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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 31, 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR JOHN MACY

For handling.



Marvin Watson

- * *National Organization for Women*
- * *Ireton, Miss Barbara*
- * *Clarenbach, Dr. Kathryn F.*
- * *Friedan, Betty*
- * *Hernandez, Aileen*
- * *Davis, Caroline*

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NOW

Full equality for women in truly equal partnership with men

National Organization for Women

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October 27, 1967

The President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

As officers of the National Organization for Women we are pleased to commend you on your new Executive Order extending to women the protection accorded by previous Executive Orders to other victims of discrimination. The 25 million working women of this country, especially those exemplified by the "new breed of women" in NOW, will be encouraged and inspired by your action.

As you know, NOW has campaigned vigorously for this approach. We emphasized that women neither wish nor require separate consideration apart from other victims of discrimination; rather, sex discrimination should be included under the same prohibitions and machinery currently used to combat discrimination based upon race, color, religion and national origin. We are grateful to you for endorsing this principle in your new Executive Order.

Although we are aware of your full and onerous work schedule, we hope you might be able to save us a few minutes for a visit some time before NOW's second annual National Conference which will be held in Washington November 17 to 19. There are several matters of vital concern to women which we would hope to discuss with you.

We were interested in the statistics quoted by Commissioner John W. Macy at the October 13 White House briefing. Commissioner Macy's figures stressed the startlingly low number of women in key policy-making jobs within the Federal government. For example, he cited only 41 women among the 2,300 government employees earning \$22,000 or more per year. We hope that your new Order strengthening prohibitions against sex discrimination within the Federal government -- as well as among Federal contractors and subcontractors -- will set in motion a serious effort to recruit and promote more women to key posts within your Administration.

The President of the United States

October 27, 1967

NOW is especially disturbed by the absence of women at policy-making levels in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the very agency mandated to combat sex discrimination and other forms of discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Surely there are many qualified women -- in lower-echelon jobs at the EEOC and elsewhere -- who would serve their country with distinction as EEOC officials.

We respectfully urge you to appoint at least one woman as EEOC Commissioner in the near future; no woman has held such a post since November 10, 1966. And we hope you will fill other senior EEOC vacancies, too, with capable women. It is essential, however, that such women be qualified for the office not only by ability and experience but also by commitment to the full mandate of Title VII. Then, and only then, will the EEOC be able to give optimum consideration to such vital pending matters as the airline stewardess case and the recommended revision of EEOC guidelines on segregated "Help Wanted-Male" and "Help Wanted-Female" advertisements. Then, and only then, can the EEOC fully convince American working women of its sincerity in handling complaints of discrimination based upon sex -- which now comprise more than 35 per cent of the EEOC case load.

If cases of job discrimination against Negroes were reviewed only by white persons at the EEOC, there would be a justifiable furor among Negro workers throughout the nation. Surely the current "men only" review of sex discrimination cases at high levels in the EEOC is equally distressing to women workers and women's organizations.

In addition to the paucity of women at the EEOC and other vital government agencies, there is also a need for more high-echelon women on your own staff in the White House -- especially in the crucial area of manpower and employment. You have employed capable women to advise you on The Woman As Consumer; we urge you to hire at least one additional White House advisor on The Working Woman. Such a voice has been seriously missing in White House counsels.

The President of the United States

October 27, 1967

We sincerely wish you well, Mr. President, in the difficult undertakings that lie ahead of you; and we pledge to you our support and assistance in informing the public of past and future efforts to eliminate discrimination against American women.

Respectfully,

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN

Kathryn F. Clarenbach

Dr. Kathryn F. Clarenbach
Chairman of the Board

Betty Friedan

Betty Friedan
President

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