and won.

Nearly 100 years later, a group of women with differing views and backgrounds will again come together with a common goal: to commemorate the women’s suffrage movement in the U.S., celebrate our collective victory for a voice, and inspire women and girls today with our foremothers’ example of sacrifice, courage and common sense.

LAW ESTABLISHING THE COMMISSION

Last year Congress passed legislation to create the **Women’s Suffrage Centennial Commission Act (S.847)**, a bill “to ensure a suitable observance of the centennial of the passage and ratification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States providing for women’s suffrage.”

The original bill, sponsored by Sen. Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin, garnered bi-partisan support, with each female member of the U.S. Senate acting as a co-sponsor. The legislation details that the Commission will meet at least once every six months until it terminates on April 15, 2021. Congress appropriated \$3 million for the Commission to perform its duties.

The **duties of the Women’s Suffrage Centennial Commission**, as written in the law, include:

1. To encourage, plan, develop, and execute programs, projects, and activities to **commemorate** the centennial of the passage and ratification of the 19th Amendment.

2. To **encourage** private organizations and State and local governments to organize and participate in activities commemorating the centennial of the passage and ratification of the 19th Amendment.
3. To **facilitate and coordinate** activities throughout the United States relating to the centennial of the passage and ratification of the 19th Amendment.
4. To **serve as a clearinghouse** for the collection and dissemination of information about events and plans for the centennial of the passage and ratification of the 19th Amendment.
5. To develop **recommendations** for Congress and the President for commemorating the centennial of the passage and ratification of the 19th Amendment.



FIGURE 3: SUFFRAGETTE

FIRST MEETING

On October 29, the Women’s Suffrage Centennial Commission held their first meeting for administrative purposes in the Capitol Visitor Center. With unanimous support, the Commission elected Rebecca Kleefisch as chair and Kay Coles James as vice chair. Together, the two will ensure

that the Commission acts within its intended purpose.

On the same day of the first meeting, the Commission also completed their charter and filed the document with the appropriate Congressional and federal offices. They also determined that the next meeting, which will be open to the public, will be held on **Dec. 7** in Washington, D.C.

“The process of winning a half share in government will go a long way toward developing a sense of equality in the minds and hearts of women... the laws will take care of themselves.”

Anne Henrietta Martin

CONCLUSION

Nearly 100 years after the ratification of the 19th Amendment, it is certainly an appropriate time for our nation to look back, appreciate and honor the suffragists who fought for women’s rights to vote in the U.S. But it is also a suitable point in time for our country – both men and women – to look forward to the next 100 years of progress.

Undeniably, much progress has already been made. Women are now running for public office in record numbers.ⁱⁱ They make up 56 percent of college students nationwide.ⁱⁱⁱ And they vote at higher rates than men.^{iv} These numbers did not grow from the work of one person, but one movement of womankind. The Women’s Suffrage Centennial Commission will do its part in commemorating women winning right to vote in the U.S., and it calls on all Americans to do the same.

14 MEMBERS

The Commission is comprised of 14 women of diverse economic, professional and cultural backgrounds: Kay Coles James, Jovita Carranza, Rebecca Kleefisch, Heather Higgins, Nicola Miner, Jennifer Siebel Newsom, Clea Mitchell, Marjorie Dannenfelser, Barbara Mikulski, Karen Hill, Colleen Shogan, Debra Wall, Julissa Marengo and Susan Combs.

Ten members were appointed by elected representatives: James and Carranza were

appointed by the President, Kleefisch and Higgins by Speaker Paul Ryan, Miner and Newsom by House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, Mitchell and Dannenfelser by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, and Mikulski and Hill by Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer.

Additionally, four women were appointed from within other federal government agencies: Shogan from the Library of Congress, Wall by the U.S. Archives, Marengo by the Smithsonian Institution and Combs by the National Park Service.



FIGURE 4 (FROM BOTTOM LEFT): COLLEEN SHOGAN, REBECCA KLEEFISCH, NICOLA MINER, KAY COLES JAMES, MARJORIE DANNENFELSER, JOVITA CARRANZA, DEBRA WALL, JULISSA MARENCO, HEATHER HIGGINS, SUSAN COMBS, CLETA MITCHELL, KAREN HILL (NOT PICTURED: BARBARA MIKULSKI AND JENNIFER SIEBEL NEWSOM)

[Kay Coles James](#), president of the Heritage Foundation, has an extensive background in crafting public policy and leading in nearly every sector of America's economy. She's worked at the local, state, and federal levels of government under the administrations of former U.S. President George H. W. Bush, former Virginia Governor George Allen (1994-1996), and former U.S. President George W. Bush (2001-2005). She has also served dozens of organizations in the corporate, and nonprofit arenas.^v



[Rebecca Kleefisch](#), Wisconsin's 44th lieutenant governor elected in November of 2010, has worked to attract jobs and businesses to Wisconsin and to ensure that all citizens are equipped with the proper skills and education to find and embrace fulfilling work. Kleefisch serves as co-chair for the Governor's Task Force on Minority Unemployment and the Governor's Task Force on Opioid Abuse. She chairs Wisconsin's Interagency Council on Homelessness and the Aerospace States Association. Kleefisch is a former news reporter and a colon cancer survivor.^{vi}



[Heather Higgins](#), president and CEO of Independent Women's Voice, serves as chairman of the Independent Women's Forum and as vice chairman of the Philanthropy Roundtable. She is also on the NY board of UBS's mutual funds, a trustee of the Committee for Economic Development and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Previously, Higgins was a portfolio manager and vice president at U.S. Trust. She was also an editorial writer for the Wall Street Journal and assistant editor at the Public Interest magazine. She continues to write opinion editorials.^{vii}



[Jennifer Siebel Newsom](#) is a documentary filmmaker, actress and public speaker. Wife of Lt. Governor Gavin Newsom of California (and current candidate for Governor), Newsom wrote and produced *Miss Representation*, a documentary that examines how the media has underrepresented women in positions of power. She is also the co-founder of The Representation Project, an organization that works to end gender stereotypes.



Nicola Miner is an assistant professor of English at the College of San Mateo in California. An active philanthropist and advocate of the environmental movement, Miner was recently appointed to the Board of Trustees at Earthjustice, a nonprofit environmental law organization. She also serves as the President of the Miner Anderson Family Foundation. She previously served as Director of the Presidio Trust and on several boards, including The San Francisco Ballet and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.



Cleta Mitchell is a partner and political law attorney in the Washington, D.C. office of Foley & Lardner LLP. With more than 40 years of experience in law, politics and public policy, Mitchell advises nonprofit and issue organizations, corporations, candidates, campaigns, and individuals on state and federal campaign finance law, election law, and compliance issues related to lobbying, ethics and financial disclosure. Mitchell practices before the Federal Election Commission, the ethics committees of the U.S. House and Senate and similar state and local enforcement bodies and agencies.^{viii}



Marjorie Dannenfelser is president and an original organizer of Susan B. Anthony List, a national pro-life organization which seeks to elect pro-life leaders and advance lifesaving laws and policy. Dannenfelser, who had worked for Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle, built and grew the Susan B. Anthony List with the goal of increasing the number of pro-life women in federal and statewide office. Since then, SBA List has helped elect more than 111 candidates – women and men – to the U.S. House, 20 to the U.S. Senate, and 23 to other statewide offices across the country.^{ix}



Barbara Mikulski was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1986 and became the second woman in the nation's history to serve in both chambers of Congress. Senator Mikulski championed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, helped establish the Office of Research on Women's Health at the National Institutes of Health, worked to expand access to higher education and protect the final resources of the nation's seniors, and supported investments in research and innovation, including the Hubble Space Telescope. In 2011 Mikulski became the longest-serving female senator and the following year, the longest-serving woman in Congress. She was also the first woman to chair the Senate Committee on Appropriations.^x



Karen Hill is the president and CEO of the Harriet Tubman Home – a National Historical Park established to manage and operate the homestead of Harriet Tubman. In her role at the Tubman Home, Hill shares Tubman's core values with visitors that tour the property. She was also influential in establishing Tubman's home as a National Historic Park.



Colleen Shogan is the deputy director for national and international outreach at the Library of Congress and an adjunct professor of government at Georgetown University. Shogan previously served as the deputy director at the Congressional Research Service and as a policy staffer in the U.S. Senate. A political scientist by training, Shogan has published numerous research articles, essays and four books. She has taught American politics at numerous universities.



Debra Wall, a twenty-year veteran of the National Archives, now serves as the deputy archivist of the U.S. Wall previously served in various roles at the Archives, including chief of staff, senior special assistant to the archivist, director of the lifestyle coordination staff and deputy director of the Information Resources Policy and Projects Division, among other roles.^{xi}



Julissa Marengo serves as the Smithsonian’s assistant secretary for communications and external affairs, where she oversees the Institution’s Offices of Public Affairs, Government Relations, Visitor Services and Special Events and Protocol. Marengo previously served as the chief external affairs officer and senior advisor at the Federal Communications Commission. She was also the president of ZGS Communication Station Group, where she oversaw the management and direction of numerous television and radio stations, and a White House Fellow in the Environmental Protection Agency.^{xii}



Susan Combs is the assistant secretary for policy, management and budget for the U.S. Department of the Interior, where she works on policy development, management reforms to align efforts among the bureaus and stewardship of Interior’s fiscal resources. Combs previously served in two Texas statewide offices as the state’s first female Agriculture Commissioner and then as the Texas comptroller of public accounts/treasurer and chief financial officer. Combs is also a small business owner and operates a ranch in Texas.^{xiii}



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- ⁱ "Anne Henrietta Martin." Nevada Women's History Project. Accessed November 05, 2018. <http://www.nevadawomen.org/research-center/biographies-alphabetical/anne-henrietta-martin/>.
- ⁱⁱ Caygle, Heather. "Record-breaking Number of Women Run for Office." POLITICO. March 08, 2018. Accessed November 05, 2018. <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/03/08/women-rule-midterms-443267>.
- ⁱⁱⁱ "NCES Fast Facts: Back to School Statistics." National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Home Page, a Part of the U.S. Department of Education. Accessed November 05, 2018. <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=372>.
- ^{iv} "Gender Differences in Voter Turnout." Center for American Women and Politics, Rutgers University. Accessed November 05, 2018. <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/resources/genderdiff.pdf>
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- ^{vi} "About Lt. Governor Kleefisch." Office of the Lt. Governor Rebecca Kleefisch. Accessed November 05, 2019. <http://ltgov.wi.gov/lt-gov-office/about-lt-governor>
- ^{vii} "Heather R. Higgins." Independent Women's Forum. Accessed November 05, 2018. <http://iwf.org/about/heather-higgins>
- ^{viii} "Cleta Mitchell." Foley & Lardner LLP. Accessed November 05, 2018. <https://www.foley.com/cleta-mitchell/>
- ^{ix} "Marjorie Dannenfelser, President." Susan B. Anthony List. Accessed November 05, 2018. <https://www.sba-list.org/marjorie-dannenfelser>
- ^x "Barbara Mikulski: A Featured Biography." United States Senate. Accessed November 05, 2018. https://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/generic/Featured_Bio_Mikulski.htm
- ^{xi} "Debra Wall Appointed Deputy Archivist of the United States." National Archives. Accessed November 05, 2018. <https://www.archives.gov/press/press-releases/2011/nr11-146.html>
- ^{xii} "Smithsonian Names Julissa Marengo Assistant Secretary for Communications and External." Smithsonian. Accessed November 05, 2018. <https://www.si.edu/newsdesk/releases/smithsonian-names-julissa-marengo-assistant-secretary-communications-and-external-affairs>
- ^{xiii} "Secretary Zinke Applauds Nomination of Susan Combs." U.S. Department of the Interior. Accessed November 05, 2018. <https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/secretary-zinke-applauds-nomination-susan-combs>

Figure 1: *Suffragette Pickets*. District of Columbia United States Washington D.C. Washington D.C, None. [Between 1910 and 1920] Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2016854985/>.

Figure 2: Mayer, Henry, Artist. *The awakening / Hy Mayer*. United States, 1915. New York: Published by Puck Publishing Corporation, 295-309 Lafayette Street. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/98502844/>.

Figure 3: Harris & Ewing, photographer. *Suffragette*. District of Columbia United States Washington D.C. Washington D.C, None. [Between 1910 and 1920] Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2016855015/>.