

Why Equal Pay Day Matters for Women's History

Written by The White House
Tuesday, 12 April 2016 10:10 -

WASHINGTON, D.C. - One day in 1917, a dozen women gathered in front of the White House to stage a silent protest for women's right to vote.



Spectators yelled at them, kicked them, and spit on them. They ripped the banners from their hands and threw them onto the ground.

Undaunted, these women brought those tattered banners back to a house across town. They cleaned them -- sometimes carefully re-stitching them -- and carried them back out the next day, and the next, and the next.

It's my job today to preserve those same banners, alongside an extensive collection of other artifacts that showcase the struggle and accomplishments of the movement for women's equality. I do it all from the house that became their final headquarters in Washington, D.C., known as the Sewall-Belmont House.

Today, on Equal Pay Day, President Obama is permanently protecting this house by designating it as America's newest national monument.



From this house, members of the National Woman's Party led the movement for women's equality, authoring more than 600 pieces of federal, state, and local legislation in support of equal rights.

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The President's designation will preserve an extensive archival collection that documents the history of the movement to secure women's suffrage and equal rights in the United States and across the globe.

We've come a long way since those protests almost a century ago. For me, preserving this site isn't just about remembering the suffragist movement. It's also about celebrating our spirit as Americans – the idea that if we work together and empower one another, we can make our government work better for all of us.

[So I hope you'll take a moment today to celebrate this moment and watch the President speak about protecting a site that holds a significant place in our history.](#)

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