

105TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4398

To establish a commission, in honor of the 150th Anniversary of the Seneca Falls Convention, to further protect sites of importance in the historic efforts to secure equal rights for women.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 4, 1998

Ms. SLAUGHTER (for herself, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, and Ms. WOOLSEY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Resources

A BILL

To establish a commission, in honor of the 150th Anniversary of the Seneca Falls Convention, to further protect sites of importance in the historic efforts to secure equal rights for women.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Women’s Progress
5 Commemoration Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DECLARATION.**

7 Congress declares that—

1 (1) the original Seneca Falls Convention, held
2 in upstate New York in July 1848, convened to con-
3 sider the social conditions and civil rights of women
4 at that time;

5 (2) the convention marked the beginning of an
6 admirable and courageous struggle for equal rights
7 for women;

8 (3) the 150th Anniversary of the convention
9 provides an excellent opportunity to examine the his-
10 tory of the women’s movement; and

11 (4) a Federal Commission should be established
12 for the important task of ensuring the historic pres-
13 ervation of sites that have been instrumental in
14 American women’s history, creating a living legacy
15 for generations to come.

16 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION.**

17 (a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is established a com-
18 mission to be known as the “Women’s Progress Com-
19 memoration Commission” (referred to in this Act as the
20 “Commission”).

21 (b) **MEMBERSHIP.**—

22 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Commission shall be
23 composed of 15 members, of whom—

24 (A) 3 shall be appointed by the President;

1 (B) 3 shall be appointed by the Speaker of
2 the House of Representatives;

3 (C) 3 shall be appointed by the minority
4 leader of the House of Representatives;

5 (D) 3 shall be appointed by the majority
6 leader of the Senate; and

7 (E) 3 shall be appointed by the minority
8 leader of the Senate.

9 (2) PERSONS ELIGIBLE.—

10 (A) IN GENERAL.—The members of the
11 Commission shall be individuals who have
12 knowledge or expertise, whether by experience
13 or training, in matters to be studied by the
14 Commission. The members may be from the
15 public or private sector, and may include Fed-
16 eral, State, local, or employees, members of aca-
17 demia, nonprofit organizations, or industry, or
18 other interested individuals.

19 (B) DIVERSITY.—It is the intent of Con-
20 gress that persons appointed to the Commission
21 under paragraph (1) be persons who represent
22 diverse economic, professional, and cultural
23 backgrounds.

24 (3) CONSULTATION AND APPOINTMENT.—

1 (A) IN GENERAL.—The President, Speaker
2 of the House of Representatives, minority lead-
3 er of the House of Representatives, majority
4 leader of the Senate, and minority leader of the
5 Senate shall consult among themselves before
6 appointing the members of the Commission in
7 order to achieve, to the maximum extent prac-
8 ticable, fair and equitable representation of var-
9 ious points of view with respect to the matters
10 to be studied by the Commission.

11 (B) COMPLETION OF APPOINTMENTS; VA-
12 CANCIES.—The President, Speaker of the
13 House of Representatives, minority leader of
14 the House of Representatives, majority leader
15 of the Senate, and minority leader of the Sen-
16 ate shall conduct the consultation under sub-
17 paragraph (3) and make their respective ap-
18 pointments not later than 60 days after the
19 date of enactment of this Act.

20 (4) VACANCIES.— A vacancy in the membership
21 of the Commission shall not affect the powers of the
22 Commission and shall be filled in the same manner
23 as the original appointment not later than 30 days
24 after the vacancy occurs.

25 (c) MEETINGS.—

1 (1) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 30 days
2 after the date on which all members of the Commis-
3 sion have been appointed, the Commission shall hold
4 its first meeting.

5 (2) SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS.—After the initial
6 meeting, the Commission shall meet at the call of
7 the Chairperson.

8 (d) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the
9 Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction
10 of business, but a lesser number of members may hold
11 hearings.

12 (e) CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON.—The
13 Commission shall select a Chairperson and Vice Chair-
14 person from among its members.

15 **SEC. 4. DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION.**

16 Not later than 1 year after the initial meeting of the
17 Commission, the Commission, in cooperation with the Sec-
18 retary of the Interior and other appropriate Federal,
19 State, and local public and private entities, shall prepare
20 and submit to the Secretary of the Interior a report that—

21 (1) identifies sites of historical significance to
22 the women’s movement; and

23 (2) recommends actions, under the National
24 Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)
25 and other law, to rehabilitate and preserve the sites

1 and provide to the public interpretive and edu-
2 cational materials and activities at the sites.

3 **SEC. 5. POWERS OF THE COMMISSION.**

4 (a) HEARINGS.—The Commission may hold such
5 hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such
6 testimony, and receive such evidence as the Commission
7 considers advisable to carry out its duties of this Act.

8 (b) INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—The
9 Commission may secure directly from any Federal depart-
10 ment or agency such information as the Commission con-
11 siders necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.
12 At the request of the Chairperson of the Committee, the
13 head of such department or agency shall furnish such in-
14 formation to the Commission.

15 **SEC. 6. COMMISSION PERSONNEL MATTERS.**

16 (a) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—A member of the
17 Commission who is not otherwise an officer or employee
18 of the Federal Government shall be compensated at a rate
19 equal to the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic
20 pay prescribed for a position at level IV of the Executive
21 Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States
22 Code, for each day (including travel time) during which
23 the member is engaged in the performance of the duties
24 of the Commission. A member of the Commission who is
25 otherwise an officer or employee of the United States shall

1 serve without compensation in addition to that received
2 for services as an officer or employee of the United States.

3 (b) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—A member of the Commis-
4 sion shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem
5 in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees
6 of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5,
7 United States Code, while away from the home or regular
8 place of business of the member in the performance of
9 service for the Commission.

10 (c) STAFF.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Chairperson of the
12 Commission may, without regard to the civil service
13 laws (including regulations), appoint and terminate
14 an executive director and such other additional per-
15 sonnel as may be necessary to enable the Commis-
16 sion to perform its duties. The employment and ter-
17 mination of an executive director shall be subject to
18 confirmation by a majority of the members of the
19 Commission.

20 (2) COMPENSATION.—The executive director
21 shall be compensated at a rate not to exceed the rate
22 payable for a position at level V of the Executive
23 Schedule under section 5316 of title 5, United
24 States Code. The Chairperson may fix the com-
25 pensation of other personnel without regard to the

1 provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chap-
2 ter 53 of title 5, United States Code, relating to
3 classification of positions and General Schedule pay
4 rates, except that the rate of pay for such personnel
5 may not exceed the rate payable for a position at
6 level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316
7 of that title.

8 (3) DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—

9 Any Federal Government employee, with the ap-
10 proval of the head of the appropriate Federal agen-
11 cy, may be detailed to the Commission without reim-
12 bursement, and the detail shall be without interrup-
13 tion or loss of civil service status, benefits, or privi-
14 lege.

15 (d) PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY AND INTERMIT-
16 TENT SERVICES.—The Chairperson of the Commission
17 may procure temporary and intermittent services under
18 section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, at rates
19 for individuals not to exceed the daily equivalent of the
20 annual rate of basic pay prescribed for a position at level
21 V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of that
22 title.

1 **SEC. 7. FUNDING.**

2 (a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
3 are authorized to be appropriated to the Commission such
4 sums as are necessary to carry out this Act.

5 (b) DONATIONS.—The Commission may accept dona-
6 tions from non-Federal sources to defray the costs of the
7 operations of the Commission.

8 **SEC. 8. TERMINATION.**

9 The Commission shall terminate on the date that is
10 30 days after the date on which the Commission submits
11 to the Secretary of the Interior the report under section
12 4.

13 **SEC. 9. REPORTS TO CONGRESS.**

14 Not later 2 years and not later than 5 years after
15 the date on which the Commission submits to the Sec-
16 retary of the Interior the report under section 4, the Sec-
17 retary of the Interior shall submit to Congress a report
18 describing the actions that have been taken to preserve
19 the sites identified in the Commission report as being of
20 historical significance.

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