

CITY OF NEW BEDFORD

IN CITY COUNCIL

March 21, 2019

RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION AND CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH - MARCH 2019

WHEREAS, American women of every race, class and ethnic background have made historic contributions to the growth and strength of our Nation in countless recorded and unrecorded ways and have served as early leaders in the forefront of every major progressive social change movement in the United States; and

WHEREAS, American women have played and continue to play a critical economic, cultural and social role in every sphere of the life of the Nation by constituting a significant portion of the labor force working inside and outside of the home; and

WHEREAS, American women have played a unique role throughout the history of the Nation by providing the majority of the nation's volunteer labor force; American women were particularly important in the establishment of early charitable, philanthropic and cultural institutions in the United States; and

WHEREAS, American women have been leaders, not only in securing their own rights of suffrage and equal opportunity, but also in the abolitionist movement, the emancipation movement, the industrial labor movement, the civil rights movement and other movements, especially the peace movement, which created a more fair and just society for all; and

WHEREAS, When women sought to question inequalities in their own lives, they turned to history to understand that if a woman's role could be socially constructed within a specific historical context, rather than natural and universal, then women could argue that it was open to change; and

WHEREAS, Women's history is now far more embedded in the curriculum of higher education than half a century ago, the number of professors in women's history has increased and it remains important to promote research into women's history, both inside academia and in the wider community; and

WHEREAS, It is also important to educate our children about the place of women in history, it wasn't all that long ago that school history textbooks made almost no mention of women's contributions, things have changed in recent years, but not as significantly as they could have changed, *History of Art*, considered the gold standard of art history books, contains only 15 female artists in its 800 pages, according to an article in Artsy, and in Texas, the State Board of Education voted to eliminate Helen Keller and Hillary Clinton from history textbooks in the interest of saving time and memorization, reported *Dallas News*, while keeping Billy Graham and local members of the Texas Legislature in the texts; and

WHEREAS, Founded in 1980, the National Women's History Project is a non-profit educational organization committed to recognizing and celebrating the diverse and significant historical accomplishments of women by providing information and educational materials and programs and led the drive to write women back into history by recognizing the achievements of women in all facets of life; and

WHEREAS, As the National Women's History Museum explained, the month of March has been declared National Women's History Month by each President since 1995, and by Congress since 1987, prior to that, it was merely a National Women's History Week, established by former President Jimmy Carter in 1980, as a result of a lobbying effort by the National Women's History Project; and

WHEREAS, The National Women's History Month 2019 Theme is "*Visionary Women: Champions of Peace and Nonviolence*", as the National Women's History Alliance website explained, "This year we honor women who have led efforts to end war, violence, and injustice and pioneered the use of nonviolence to change society," in keeping with their tradition, the Alliance has selected 15 living and deceased honorees this year, who will be acknowledged at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., on March 30, 2019, the women include Graciela Sanchez, co-founder of the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center; Deborah Tucker, president of the Board of Directors of the National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence; Dr. E. Faye Williams, human rights activist and President/CEO of the National Congress of Black Women; Sarah Brady, the late gun control activist and champion of the Brady Bill and Peace Pilgrim, who logged thousands of miles in her cross-country marches for peace before her death in 1981; and

WHEREAS, Despite these contributions, the role of American women in history has been consistently overlooked and undervalued, in the literature, teaching and study of American History:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the New Bedford City Council hereby recognizes March as **NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH**, thanks all the women locally and nationally who have made a mark on our City, State and Country's culture, government and society.