



Creating an American Museum of Women's History

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Objective:

We urge Congress to support the creation of an American Museum of Women's History (AMWH) as part of the Smithsonian Institution. This includes the appropriation of federal funds and the allocation of land and/or a building to house the museum.

Background:

In 2014, Congress enacted legislation creating a commission to study the potential creation of a national women's history museum. During deliberations over the bill, NCH advocated for the inclusion of professional historians with expertise in women's history to advise the commission.

In November 2016, the commission released its report. Key points included:

- Affirmation that an American Museum of Women's History should be created, and it should be an official part of the Smithsonian
- The need to present a wide range of women's history and consider diverse ideological viewpoints in the process, especially on potentially controversial subjects
- Outreach to scholars, other museums, and nationwide focus groups to capture diverse viewpoints, and to collect the artifacts necessary to do so
- A private sector fundraising goal of \$150-\$180 million to construct the museum, along with federal donation of land and/or a building and appropriation of funding for operating costs
- A three-phase, ten-year action plan for fundraising, planning, and construction, with an envisioned museum opening in 2026

The full report can be found at amnh.us/report. Despite the commission's findings, Smithsonian Secretary David J. Skorton said in 2018 that he does not support building a new museum.

The NCH fully supports efforts to ensure the creation of a world-class museum honoring the impact and experience of women in America.

Why it matters:

The time has come for the creation of a museum of women's history to educate, inspire, and provide diverse role models for a new generation of Americans. The contributions of women deserve the kind of national recognition that a permanent physical space associated with the prestige of the Smithsonian name can provide.

This new museum will also facilitate quality scholarship in women's history, improve the work of other museums through educational collaboration and traveling exhibitions, and bring further tourism to the Washington, D.C. area.