
Presidential Documents

Title 3—

Proclamation 7071 of March 2, 1998

The President

Women's History Month, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The Preamble to the Constitution begins, “We, the people.” Yet that phrase, inspiring as it is, has not always included all Americans. Women’s history in America has been the story of the struggle of women of all racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds to be included in that simple but powerful statement. It is the story as well of how, in striving to reach their own great potential, women have strengthened and enriched our Nation.

In every era of American history, women have braved enormous challenges to change our world for the better. Women of faith in the early 17th century dared a dangerous journey and the unknown wilderness to seek freedom of conscience in a new land. As our Nation struggled for independence and to establish a new, more enlightened form of government, women like Esther DeBerdt Reed and Sarah Franklin Bache supplied food, clothes, and funds for Washington’s soldiers. Freedom fighters like Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman led hundreds of enslaved men and women to liberty through the Underground Railroad, and social reformers like Gertrude Bonnin advanced the human rights of American Indians. Suffragists like Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Luisa Capetillo challenged the conventions of their times and sought to secure for women one of the most basic rights within our democracy.

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the women’s rights movement in America and its immeasurable contributions to our Nation’s promise of justice and equality for all. The visionary women and men who gathered in Seneca Falls, New York, in July of 1848 for the first Women’s Rights Convention in history gave voice so powerfully to women’s aspirations for inclusion and empowerment that their vision continues to shape our world today.

Once disenfranchised, American women now serve at the highest levels of government, as Justices of the Supreme Court and in increasing numbers in the Cabinet and the United States Congress. Once denied the resources and opportunities to play organized sports, American women made sporting history this year by winning the first-ever Olympic Gold Medal in women’s ice hockey. Women are cracking the glass ceilings of corporate management to lead some of our country’s most prominent businesses. As parents and partners, entrepreneurs and artists, politicians and scientists, women are helping to build an America in which all citizens, regardless of gender, are free to live out their dreams.

Thanks to the efforts of women leaders, little girls across America today know far fewer limits than did their mothers and grandmothers. But there still remains work to be done to create a more just America, and we must rededicate ourselves to ending the discrimination that women still face. We must continue our efforts to help women succeed at work and at home, to be free from violent crime, and to enjoy quality health care. In doing so, we will confirm our conviction that “We, the people” includes us all.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 1998 as Women's History Month. I encourage all Americans to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities, and to remember throughout the year the many voices and stories of courageous women who have made our Nation strong.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "William J. Clinton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "W" and "C".