

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO.4718, by Representative Chase

WHEREAS, Washington women of every race, class, and ethnic background have made historic contributions to the growth and strength of our Nation in countless recorded and unrecorded ways; and

WHEREAS, Washington women have played and continue to play a critical economic, cultural, and social role in every sphere of the life of the State by constituting a significant portion of the labor force working inside and outside of the home; and

WHEREAS, Washington women have played a unique role throughout the history of the Nation by providing the majority of the volunteer labor force; and

WHEREAS, Washington women were particularly important in establishing early charitable, philanthropic, and cultural institutions in our State; and

WHEREAS, Washington women of every race, class, and ethnic background served as early leaders in the forefront of every major progressive social change movement; and

WHEREAS, Washington women have been leaders, not only in securing their own rights of suffrage and equal opportunity, but also in the abolitionist movement, the emancipation movement, the industrial labor movement, the civil rights movement, and other movements; and

WHEREAS, Washington women include:

Mary Davenport Engberg, the first female symphony conductor in America. Engberg directed an 85-member symphony orchestra in Bellingham's Beck's Theater on December 14, 1914. She was a composer, teacher, and violin virtuoso.

Ella Higginson, the state's illustrious poet laureate, who was criticized by her older brother and her husband for her literary ambitions. She worked 16 hours a day on her poems. Her popular poems were set to music and sung by Emma Calve' and Enrico Caruso.

Mary Richardson Walker, one of the first white women to cross the Rockies in 1833. She was an amateur botanist, geologist, taxidermist, carpenter, and mother of eight. From one of her diaries: "Rose about five. Had an early breakfast. Got my housework done about nine. Baked six loaves of bread. Made a kettle of mush and now have suet pudding and beef boiling...I have managed to put my clothes away and set my house in order....Nine o'clock P.M. Was delivered of another son."

Kate Sadler, a beloved orator, who wrote: "Oh, Labor, Labor when will you know your strength?"

Christal Ountasket "Mourning Dove," an Okanogan Indian, who was the first Native American novelist. In 1927 she published *Cogewea, the Half Breed*. She was a migrant worker who lugged her typewriter from camp to camp.

Bertha Landes, who was, in 1926, the first female mayor of Seattle and the first female mayor of a major American city.

Nellie Centennial Cornish, who founded the Cornish School of Music and Art in 1914. The school was one of the first of its kind in the nation.

May Arkwright Hutton, a suffrage leader who worked tirelessly for equal rights and helped win the vote for women in Washington State in 1910. She was one of the first two women called for jury duty in Spokane County, and the first female delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1912.

Thea Foss, who started out renting rowboats to fishermen. By the 1890s she was transporting logs by tugboat under the green and white flag of Foss Launch and Tug Company. Foss Maritime continues today.

Ruth Parton, a daredevil equestrian who invented the "Drunken Derby" in which the rider, on an unbridled horse stood in the saddle leaning way to one side during the ride. She was an inductee into the National Cowgirl Hall of Fame in Hereford, Texas.

Mary Perkins, one of the first female doctors in Washington State. She practiced until she was 79.

Catherine May Bedell, the first woman elected to Congress from the State of Washington. She served in the Washington State House of Representatives from 1952 to 1958. She was elected to Congress six times and served from 1959 until 1970.

WHEREAS, Despite these contributions, the role of Washington women in history has been consistently overlooked and undervalued, in the literature, teaching, and study of Washington history;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives honor March as "Women's History Month"; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That members of the House of Representatives and the Senate be encouraged to distribute this resolution in their home communities and invite nominations of local women who are making history to be added to this honored list in future years.

I hereby certify this to be a true and correct copy of
Resolution 4718 adopted by the House of Representatives
March 9, 2004

Richard Nafziger, Chief Clerk