



National Women's History Museum

Bottom Line: While the idea of celebrating women is admirable, the content of such a museum would be a shrine to the leftist ideology and would not provide an accurate portrayal of American women. It is for this reason we object to the National Women's History Museum as currently structured.

Background:

- The National Women's History Museum (NWHM) was founded in 1996 and began fundraising to establish a museum in Washington, D.C. Legislation was first introduced in 2001.
- In 2010, Concerned Women for America Legislative Action Committee (CWALAC) opposed the building of the NWHM on the National Mall and successfully requested Senators Jim DeMint (R-South Carolina) and Tom Coburn (R-Oklahoma) to place a hold on this bill.
- During the 112th Congress, CWALAC worked with Republican House leadership to ensure this bill did not come to the House floor for a vote.
- The NWHM changed tactics in the 113th Congress. Instead of trying to get Congressional approval for a museum site on the National Mall, NWHM has created a commission to study the establishment of a museum which will be a stepping stone to create another Smithsonian that will eventually receive federal funding and will provide a jaundiced view of women's history. They based their tactics on success of the African American Museum, the Latino Museum, and the Native American Museum.
- In an apparent move to side-step the so-called "war on women" rhetoric, Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-Virginia) stated in *The Hill* newspaper that the House will vote on the NWHM this election year.

Talking Points:

- The NWHM does not accurately portray women's history and for this reason we oppose the NWHM. The museum's online exhibits tout the "progressive era" and feminism but do not acknowledge their ramifications, the destruction of marriage and the family. The online exhibits highlight the feminists' view of "free love" (like Victoria Woodhull) but do not acknowledge their pro-life ones.
- The NWHM will indoctrinate those who visit the museum to a jaundiced view of women's history. The NWHM website attached to this proposed museum references Margaret Sanger nine times and Victoria Woodhull over 20, while referencing Phyllis Schlafly once and not mentioning Beverly LaHaye at all. It also highlights Sandra Fluke, while ignoring Kay Coles James, Alveda King, and



Star Parker. NWHM lauds Bella Abzug, who cofounded a global women's advocacy organization whose goal was to work towards a "just world" that promotes and protects human rights, "gender equality," and the "integrity of the environment" while ignoring the first American woman Ambassador to the United Nations, Jeane Kirkpatrick.

- Supporters of the NWHM have said that women's contributions and accomplishments for the most part have been overlooked and consequently omitted from mainstream culture. However, Columbia College in Chicago, found there are over 20 women's museums, including the Sewall-Belmont House and Museum by the United States Capitol that "celebrates women's progress toward equality, and explores the evolving role of women and their contributions to society" as well as a Smithsonian-affiliated museum (The Women's Museum: An Institute for the Future) that uses the latest technology to show how women have shaped our nation's history.
- While the NWHM states that it intends to be privately funded, according to its own web site, it intends to be affiliated with the Smithsonian Institution. Currently, the Smithsonian Institution receives 65% of its funding from the federal government, which spent \$805 million in F.Y.2014. In today's fiscal climate, we must weigh whether it is prudent to add more costs to an already constrained budget.
- According to Sonya Michel who served on the museum's Scholarly Advisory Council, over the past sixteen years, the National Women's History Museum has raised only \$14 million of its \$400 million fundraising goal, most of which has gone to cover its own expenses.
- There is nothing in H.R. 863 which will definitively preclude the NWHM from receiving federal funds in the future.
- The Commission will include 8 members, 4 Republican appointed members and 4 Democrat appointed members. There is nothing in H.R. 863 to ensure that pro-life/pro-family conservatives will have equal representation on this Commission to ensure that women's history is not one-sided from the "progressive" or feminist viewpoint.
- According to a quote by Diane Baer, a Boston University political scientist and a close observer of the museum, in the *Huffington Post*, "there is no official way for anyone in the public to have a say in NWHM decision-making proves because it has been closed and insular and not representative of the full range of views."
- The NWHM dismissed its scholar advisory committee which was critical of the NWHM for the museum's practices and content which contained numerous factual errors.