



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Suzi Oppenheimer

Oppenheimer Celebrates Women's History Month

SUZI OPPENHEIMER March 1, 2012

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Senator Oppenheimer pays tribute to generations of women who have pioneered equal rights and opportunities for women

Senator Suzi Oppenheimer (D-Mamaroneck) today marked Women's History Month by reflecting on how women have shaped our society, government, culture and all aspects of our lives. But despite the accomplishments of the past century, inequalities remain, such as the absence of equal pay for equal work and restrictions on a woman's reproductive rights.

"New Yorkers have played a proud role in women's history and we must continue to lead the way towards a brighter future," noted the Senator. "The legacy of equality and the pursuit of justice passed down from our mothers and grandmothers shapes our obligation to continue the progress for our own daughters and granddaughters."

"Our state was home to many well known role models and women's rights advocates, such as Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. These tenacious women founded the National Women Suffrage Association in 1869," observed Senator Oppenheimer, "and paved the way for women not only to vote, but to hold political office and participate fully in our democratic process."

“Women officeholders, like me, owe a special debt of gratitude to these visionary and courageous women. While society has come far since the days of women’s suffrage, full equality still eludes us.” Noting the continuing wage disparity between men and women and ongoing efforts to restrict women’s access to reproductive health measures, the Senator stated, “we cannot take our achievements for granted, nor can we forget that there is still work to be done.” As the words of our beloved former first lady, Eleanor Roosevelt remind us, “the battle for individual rights of women is one of long standing and none of us should countenance anything which undermines it.”

Women’s History Month in the United States grew out of a weeklong celebration of women’s contributions to culture, history and society organized by a school district in Sonoma, California, in 1978. It expanded to a national celebration in the 1980s and since 1987, Women’s History Month has been celebrated officially in the month of March.

Each year, the National Women’s History Project selects a theme that highlights achievements by distinguished women in specific fields. This year’s theme – “Women’s Education – Women’s Empowerment” -- focuses on the pioneering women and events that have helped to close the gender gap in education. “Education *is* empowerment,” said Oppenheimer, who is the ranking member of the Senate Education Committee, “so I’m thrilled that women now outnumber men in colleges throughout the country.”

For information on Women’s History Month events please go to:

<http://womenshistorymonth.gov/>.