



May 19, 2025

The Honorable Sharon A. Ray  
Chair, Ohio House General Government Committee  
Ohio House of Representatives

Dear Chairwoman Ray,

I write to you today on behalf of Women In Government, a nonpartisan nonprofit foundation that empowers women state legislators nationwide. Led by a bipartisan, 14-member Board of Directors comprising current women state legislators from different states, Women In Government is the premier organization for female state lawmakers. Convening legislators and subject matter experts through in-person conferences, virtual events and networking events in state capitals, Women In Government provides women legislators with timely information about policy topics, opportunities to connect with colleagues across the country and across the aisle and access to stakeholder experts who can serve as a resource for state policymaking.

I appreciate the opportunity to express Women In Government's strong support for H.B. 244, an act to designate March as Women's History Month in the state of Ohio. While the U.S. Congress made this designation in 1987 and U.S. presidents have issued proclamations at the federal level for more than 30 years recognizing the month of March as Women's History Month, it is deeply meaningful for individual states to align with this practice.

While Women In Government recognizes and celebrates the work of women state legislators, our policy discussions frequently focus on issues of significance to women everywhere. Organized around the themes Access to Health Care, Resilient Communities and Strong Economies, our conferences and virtual events provide information that helps legislators address some of the most pressing challenges for their constituents and communities.

Many subject matter experts in a variety of fields and from a wide swath of backgrounds speak to women legislators' concerns, and many of these experts (but not all) are women themselves. Women In Government has featured the perspectives of female research scientists, nonprofit leaders, physicians, business owners, skilled workers, patient advocates, educators, caregivers and engineers. Including and valuing the contributions of women to policy discussions has helped influence and shape state legislation in all fifty states.

Women's History Month is an opportunity to connect the contributions of women to historical milestones and landmark achievements for the state of Ohio. It is important for the community at large to recognize and celebrate the historic work of women within Ohio. Additionally, it benefits Ohioans to learn and celebrate the many ways that Ohio women have impacted history for the nation and the world.



Within Ohio, women have shaped public policy for the state, serving as governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, attorney general, state treasurer, state auditor, member of Congress, judge, state legislator, mayor and city councilor. Buckeye state women have served as university presidents, professors and administrators, creating some of the nation's most successful higher education institutions. Ohio women have been business owners, plant managers and factory workers, contributing to Ohio's economy and strong reputation as an auto manufacturing state.

Ohio women have made their mark on the world. From the literal marksmanship of sharpshooter Annie Oakley to the pointed wit of humorist Erma Bombeck, women from the Buckeye state have made names for themselves and the state in their achievements. Actresses Doris Day, Dorothy Dandridge and Halle Berry entertained audiences the world over through blockbuster movies. Author Maya Angelou, political activist Gloria Steinham and news anchor Dorothy Fuldheim helped create the books, articles and news broadcasts that shaped their generations. Agnes Meyer Driscoll was one of the U.S. Navy's most important codebreakers during World War I and World War II. Katie Smith won two WNBA championships and three Olympic gold medals. All Ohioans deserve to know about and celebrate these achievements.

It is valuable to all Ohioans to learn the whole history of their state and the greater impact of their state on the larger world. Women are an important part of that story, and designating March as Women's History Month is an invitation to seek out and learn about the ways in which Ohio women have made – and continue to make – history. All Ohioan, young and adult, will see either themselves or their mothers, sisters, daughter, aunts, grandmothers, teachers, neighbors or church leaders in the stories of historic Ohio women.

As an organization that exists to empower women state legislators, it is an honor to speak on behalf of women more broadly and to urge this Committee's strong support of H.B. 244. Thank you for your contributions to political leadership and history.

Sincerely,

Meredith Martino  
Executive Director