

U.S. Government Backs Bipartisan Effort for Women's History Museum on National Mall

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The U.S. government is backing a bipartisan congressional effort to establish the Smithsonian American Women's History Museum on the National Mall. Lawmakers from both parties have reintroduced legislation to secure a permanent site for the museum, building on Congress's 2020 authorization and reaffirming the federal government's role in the project.

Support for the American Women's History Museum is gathering across party lines. In March 2025, Congresswoman Nicole Malliotakis (Republican–New York) introduced legislation, joined by numerous Republicans and Democrats, including Representatives Judy Chu, Brian Fitzpatrick, Monica De La Cruz, Debbie Dingell, and Mike Carey, to allocate a designated site on the National Mall and facilitate a land transfer to the Smithsonian Institution. That bill now counts more than 90 bipartisan cosponsors and does not require new federal spending, relying instead on administrative land reassignment and oversight mechanisms.

Both the Democratic and Republican Women's Caucuses sent a joint letter in July urging full appropriations for the museum's construction. The letter emphasized the need to fill a significant gap in America's historical narrative by formally honoring women's contributions through a Smithsonian institution. Malliotakis, representing the Republican Women's Caucus, stressed that museums should remain politically neutral and reflect the broad achievements of American women, without ideological biases.

Republican voices like Representative Kat Cammack have reiterated that the museum should celebrate national heroes and represent women's accomplishments across sectors, from government and business to the arts and the military, while maintaining traditional values and resisting politicization. Democratic Caucus Chair Teresa Leger Fernandez, meanwhile, supports securing the funding now and addressing potential political influence later, affirming bipartisan trust in the Smithsonian's independence.

The museum's authorization dates back to December 2020, when Congress passed legislation as part of a major appropriations package,

establishing the Smithsonian American Women's History Museum and its companion institution, the National Museum of the American Latino. Since then, the Smithsonian's American Women's History Initiative has worked on planning, research, and public engagement in preparation for the museum.

In 2024 and early 2025, Malliotakis and her colleagues convened public events, including a Capitol breakfast featuring actress Lynda Carter, to build momentum and bipartisan support for the museum's construction and placement on the mall.

The current legislation aims to formalize the museum's location and oversight without burdening taxpayers, employing existing land and federal agencies to carry out the project efficiently. If enacted, the museum would occupy a prominent place among its peers on the mall and provide a long-overdue tribute to the women who helped shape the American story.