



WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CENTENNIAL COMMISSION

FOURTH PUBLIC MEETING: JUNE 3, 2019

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

I. INTRODUCTION

The Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission (Commission), with Kay Coles James presiding as the Commission Chair, convened their fourth public meeting on Monday, June 3, 2019, at The U.S. Department of the Interior located at 1849 C Street N.W., Washington, D.C., 20240. The meeting was called to order promptly at 9:00am EDT.

The purpose of the meeting was to receive an overview of the Commission's newly launched public website (<https://www.womensvote100.org/>) and a facilitated dialogue on the topic of "Suffrage in Black and White" led by Susan Philpot, a representative from the National Park Service. Additional discussion topics included grants for states, fundraising and an update from the Capitol City Commemorative Subcommittee.

II. SUMMARY OF KEY DECISIONS AND ACTION ITEMS

A. Key Decisions

- The meeting minutes from the February 27, 2019, and March 27, 2019, were both approved unanimously.
- The Commission approved the following resolution regarding grant-making for states: *"While the WSCC recognizes that Congress has conferred statutory authority on the Commission to make grants to states in carrying out the mission of the WSCC, it is hereby resolved that the WSCC has elected not to exercise its grant-making authority."*

B. Action Items

- WSCC staff will prepare a letter to the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee, which will be signed by every member of the Commission, in support of the letters being sent by the women of Congress and the Senate.
- Kelsey Millay will continue informing states about the roster of Commissioners to attend events and give remarks.
- Kelsey Millay will design a dashboard that will capture outreach data to states and local governments, and update it as it goes out to the Commissioners.
- WSCC staff will add to the toolkit for states the symbolism of wearing white to the ratification celebrations.
- WSCC staff will prepare a letter to Governors, which will be signed by Chairman James and Senator Mikulski and sent out next week.
- Bass Public Affairs will put together a press event.
- Bass Public Affairs and the WSCC staff will put together three to five ideas that the Commission can consider for new story pitch.
- WSCC staff will research the options for an online web store (pin, buttons, swag) and come up with suggestions and ideas for fulfillment that the Commission can consider.
- Commissioner Shogan (working with the Park Service) will look into putting together a presentation on the relationship between Fredrick Douglas and Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

- WSCC staff will research and recommend dates/times around suffrage milestones for holding Commission meetings at different suffrage site locations.

III. PRESENTATIONS, KEY DISCUSSIONS AND COMMISSION VOTE

A. Opening Remarks –David Bernhardt, Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior

“Well thank you very much. First off, this week’s a big week for us because Susan (Combs) is going to get confirmed. So it’s been an absolute tragedy how long it’s taken. It’s a real privilege to serve the President at the Department of Interior, and it’s great to be able to join you today. All in all, I know 2020’s a big year for a lot of things, and August 2020 is really right around the corner. As Susan said, I grew up in a little town and I still remember how exciting things were with the bi-centennial commission and what a big deal folks were able to make of that. This morning, I have an eighth grade daughter Katie, she’s 13 but at days I think she is going on like 18. And so I drive her to work every day, and this morning I was basically explaining to her that it took about 72 years between the women’s right convention in Seneca Falls and the ratification of the 19th Amendment, and she rolled her eyes and basically said “Well dad, if I would have been here we’d have gotten it done a lot quicker.” So, I think that that says pretty much everything we need to know about how things have changed. And the great thing about Interior, one of our missions is we get to tell America’s story in many different ways, and obviously there are so many pioneers who fought tirelessly to lead change. You know from Susan B. Anthony on down and those stories are all stories that folks like Katie are completely familiar with, and part of that is given the role that Interior plays, and so I just want to welcome you here...tell you we want to do everything we can to help you. You already have Susan (Combs) on the Commission who is really the “enforcer” at Interior, so you should be able to get anything you want from the Department. I just wanted to tell you guys thank you very much for all the important work you do, and we’re here to help and do everything we can to make the next year successful for you all. Obviously, Congress is doing their work. The House has acted and the Senate will, and so I think we’re creating some buzz, and we will help you any way we can. So thanks for coming and thanks for coming to Interior. It’s great to see you all.”

Following Secretary Bernhardt’s opening remarks, Chairman James conducted a roll call of the Commissioners attending the meeting in person or by phone. Next, the Commission voted on the approval of the meeting minutes from the February 27, 2019, and March 27, 2019, meetings. Both minutes were approved unanimously.

B. Executive Director Update – Rebecca Kleefisch

Mrs. Kleefisch shared that we have passed our first centennial on May 21st, in the U.S. House of Representatives. Members put on the yellow roses presented by WSCC and wore them to the floor and throughout the day. Our resolution passed in the U.S. House and this effort was led by Anna Laymon, National Events Director, Kelsey Millay, States Events Director, and Candace Samuels, Staff Director. The House celebration concluded with a reception in Statutory Hall.

Tomorrow we also have a big day in the U.S. Senate. The coin legislation, also in the meeting folders, is a good example of what the Commission is already working on inside the U.S. Congress. Mrs. Kleefisch also shared that the Commission staff will share their updates with the Commission.

C. National Events Director Update – Anna Laymon

Last week, on May 21st, was the centennial of when the 19th amendment passed through the House and tomorrow is the centennial of when the amendment passed in the Senate. Tomorrow (June 4th) we will do something similar to the House demonstration in the Senate. Kroger has again donated yellow roses for Senators to wear. We also have a commemorative resolution that hopefully will come to a vote on the floor. We will find out about that later today. Tomorrow evening (June 4th), there is an exhibit (“Shall Not Be Denied”) opening and reception at the Library of Congress. Women Senators and Congresswomen are coming together to read the text of the 19th amendment along with WSCC Chair and Vice Chair.

In addition to these commemorative resolutions, we are also working on a stamp, a coin, a medal, a quarter, a monument, and we will hopefully get at least one room renamed in the Capitol building named after Jeanette Rankin.

Discussion:

Chairman James asked if there is an issue with the coin. Anna responded that there is not an issue with the coin, but that there was a concern that if the Senate voted on the coin tomorrow there could potentially be a couple of “no” votes because some Senators historically always vote “no” on coins no matter the topic of the coin. So to keep the Senate’s centennial on a positive note, it was decided not to bring the coin up for a vote tomorrow. Hopefully, once the Senate votes and passes the coin bill, the House will do the same.

A question was asked about who is designing the coin. Anna responded that the coin and the medal will be designed by the U.S. Mint noting that Commissioner Carranza held a great meeting with her team, Commissioner Shogan, and Anna, and they walked through the design process to have the coin and the medal created through the Mint. They have a bullet proof process, and both Commissioner Shogan and Anna have every confidence in the Mint’s ability to do this well. The estimated time of production for the coin and medal is Spring 2020, which is when they should be ready for sale.

A concern was shared by Senator Mikulski that we don’t want this to become a subject of controversy, i.e. Harriet Tubman was supposed to be on a bill that has been set aside. She doesn’t want that to happen with the coin. She further commented that the design has to be inclusive. Commissioner Shogan commented on the comprehensive schedule and presentation given by Commissioner Carranza and her staff. They have sought comments from subject matter experts on the ideas and principles that the artists can work from on for depictions on both sides of the coins. The ideas focused on diversity and the totality of the movement.

Commissioner Mitchell shared a concern that the coins would disregard Susan B. Anthony. Commissioner James commented that the coin or medal would focus on ideas and ideals, not any one individual, and that once we get to the point of an actual design, it would much easier to have a conversation about it.

The stamp is an example of what we have control over versus what we do not. For the stamp, Anna took the idea to Congresswoman Lawrence’s team because she has a background with the postal service. A letter was drafted encouraging the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee to streamline the process for stamp creation, which usually takes 3-4 years. We are hoping the stamp will be completed next year. There are plans for all 106 Congresswomen to sign the letter. Senator Collins and Senator Feinstein have taken the lead in the Senate, and all 25 women

Senators have signed on. The two letters will be sent together to the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee in an effort to expedite the request. Samples of the letters were circulated to the Commission in the Executive Director's update. They have encouraged that the symbol of the yellow rose be used in the design of the stamp, but ultimately, stamps go through a similar design process as the coin and the medal, and the Commission can make suggestions and encourage inclusivity, but the final design decision will not be made by the Commission.

Chairman James instructed that in addition to the letters signed by the female members in Congress, that there should also be a letter signed by every member of the Commission in an effort to show support. She further shared that she is hopeful that the symbols that are chosen are inclusive, don't focus on any one individual, and represent the values and ideals of the Commission.

Commissioner Carranza added that 10-20 renditions of the coin and medal will be presented to the Secretary of Treasury and the council of fine arts and the other advisory council will look at the renditions and make their recommendations and then vetting will continue. There is also a possibility that there would not just be one coin, but a series of coins or sets is also a possibility. They will let us know what will be historically sound.

Commissioner Siebel Newsom further added that women have been historically invisible in history, and when she saw the stamp might potentially be a rose, although symbolic, there is a need to see a woman and women. She shared that she supports the idea of a set of women because we have to put women out there visibly. A rose is beautiful, but it is missing the visibility that women require since we have been missing from history books.

D. States Events Director Update – Kelsey Millay

Kelsey began by introducing herself and shared that prior to joining the Commission staff she was with the National Woman's Party at the Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument. She has been focused on women's history for years.

Following the June 4th centennial in the Senate, we roll into celebrating the first 36 states that voted to have the 19th amendment added to the Constitution. On June 10th we celebrate Wisconsin, Illinois, and Michigan, the first three states to ratify. In Wisconsin, they will be passing a joint resolution commemorating the centennial of their ratification of the 19th amendment; they also have an exhibit in the State Capitol, and they will be holding events all day on June 10th. Mrs. Kleefisch will be speaking at one of the events. Illinois has already passed legislation and in April named June 10th "Ratification Day".

In Illinois, they are working on legislation for a state medallion in their Treasury Department. Some resolutions and orders have also been passed on the county and town levels. It is important that these celebrations reach the community level as well. Michigan will be passing a joint resolution and holding some events on June 6th and their Governor will issue a proclamation on June 10th.

Kelsey is working with states and the public affairs team to support outreach on social and traditional media outlets in order to best amplify the ratification celebrations and build momentum. An official planning toolkit, included in the meeting materials, gives historical context and demonstrates why this is important and why they should be celebrating. The toolkit also

provides a range of activities and event ideas. Kelsey is also researching events to attend through the National Governors Association and League of Cities membership lists. She has already reached out to all of the states with ratification anniversaries coming up.

Kelsey is focused on contacting Governor's offices, state legislatures, historical societies, League of Cities, League of Women Voters, the DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution), Boys and Girls Scouts, and other national organizations with state and local memberships. These organizations are well equipped to widely and quickly distribute information about the toolkit and the centennial.

Discussion:

Chairman James instructed that she would like to see Commissioners represented at the state events. Kelsey responded that she has and will continue informing states about the roster of Commissioners to attend events and give remarks. As she continues her outreach to states, she is hoping to see a lot more requests for Commissioners to attend and give remarks. Chairman James further instructed Kelsey to make the recommendation and push.

A question was asked who is tracking the success of all the outreach? Who will monitor the utilization of the toolkits for overall effectiveness? Kelsey responded that she will be keeping track of everyone she is reaching out to and the results from that outreach. She is keeping track of the top three outcomes they want to see in each state which are: 1. Proclamations and Executive Orders from Governors, 2. Resolutions passed by state legislatures, and 3. Lightings of Capitol buildings, Governors mansions, and other buildings throughout the states. Those are the big three, but she is also keeping track of all other events she learns about on the state and local level. She will continue checking off what she learns people are doing and all of the outreach which will be put into a report for the Commission.

Chairman James requested that Kelsey design a dashboard that will capture the data and be updated as it goes out to the Commissioners, so the Commissioner can access what's going on and assess how they are doing.

A question was asked if we have graphics or materials we are sending like a banner or what we want everyone to wear. Do we have any recognizable symbols? Kelsey responded that the toolkit does offer recommendations such as wearing the yellow rose when legislatures are passing their resolutions, or wearing "votes for women" pins. In terms of something that can be worn, that is the recommendation for now.

A comment was made that we are not providing the graphics to easily reproduce those, and that we need to give them something that we would like them to wear and the Commission needs to decide what that is and get that ready and out to the states and sports teams, etc. Mrs. Kleefisch responded that this should be added to the discussion on partnerships. As of right now we are printing 5X7 cards to give as collateral which is informational and educational. We are not printing any other collateral and seek direction from the Commission on whether they would like anything else printed because states have been asking for it.

A question was asked what are the plans for those states that ratified after the 19th amendment was approved. Kelsey responded that the recommendation in the toolkit for those states is that they focus on the August 26, 2020, centennial date and address their states history when that

date comes up. They are encouraged to focus on Women's History Month in March and Women's Equality Day on August 26th of this year too.

Commissioner Nance offered to have her organization reach out to Governors offices and State organizations to help with the outreach. A question was asked if the staff needed assistance with getting letters out to Governors, and Mrs. Kleefisch responded that she has asked Kelsey to prioritize outreach as follows: 1. Governors offices, 2. Legislative leadership, 3. Leagues of Municipalities and 4. Historical Societies, and then prioritize in order of ratification. The staff is working to onboard in intern to help with the volume of outreach and responding to questions.

Commissioner Siebel Newsom offered to assist with getting letters and toolkits mailed to Governors. Chairman James reminded the Commission that most of not all governors have offices in Washington D.C. Chairman James also asked the Commission staff to come up with ideas for Centennial swag (pins and buttons, etc.) because there should be a place on the website where the public can access that. The staff should also research fulfillment and let the Commission know what that would look like if it's possible. Commissioner Combs added that she agrees this Commission needs to own some serious swag.

A request was made of Rebecca to describe how the Commission is attracting national attention to all of the Commission's efforts and events? What does that rollout look like because the Commission needs to be the leading voice of the centennial in the media? Chairman James requested that we table this conversation for later in the meeting.

One last suggestion was recommended for the toolkit for states, which was to add the symbolism of wearing white to the ratification celebrations.

E. Communications Update – Deanna Bass Williams, Bass Public Affairs

Before turning the floor over to Deanna Bass Williams for the Communications update, Mrs. Kleefisch shared that there were press releases that have already gone out for both the Senate and House efforts.

Bass Public Affairs has already been working with WSCC staff on earned, owned, and paid media. Earned and owned media are the two areas they are most focused on. Earned media is really referring to national press releases and press wires, which they are already doing. They also want to make sure they are using the Commissioners owned and earned media space as well, because each Commissioner has a network that is vast and large. Commissioners should all be plugged into their media program.

At the beginning of each event, Bass Public Affairs has issued a standard press release to hundreds of journalists, and in terms of dashboards and tracking, they are able to track the number of times each link is opened or if anyone has unsubscribed. They can provide the analytics for Twitter, Instagram, etc., to the Commission upon request. Regarding the race to ratification, they are releasing national news wires.

If Commissioners are interested in getting on the road and being in the press to share the history of women's suffrage they were encouraged to be in contact with Bass Public Affairs. Although the press might request the Commissioners to speak about the news of the day, all Commissioners are encouraged to steer the conversations back to women's suffrage. Bass Public Affairs has put

together a general media kit and a congressional media kit. They are also working congressional press staff to ensure they are capitalizing on their network of media. A lot of the press received on May 21, 2019, was a result of Speaker Pelosi and Representative McCarthy driving the narrative. The point is to attach this Commission to people with large networks.

Bass Public Affairs has also been tracking each Commissioner's social media, and they request that those Commissioners who do use social media retweet the posts that they are tweeting or create organic social media postings on their own social media space.

Discussion:

The morning shows seem to be perfect for the Women's Suffrage Centennial discussion, and it would be ideal for Chairman James and Senator Mikulski to be on every morning show because of the symbolism of having a prominent conservative and a prominent democrat committed to this subject. Has Bass Public Affairs been able to talk to bookers for those morning shows? Deanna replied that they have reached out to every national network, and although they are getting interest, they have not landed bookings yet. There is a lot of interest in the leaders on this Commission.

A question was asked if there are talking points for Governors as well. Deanna replied that they came up with challenge questions and how to respond to those challenge questions. Although they are not posted on the website, they can provide them if requested. If there are people who are participating in unique media opportunities, Bass Public Affairs can create messaging marks for individual engagements. They continue to work with Kelsey Millay to identify locally driven media opportunities.

Commissioner Marengo recommended that Mrs. Kleefisch and her staff find a local story for how the work the Commission is doing is affecting some young woman in America. That is a more powerful story to position the Commission for morning shows and local media. There is a level positioning that needs to happen to ensure this topic comes to the front of mind in 2020 for all major networks.

Senator Mikulski complimented the staff on their hard work in pushing the stories, but also shared that she is frustrated with the media not covering events that she considers of national significance. Two events are happening this week that supported our pursuit of democracy, Thursday will be the 75th anniversary of D Day and tomorrow will be the 100th anniversary of when the Senate (48 States) passed a suffrage resolution to send it to ratification. If the media were to talk to her, they would talk about the President, not D-Day and not the Commission. She further shared that when she opened the post today and read the events that they are going to cover, there was not one word about the Commission. She concluded by stating that very few people know what the yellow rose stands for and asked if the Commission needs a press event rather than only interviews to educate the public about the suffrage centennial, especially since this is a source of national pride for which we can come together. She reminded everyone that the role of the Commission is not only to commemorate, but to educate the public of what that struggle meant.

Deanna agreed that the press event is important and we should do it. She added that the team is pressing to take control of the owned media. For instance, Anna has created a beautiful website and there are videos posted. We will not use the fact that everyone wants to cover the President

as an excuse not to pursue media aggressively. For those Commissioners who do not feel comfortable pivoting, we will create opportunities to advance the owned media.

Chairman James added that there should be an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, or the New York Times. Senator Mikulski added USA Today to the list. Commissioner Hill shared that she has contacts with USA Today and could reach out. She also encouraged Deanna to get with each Commissioner to talk about ways in which they can help with the communications work. Commissioner Hill volunteered to facilitate those linkages. She added that up at Tubman near Seneca Falls, there is huge media interest in what they are doing, and she is asked all the time if she is coming (to events). If we (the Commission) engage media, we also need to be prepared to respond to media.

Chairman James suggested that there has to be a Commission meeting held at Seneca Falls. Commissioner Marengo asked that the Commission come up with three to five storylines they would like to see out there, for example an op-ed is an excellent idea. This means we (the Commission) would need to have an opinion on something. An opinion that the Commission is willing to go forth with should be crafted. Once we have those three to five ideas, they should be circulated among the Commission to see who has those contacts and the ideas for where those stories should be pitched.

Commissioner Newson posed the question, “How can we get young girls involved in this effort?” Her thought was that maybe we can get more people interested in this by making it relevant to them. Deanna responded that Mrs. Kleefisch is working on YouTube videos that should be more appealing to young people. For social media outreach, they are engaging in a way that encourages people to speak back. They have identified key accounts that they want to follow the Commission. They are hoping some celebrities with large networks will engage as well, and support that millennial/gen-z following they are working towards. There are also partnerships that might help the Commission capture the millennial/gen-z audience.

Chairman James shared that she and Commissioner Shogan recently met with 20 young girls and shared the work of the Commission.

F. Website Update – Anna Laymon, National Events Director, WSCC

The official WSC website and social media accounts were launched on May 17, 2019. Some of the Twitter polls that are meant to be interactive are not getting a lot of responses, so Commissioners were asked by Mrs. Kleefisch to respond to the polls, lead the responses, and retweet them whenever possible. She added that the YouTube channel is a direct target on Gen Z since they are much more YouTube users than other generations.

Anna Laymon presented the newly launched Commission website and walked the Commissioners through the content on each page. She added that the website is meant to be a modern, clean and robust portal about the Centennial and information about the 19th Amendment. The goal was to bring all the content that was already created into one place. All the Federal learn centers were added to the website which include teacher and student resources. There are also partner resources which were added. A blog (yellow rose journal) was added to the website, and Commissioners are asked to add blogs. The website also links to a few additional database resources. The “Get Involved” page shares multiple ways that the public can get involved in their

states. The “States” page is a portal to all states and territories for the public to see what is going on in the state and the suffrage history associated with the state.

Anna asked the Commissioners to share feedback on the website.

Discussion:

Commissioner Siebel Newsom asked if there could be a letter to Governors providing them with a point of contact to share updates for the website. Anna responded, yes that is the goal, to get a point of contact in every Governor’s office. Chairman James requested that the staff prepare a letter to Governors, which will be signed by both her and Senator Mikulski and sent out next week.

Chairman James added that when the Commission has its own gear, it should be added to the “Shop” page of the website. Commissioner Siebel Newsom commented that swag is “great.” Commissioner Hill added that women’s rights is one of the shops that should be featured on the Commission’s website. Anna responded that the National Parks do not currently sell their merchandise online. The staff tried to keep the website focused on federal partners only. Commissioner Hill then asked if there was a way that Eastern National Parks could be referenced on the website. Anna responded that unfortunately, none of National Parks or Eastern National Parks merchandise is available online, otherwise it would have been featured on the website.

Commissioner Siebel Newsom asked if there would be a fulfillment house. Mrs. Kleefisch asked the Commission to confirm if they do or do not want a web store for the Commission on the website. Chairman James responded with clarity that she has asked the Commission staff to research what they could have made available and what that would look like. She wants the staff to research the options for an online web store and come up with suggestions and ideas for fulfillment that the Commission can consider.

Senator Mikulski added that when the Commission was created, it was not the intent they would be in the merchandising business, but rather the education business. With merchandising the Commission needs to be concerned that the products to be sold are made in America. The staff should be really careful about this, and about getting into sole source contracting, and our capacity to vet every product. The Commission needs to be careful; just as those shops already posted on the website were vetted by Federal agencies. Commissioner Mitchell added that sending something to Governor’s offices, such as patches, will make an impact, so the idea of swag matters. She was not specifically talking about swag online for sale, but was referring to physical materials that the Commission might send to partners and states to get people to pay more attention.

G. Group Discussion – Partnerships

The Commission was provided a long list of potential partners that was prepared by Candace Samuels, Staff Director. Mrs. Kleefisch began the discussion with pointing out the previous partnerships that were in place to get things done before budgeted funds were available, for example Kroger’s donated yellow roses for the House and Senate events, and gift cards donated by a partner helped pay for the website URL. She requested the Commission consider the list and provide the staff with feedback on what partnerships, if any, they are interested in pursuing.

Senator Mikulski responded by saying that the writers of the legislation establishing the Commission were not anti-private sector. She was particularly upset in terms of a passing conversation Mrs. Kleefisch had with “the Johnny Walker people”. According to Sen. Mikulski, at one of the receptions on Capitol Hill there was the Trade Association for Alcoholic Beverages, noting that the liquor industry was against suffrage, and alcohol has been a known source for triggering domestic violence, and it was not the intent of the writers of the legislation that we would have a “Janie Walker” scotch bottle. The women of the Senate wanted to make sure that suffrage was in no way minimized. In looking at the list of partners, she is unsure what their interests are. Commissioner Mitchell added that when she thinks of partners, she thinks of who can help the Commission get a message out that we would control. Like girl scout patches. People won’t come and look at our website, but if they are watching a major league baseball game or a golf tournament and the announcer shares the Centennial of Women’s Suffrage, that requires a consistent plan of us asking them to do something specific. If we need to ask for specific help to develop certain materials, collateral, or swag that is a limited request. She was clear that she does not want the staff to be involved in raising funds to give grants to states.

Chairman James commented that this topic requires wisdom and judgement, so the Commission cannot go through this entire list of partners and say “yes or no.” Instead, she requested that the Commission staff look at the objectives and overarching principles that they would like to use to determine partnerships, and what is it they recommend to the Commission. That way they have something concrete to take a look at. For instance, “we want partnerships that will do the following three things, and we are not looking for partnerships that will do the following three things,” would be helpful to the Commission. Janie Walker gets us into the category of suffragettes and we should avoid those types of partnerships. The staff should establish guidelines and principals in order to narrow down the list of partners and focus on those partnerships that would promote the work of the Commission.

Commissioner Carranza encouraged the staff meet with the Chairs of the subcommittees because they are more leveraged for productive discussions. Commissioner Hill added that there are lots of great ideas that cost money and resources. If we can find partners that do not diminish women and families that will dwindle down the list. The Commission should marry the Subcommittee recommendations to the list of partners that also incorporates the values of the Commission. Commissioner Mitchell then spoke about the need for guidelines. She suggested the following guidelines be adopted by the Commission:

1. Partners will utilize the Commissions talking points, facts, graphics, and materials. Our partners would use our stuff.
2. Partners will underwrite production of specific graphics, materials, or events. It would need to be something specific.
3. We will not go to partners to ask them to give us money or participate in fundraising that we would use to make grants.

Commissioner Siebel Newsom asked that the Commission also set a criteria for companies that value women. Several of the restaurant companies on the potential list of partners actually under pay women or discriminate against women. There also needs to be a consideration for “reach” for instance Girl Scouts putting the logo on their cookie boxes Wheaties putting images of women suffragists on the front of the box and their history on the back of the box. Those are the kind of partnerships where there is money and marketing involved that make sense.

Chairman James asked the Commission to take a closer look at Commissioner Mitchell's first two suggestions. Commissioner Marenco took a second stab at the partnership guidelines.

1. Partners should amplify our message. Partners should have similarly situated audiences and goals alongside of the Commission.
2. Partners should have brand alignment, meaning that they are heavily focused on women as leaders within their business.
3. Partner means mutuality, so what is the benefit for them aligning with our goals?

Commissioner Higgins added that we should not only target companies that market to women, because the whole point of this is a national celebration, which includes men. For instance if we could get a national sports team that has a male audience to celebrate that we are at the Centennial of Women's Suffrage that would be a great thing. Chairman James agreed and responded that this Commission will not go through and vet companies to decide which one are or are not appropriate.

Commissioner Siebel Newsom pointed out that she is trying to avoid a backlash, such as there would be a backlash if we partner with Arby's or other certain fast food restaurants. We can't in any way choose a company that has a sexual harassment or discrimination history. She agrees that we can choose a great sports entity, like the WNBA.

Chairman James commented that if we stick to the guidelines we have thus far, we should be okay. On an individual basis if there is anything controversial that the staff uncovers, they can bring it to the Commission and we can make a decision as to whether or not we plan to go forward. Commissioner Higgins added that she thinks the Commission might face more backlash if a company comes to us and we respond with "You are not good enough."

Commissioner Mitchell recapped the guidelines for partnerships as follows:

1. Partners will utilize our materials.
2. Partners will underwrite a specific thing that we have identified that we want to do.
3. Partners will amplify our message.

Commissioner Hill recommended that we should be prepared for if a company reaches in. Chairman James responded that should a company reach in, this Commission reserves the right to say "yes or no." Commissioner Nance added that we should not be too specific with the guidelines because each Commissioner has their own "Naughty or Nice" list. Commissioner Higgins reminded the Commission that they need to have well thought out branding ideas if we are going to ask companies to use our materials.

Chairman James reminded the Commissioners to keep their focus on the mission and what they are trying to achieve. Susan Combs suggested local partners for these races around the country. This is an enormous opportunity. We use our events and ask partners to sponsor them.

H. Group Discussion – Fundraising

Chairman James stated that she does not want the Commission fundraising because we do not have the capacity to fundraise. Commissioner Combs agreed. Finding sponsors for events is in a sense fundraising, but we would not raise money.

Chairman James defined grant making which means the states would be allowed to write a proposal and request funding from the Commission.

Senator Mikulski stated that based on the legislation, grants can only go to states, but that is vague. Does it mean grants to governors or other state organizations? Seth Greenfeld replied that GSA interprets that be open to interpretation and there is some leeway. There is wiggle room for states to request the funding go to groups within their state. It would ultimately be up to the Commissioners to decide what perimeters would be set around the grant program.

Commissioner Mitchell offered the following resolution for the Commission to consider:
“The WSCC will not solicit or make grants or solicit or provide financial support from any entity, but will provide collateral materials and other tangible support to help amplify the work for the WSCC.”

Since Commissioner Mitchell’s resolution was unclear about partnerships which may solicit financial support, Chairman James offered the following alternate resolution:
“While the Commission has the authority to make grants to states, it is the decision of this Commission that we will not.”

Another wording on the decision for grant making was suggested as follows:
“While the statutory authority has been granted to the Commission to make grants to states, it is the decision of this Commission that it will not exercise grant-making authority.”

Commissioner Shogan questioned the budget and that \$2.5 million has been accounted for and \$1.8 million which has been appropriated has not yet been accounted for, so if we don’t give grants to states, what is the other \$1.8 million going to be spent on? Why wouldn’t we push this limited amount of money to state entities that have good ideas? Chairman James responded that pushing money out to states could mean that this Commission is holding site visits around the country such as Seneca Falls. Also, when she earlier raised the issue of Commissioners taking a more active role and for the Commissioners to take this message out to states, that is a more appropriate use of the budget. Lastly, when Chairman James chairs a Commission, she returns money to the Treasury and she does not feel the need to spend every penny. If money is leftover she is okay with that.

Subcommittee recommendations should generate ideas for ways the money can be spent such as for traveling exhibits.

Commissioner Mitchell offered the final wording for the resolution regarding the Commission’s decision for grant making:
“While the WSCC recognizes that Congress has conferred statutory authority on the Commission to make grants to states in carrying out the mission of the WSCC, it is hereby resolved that the WSCC has elected not to exercise its grant making authority.”

The Commission unanimously approved this decision.

Chairman James turned back to the partnerships discussion and Commissioner Higgins mentioned that perhaps the Commission should consider revising the guidelines to prohibit partners from making money on the Commission logos, etc. Several other Commissioners did not agree with this

and shared that the money that would be made would likely come from small entrepreneurs in small markets and would be negligible.

A question was asked if the branding would be trademarked and if partners would have a partnership agreement or memorandum of understanding that would outline the specific things that partner plans to do? Are we going to sell the things with the logo or will the partners do that? Chairman James again reiterated that the staff will consult with the attorneys and come back with ideas and solid recommendations. We don't have enough data to make a decision about this today.

A break was taken at 11:15a.m. and the meeting reconvened at exactly 11:30a.m.

I. Presentation "Suffrage in Black and White" - Susan Philpot, Park Ranger Interpreter, Belmont Paul Women's Equality National Monument.

The National Park Service partners with the National Women's Party to tell the story of the struggle for passage of the 19th Amendment. Ms. Philpot began her presentation by thanking Brittney Hall from the Frederick Douglass House who got the ball rolling on the dialogue about Suffrage in Black and White. Brent Staples at the New York Times wrote an editorial in July of 2018, "How the Suffrage Movement Betrayed Black Women." The article ran with an image of Susan B. Anthony with her back to the camera, which symbolized white women turning their backs on black women during the movement. Telling this story is a difficult story and not all celebratory. People did great things for the movement, but also did things that are problematic that must also be told and acknowledged as well. Ms. Philpot asked all the Commissioners to pick one thing they would want everyone to know about themselves. She shared about herself that she has lived in Maryland all of her life. The Commissioners all shared one thing and the discussion continued by noting that black women were asked to pick one thing. They had to choose if they were black or a woman and they couldn't pick because they were both and many other things too.

Ms. Philpot shared many quotes that used language of that time period, and shared a book titled, "History of Woman Suffrage, Volume 1...-Primary Source Edition", written by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan Brownell Anthony, Matilda Joslyn Gage, and Ida Husted Harper, which left out things that were unflattering or made them look bad. The women's suffrage movement was marked by the Seneca Falls Convention in July 1848, but that is not when the women's rights movement started. It had already been going on for a while, but this is when the mission statement was produced, "The Declaration of Sentiments," which talked about all the ways women were not treated equally. One of the grievances says, "He has withheld from her rights which are given to the most ignorant and degraded men—both natives and foreigners." So right from the beginning they are not talking about equality, but rather accepting a hierarchy of society, as if to say, "We white women are in the wrong place, and we need to move up in the hierarchy."

Frederick Douglass was the only African American who attended the Seneca Falls Convention. Future conventions were larger in scope and African American women began attending such as Sojourner Truth. She stood up to speak at one of those conventions in Akron, OH, and gives a speech that becomes very famous, the "Ain't I a Woman" speech. One of the problems is the

speech assumes she has a southern dialect, which she never would have had because she was from New York and her first language was Dutch. One quote shared from her speech was, ““I am a woman’s rights. I have as much muscle as any man, and can do as much work as any man. I have plowed and reaped and husked and chopped and mowed, and can any man do more than that? I have heard much about the sexes being equal; I can carry as much as any man, and can eat as much too, if I can get it. I am as strong as any man that is now.”

When the civil war comes along, the work for women’s rights was put aside for the end of slavery and that perhaps the work of women in the war would be rewarded, but yet even after the war ended women were pushed aside. After the ending of slavery, the 14th amendment defined what it really means to be a citizen. This is the first time the word “male” is introduced into the constitution and tied voting to being male. Whether or not to support the amendment became a big conflict in the suffrage movement. The American Equal Rights Association was formed in 1866 and their primary goal was to secure equal rights for all American citizens especially suffrage rights regardless of race, color or sex. However, women found themselves being told maybe equal rights based on “sex” couldn’t be accomplished just yet.

Sojourner Truth spoke out at another meeting in 1867 and said, “I feel that if I have to answer for the deeds done in my body just as much as a man, I have the right to have just as much as a man. There is a great stir about colored men getting their rights, but not a word about the colored women; and if colored men get their rights and not colored women theirs, you see the colored men will be masters over the women, and it will be just as bad as it was before.”

Ms. Philpot told commissioners that Elizabeth Cady Stanton published and said over and over again the following worst kind of stereotype: “Think of Patrick and Sambo and Hans and Yung Tung who do not know the difference between a monarchy and a republic, who never read the Declaration of Independence or Webster’s spelling book, making laws for [educated white women].” In response, Frederick Douglas fights for the urgency for black men to earn the right to vote first. He says, “When women, because they are women, are hunted down through the cities of New York and New Orleans; when they are dragged from their houses and hung upon lampposts; when their children are torn from their arms and their brains dashed out upon the pavement; when they are objects of insult and outrage at every turn; when they are in danger of having their homes burnt down over their heads; when their children are not allowed to enter schools; then they will have an urgency to obtain the ballot equal to our own.” Susan B. Anthony disagrees and asks if black women have to deal with much of the same? Frederick Douglas agrees, but responds that it’s not because they are women, it’s because they are black.

Ms. Philpot asked the Commissioners to think about a time when they felt pushed aside or belittled. How did that feel? Because black women were being asked to choose. Should they be loyal to black men because you are black, or with the white women, because you are a woman? Whose interest should they align with? How could they choose? Ms. Philpot shared the following quote from Mrs. Francis E.W. Harper in 1869, “I cannot recognize the claim that the negro man is the only one who has pressing claims at this hour. To-day our government needs women’s conscience as well as man’s judgment. And while I would not throw a straw in the way of the colored man, even though I know he would vote against me as soon as he gets his vote, yet I do think that woman should have some power to defend herself from oppression, and equal laws as

if she were a man.” Meaning that black women needed the ballot even more than white women, because black women were doubly silenced and doubly ignored, according to Ms. Philpot.

The Fifteenth Amendment reads, “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude.” Women tried very hard to get the word “sex” included, but it didn’t happen. Again, there was another split about whether or not to support the amendment. The National Woman Suffrage Association decides not to support the 15th Amendment. The American Woman Suffrage Association supported black men getting the vote, and decided to focus their efforts more on the states. Ida Husted Harper stated, “She would sooner cut off her right arm before she would ever work for or demand the ballot for the black man and not the woman.”

[Commissioner Higgins spoke to add to the discussion, but her microphone was not turned on and she could not be heard in the meeting recording for the purpose of documenting the minutes]

Commissioner Hill commented that it is well documented and understood, that the leaders of the suffrage movement had issues around race. Frederick Douglas was the one black friend who had the intellect that they (white women) felt they could relate to. Black women were the only ones who could articulate to African American audiences the need for women to get the vote. There were many layers. There are still many complexities related to race in this country.

Commissioner Mitchell agreed there is a complicated relationship and disagrees that we are putting our modern day framework to folks in the 19th century. Elizabeth Cady Stanton is not listed on the National Park Service’s suffrage website but Frederick Douglas is. So, the idea of expecting people to be educated is not a negative thing, but she expressed that she feels ignored when everything is cast in modern day thinking and we denigrate women that fought for suffrage. It’s inappropriate, she says.

Commissioner Shogan agrees this is a very complicated topic, but she teaches this at Georgetown Political Science Department, and it is important to get right the role that race and gender have played in history. It has to be acknowledged; it cannot be shoved under the rug, and the story has to be told. The interaction between Anthony and Douglas is a multi-faceted relationship that went through a lot of twists and turns over time.

Chairman James echoed it is important to get the history right. She is frustrated immensely when people try to “white wash” the history through today’s lenses. The history is complex and people don’t want to deal with that kind of complexity, but we must in understanding those relationships. She has given this a lot of thought and didn’t need a modern day movement to teach her about intersectionality. She further shared that she felt most ignored and shut aside as a conservative women by her liberal sisters. We have to have these conversations, but we aren’t going to have them right now. She shared that she continues to enjoy the conversations with the women around the table, and expressed that we cannot over simplify these very complex issues and see them through our modern day lens.

Commissioner Siebel Newsom asked, “If there is more we can do on our website, our education materials, our media opportunities to not limit ourselves to one quote seen through our modern

day prism or an either or prism?” It almost feels like that’s something we can lead with. Chairman James agreed that we should lead the way. She wants to ensure that we do not fall prey to a much broader agenda as other organizations might.

Senator Mikulski added that the past doesn’t mean it has to be the future. Nativism was a strain that was present at the time based on race ethnicity and religion. Like when President George W. Bush dedicated the African American History museum. It’s not that great nations don’t make mistakes, it’s that we recommit and work the democracy. We have to name it, claim it, and move ahead.

Chairman James requested Commissioner Shogan to prepare a presentation on the relationship between Douglas and Stanton. Commissioner Shogan agreed to do that and also shared information about a play on this topic called “The Agitators.”

Commissioner Mitchell added that she read the Brent Staples article and looked up the African American women he referenced, and she feels strongly that it would be a mistake if we tried to scrub our symbols of the people, because it was people who made this happen. She recommended a series of daily podcasts during Black History Month featuring black female suffragists, and then carry on into Women’s History Month, which is in March featuring other women (not black women) that also led the suffrage movement because we make a mistake if we don’t celebrate these individual women. Even if they did things that today we find objectionable, they brought us here today.

Commissioner Higgins commented that we are seeking historic truth that in making sure not to omit things doesn’t over correct in its zeal and attribute motivations that were probably not in fact there. I don’t believe it was the objective of any of the suffragists to leave black women behind. They didn’t put in a 19th amendment that left out black women. What they were objecting to was that race was being treated as superior to sex when they thought that they both should have been handled at the same time. So the article that was handed out last time, that is also referenced in the second slide the presentation, is not written by an historian, but by someone who has very much of a strong sense of grievance that he is trying to redress, but in the course of doing that he misreads history himself and attributes things that aren’t there. It behooves us to try and be as nuanced as possible about an incredibly complicated subject and not make errors of our own.

Commissioner Hill stated that when you have a parade to move the movement forward and you put Ida B. Wells and others at the back of the parade so as not to offend white women who were more marginal in their commitment and didn’t want to choose between that black women, race was a factor and that’s okay. The important thing to commemorate is that they were able to move forward. But let’s not “white wash” it. And we do have an opportunity in addition to what Colleen is doing, David Blight is a friend that would be more than willing to help inform the Douglas side. Lori Ginsberg has been on pilgrimages by the Faith and Politics institute that deals with the Stanton piece.

Senator Mikulski noted that when we had the press conference the Deltas were right there in the front row. That is the point of where we are. It meant that we were all in the same room, anyone

could take their place where they wanted. And we were going to be the voice for commemoration to look at the future.

Susan Philpot resumed to speaking about the slides about African American women contributions. When you are fighting to right a wrong or fighting for equality. What are the consequences when you make compromised? They were faced with a dilemma. Do we fight for everybody or tell some people to wait their turn while we do what we think we can accomplish. If we decide not to fight for everybody and be practical about what we can accomplish now are there consequences and benefits to that?

Commissioner Higgins pointed out that Thaddeus Stevens took out some of the language in the 13th Amendment, so that you could even just get it through and make progress where the abolitionist had made no progress for 30+ years before. So, there is an argument for getting what you can get and then getting the next slice after that in a world of human beings where you don't get everything all at once.

Ms. Philpot added that as next generation were taking over leadership of the movement, there is an effort to mend those splits. In 1890 the groups came back together to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA). The reconstruction era is running into more and more Jim Crow laws and practices along with lynchings and other terror campaigns. The split also occurred in the women's rights movement too. In 1905, Harriet Tubman, at least 80 years old at the time, travelled to a women's suffrage convention in Rochester, NY, and was featured as an honored guest. She travelled by train with other women attending the conference. When they got off the train to go to their places of lodging for the conference the next day, Harriet Tubman had to spend the night in the train station because there was no place for a black woman to get lodging even in Rochester, NY. The leaders of the conference eventually found a place for her to stay. This is emblematic of how easy it is to push aside to push aside the needs and concerns of those who aren't being heard.

By this point there is a nod to white supremacy and many of the Southern states, so there is a willingness to appease to white supremacist narrative. When NAWSA holds a convention in New Orleans, a local paper commented that they are really fighting for NAWSA racial equality to which NWSA responds they have no view on the subject, they are simply fighting for women's rights to vote. "The association as such has no view on this subject...granting suffrage to women who can read and write and who pay taxes would insure white supremacy..."

In 1913, Alice Paul puts her finger on the amendment and states the one state at a time strategy is taking too long and set up a march at Woodrow Wilson's inauguration. Black women supported her. A local newspaper reported, "The women's suffrage party had a hard time settling the status of Negroes in the Washington parade. At first, Negro callers were received coolly at headquarters. Then they were told to register but found that the registry clerks were usually out. Finally, an order went out to segregate them in the parade, but telegrams and protests poured in and eventually the colored women marched according to their State and occupation without let or hindrance."

Ida B. Wells, who wrote articles about lynchings and white men raping black women, wanted to participate in this march. She was told to march in the back. She stepped out in front when the Illinois contingent came up.

J. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Melanie Ross Levin - Office of Women’s Advancement and Advocacy for the State of Delaware:
Commented that states can bring ideas to the table. She shared that she is optimistic about opportunities for state grants because states want to do work but they just don’t have the money. It would help if states had some funding (even if limited). Without grants there will be fewer events and opportunities for education, etc.

Pat Wirth – Turning Point Suffragist Memorial:

Commented that she is excited about great progress on the Commission’s work completed thus far. She complimented the Commission on a great website that is user friendly. She suggested that organizations that provide funding be referred to by the Commission as “supporters” and not “partners”. She also shared that the Occoquan Region Park – Part of the Workhouse complex – dedication of memorial is August 26, 2020

Nancy Tate – 2020 Women’s Vote Centennial Initiative:

Congratulated the Commission on their progress and website. She asked that the Commission drill down deeply when it comes to information sharing. She shared that money was raised for a float for the Rose Bowl Parade in California 2020.

IV. WRAP UP/CLOSING

Chairman James would like to hold meetings in locations outside of Washington D.C. Senator Gillibrand has invited the Commission to Seneca Falls for a meeting. Commissioner Siebel Newsom also invited the Commission to meet in California. Chairman James asked the WSCC staff to research and recommend dates/times around suffrage milestones for holding Commission meetings at different suffrage site locations.

Interested States and organizations who would like to collaborate with the Commission in planning suffrage commemorative events may contact the Commission’s Executive Director, Rebecca Kleefisch, at Rebecca@womensvote100.org

Interested parties may contact the Designated Federal Officer, Kim Oliver, at kmoliver@blm.gov or (202) 912-7510 with any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the content of this meeting summary.

V. MEETING PARTICIPANTS

A. COMMISSION MEMBERS

Kay Coles James (Chair), President, The Heritage Foundation
Barbara Mikulski (Vice Chair), Former U.S. Senator, State of Maryland
Cleta Mitchell, Partner and Political Law Attorney, Foley & Lardner, LLP
Colleen J. Shogan, Assistant Deputy Librarian, Library of Congress
Debra Wall, Deputy Archivist of the U.S. Wall, National Archives
Heather Higgins, CEO, Independent Women's Voice
Jennifer Siebel Newsom, Filmmaker, Actress and Public Speaker

Jovita Carranza, Treasurer, Department of Treasury
Julissa Marengo, Assistant Secretary for Communications and External Affairs, Smithsonian Institution
Karen Hill, President and CEO, Harriet Tubman Home – a National Historic Park
Nicola Miner, Assistant Professor of English, College of San Mateo in California
Susan Combs, Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget, Department of Interior

Attended by phone:

Penny Nancy, CEO and President, Concerned Women for America

B. PRESENTERS & SPECIAL GUESTS

Secretary David Bernhardt, Department of Interior
Susan Philpot, Belmont Paul Women's Equality National Monument

C. STAFF SUPPORT

Anna Laymon, National Events Director, Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission
Becky Beland McNaught, State of California
Candace Samuels, Staff Director, Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission
Hannah Milgrom, State of California
James Imoehl, The Heritage Foundation
Kelsey Brantley, Designated Federal Officer, Department of Interior
Kelsey Kats, Treasury
Kelsey Millay, States Events Director, Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission
Kim Oliver, Designated Federal Officer, Department of Interior
Louise Flavahan, Senior Advisor to Barbara Mikulski
Margaret Triebsch, Committee Management Officer, Department of Interior
Rebecca Kleefisch, Executive Director, Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission
Seth Greenfeld, Senior Assistant General Counsel, General Services Administration
Una Corbett, Intern, Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission

D. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Aurelia Skipwith, Fish and Wildlife and Parks
Barbara Little, National Park Service
Beth Herman Hadar
Bob Compton
Bonnie Nelson Schwartz, One Woman, One Vote Festival
Eleanor Mahoney, National Park Service
Katie Crawford-Lackey, National Park Service
Lauren Devore, National Park Service
Melanie Ross Levin, State of Delaware
Michon Boston, One Woman, One Vote Festival
Nancy Tate, 2020 Women's Vote Centennial Initiative
Pat Wirth, Turning Point Suffragist Memorial Association
Sylvester Woolford, Commissioner, Delaware Heritage Commission

APPENDIX A: MEETING MATERIALS

<https://www.womensvote100.org/s/June-3-2019-Meeting-Materials.zip>

APPENDIX B: WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS



PO Box 457
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

May 28, 2019

Rebecca Kleefisch,
Executive Director
Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission

Dear Executive Director Kleefisch,

The New Jersey Historic Trust requests a one-time grant of \$125,000 from the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission to expand the National Votes for Women Trail (the Trail). The Trail will document the historic sites and leaders of women's suffrage in each state. Working in partnership with the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites, the NJ Historic Trust will create a permanent commemoration by connecting every state and hundreds of local communities to the national, non-violent movement to expand democracy to include women, more than half the U.S. population.

The New Jersey Historic Trust (NJHT) was created by law in 1967 to advance historic preservation in New Jersey for the benefit of future generations through education, stewardship and financial investment programs that save our heritage and strengthen our communities. As a quasi-state agency that is also recognized as a non-profit organization, the Trust routinely collaborates with other organizations to expand our reach and achieve greater results. Working as a partner with the State Historic Preservation Office, the Trust helped to fund a signage program to mark and commemorate sites along the New Jersey Women's Heritage Trail, the first trail of its kind in the nation.

What is the National Votes for Women Trail?

Today the National Votes for Women Trail includes a database of 1150+ sites where a suffrage story can be told in 47 states. This database has been crowd sourced by volunteers in each state and is accessible on the website www.ncwhs.org. The William G. Pomeroy Foundation, based in Syracuse, NY, has committed to fabricating permanent roadside markers for 250 sites on the Trail - five in each state in the country. Volunteer state coordinators will select sites for roadside markers and submit nominations to be reviewed by a panel of noted historians. Once approved, the roadside markers will be fabricated and installed. State coordinators will work with historic sites and local governments to create public celebrations for the marker installations. A marketing toolkit will help each state coordinator to widely promote the Trail and marker installations, further sharing their state's suffrage history.

Completing this ambitious project by the end of 2020 requires professional oversight. The NJ Historic Trust is uniquely situated to work with the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites, a New Jersey registered 501c3. As the Trust's Executive Director, I bring a strong background in preserving historic resources and promoting women's history. I led the creation of the New Jersey Women's Heritage Trail which tells the story of the important contributions of New Jersey women through the

phone 609/984-0473 e-mail: njht@dca.nj.gov

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COMMITTEES:
ARMED SERVICES
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS
AGRICULTURE
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3205

March 8, 2019

Kay Coles James
Chair
Women's Suffrage Commission
Library of Congress
101 Independence Ave SE
Washington, DC 20540

Dear Chair James,

In light of the upcoming 100th anniversary of women's suffrage and the passage and ratification of the 19th Amendment, I am writing to respectfully request that the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission hold one of its meetings at the Women's Rights National Historic Park in Seneca Falls, New York. The State of New York is the birthplace of women's rights, and Seneca Falls is among the most legendary landmarks of the suffrage movement. As we approach this monumental anniversary in United States history, meeting in Seneca Falls would be an important way for the Commission to honor these historical achievements and the heroic efforts of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Harriet Tubman and other champions of New York who played a pivotal role in the fight for women's rights.

Seneca Falls and other nearby cities in New York State have provided the stage for many of the women's suffrage movement's most historic accomplishments. Organized by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, a native to Seneca Falls, the Seneca Falls Convention was held in 1848. It was from these meetings that the Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions emerged, which set the framework for the national women's suffrage movement that soon followed. To commemorate these important milestones, the Women's Rights National Historic Park was later established by the National Park Service in 1980.

The women's suffrage movement also has roots in the City of Rochester, where the home of Susan B. Anthony is located and now serves as a museum and National Historic Landmark. Near the City of Syracuse, fellow suffragist Matilda Joslyn Gage is also honored at her historic home in Fayetteville, and the Harriet Tubman Home and National Historic Park is located nearby in the City of Auburn. While meeting in Seneca Falls, Commissioners would have the opportunity to add visit any of these area sites, allowing for a more complete experience and understanding of the impact these amazing women and the region had on the suffrage movement.

New York State has long been at the epicenter of the women's suffrage movement upon which the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission was established. It is for this reason that the Commission should hold a meeting on the symbolic, hallowed grounds of Seneca Falls and pay tribute to the historic achievements that brought equality and the constitutional right to vote to women for the last 100 years.

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Thank you for your serious consideration of this request, and I look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kirsten Gillibrand". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator