

1914

Letter, 1914, Federal Suffrage Association to Dear Members and Friends

Federal Suffrage Association

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Federal Suffrage Association

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Washington, D. C.,

1914

DEAR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS:

The Federal Suffrage Association was formed in 1902, as the Federal Woman's Equality Association to continue the effort to obtain Federal Suffrage for women, which had been initiated by Mrs. Stanton, Miss Anthony, and others, ten years before. By change of name, March 25, 1914, it related itself to the former work of the Federal Suffrage Association of the United States.

BILLS IN CONGRESS.

As chairman of the Federal Suffrage Committee of the National Suffrage Association, Mrs. Clara Bewick Colby secured the introduction of bills to enable women to vote for members of the House of Representatives in 1892 and 1894, and hearings were given upon these bills.

Since 1902 this Association has had bills in each Congress. In 1904 hearings were given by the Senate Committee on Woman Suffrage, and by the House Committee on Election of President, Vice-President and Members of the House of Representatives. The latter gave a hearing on our bill in January, 1913. A sub-committee was ordered to prepare a report on it, but this failed through adjournment of Congress.

In this Congress the bill introduced by Hon. Burton L. French and Senator Shafroth includes the vote, for United States Senators. The House Committee gave a hearing on this March 24, 1914. Ten members of the Committee were present, and a favorable report is expected.

NATIONAL AMENDMENT WORK.

We have not, so far, in this Congress asked for a Senate hearing on the Federal Suffrage bill, as we wished to focus our efforts on the passage of Joint Resolution No. 1: Senator Chamberlain and Hon. Frank W. Mondell, at the request of our Association introduced this bill with such management that it became No. 1 in both Senate and House. On this measure the Federal Suffrage Association had a hearing before the Senate Committee April 21, 1913, and before the House Judiciary Committee, March 3, 1914.

During the past year several rallies have been held in the interest of Joint Resolution No. 1 including a Lawn Fete with all-day speaking to celebrate the favorable report of the Senate Committee.

A Committee of our Association secured at the Gettysburg Anniversary several thousand names to petitions for the passage of Joint Resolution No. 1, which, with many others, secured elsewhere, were presented to the Senate on February 6, 1914, by Senator George E. Chamberlain who had them given to 84 Senators according to the States from which they had come. This presentation and the Memorial from the Committee, Mrs. C. W. MacNaughton and Mrs. Anna Harmon, were printed in the *Record*.

STATE CAMPAIGNS.

This Association aided its Corresponding Secretary to speak in the campaigns of 1912 in Oregon, Kansas, and Wisconsin, and bore the full expense of one month's work in Michigan in 1913. It is now raising a fund to aid the five State campaigns now pending. Since it is expected there will be eight in all, the situation calls for every effort that can possibly contribute to success. Contributions for this fund are earnestly solicited.

ANNUAL MEETING.

A special session was held in the interest of the State campaigns March 23; March 24, the hearing and an evening reception to Rev. Olympia Brown; March 25, Members' meeting, officers were elected and Constitution adopted as here given.

A PERSONAL APPEAL.

With this showing of work accomplished we ask memberships, contributions and co-operation in this distinctive line of suffrage agitation. Our statement in the Constitution of the Association has good argument to back it. If told the courts have decided against us, you must be able to explain that the celebrated cases of women voting and the arguments and decisions in those cases were all based on the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments which do not concern our claim. Members will be supplied with hearings and other explanatory matter. Send memorials of organizations and meetings asking the Committee to make a favorable report on House Roll 9393.

While we must work along all lines until full Suffrage is secured for all women, this claim based on the Constitution adds dignity to our movement and lays upon men the responsibility not to give but to secure to women their inheritance of liberty according to the foundation principles of our Government.

CLARA BEWICK COLBY, *Corresponding Secretary*.

CONSTITUTION OF FEDERAL SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION

Women as citizens have the right to vote under the Constitution of the United States as originally adopted.

Congress has the power by direct Act to protect this right and bring it into activity as far as it relates to members of Congress.

This Association is named THE FEDERAL SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION.

Its objects are: To obtain such forms of suffrage as Congress can give; and to work for the general enfranchisement of women.

Membership is open to all persons. Fee, One dollar annually; sustaining membership, ten dollars annually; life membership, fifty dollars.

Elected Officers are: Honorary President, President, two Vice-Presidents, Corresponding Secretary, two Recording Secretaries, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and two Auditors. These form a Governing Board.

Officers appointed by the Governing Board: Honorary Vice-Presidents in Congress from the free States. An Advisory Council (no name shall be used without the persons consent).

Headquarters shall be in Washington where the annual meeting shall be held during session of Congress. Other meetings may be held by order of the Governing Board.

This Constitution may be amended by a majority vote at any annual meeting.