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## FIRST AND SECOND LADIES WHO TESTIFIED BEFORE CONGRESS WHILE IN OFFICE

[Abstract: As the title states, this report documents First and Second Ladies who testified before Congress while in office. It is arranged in reverse-chronological order, from Tipper Gore to Eleanor Roosevelt. An additional list follows that documents any notable relationship with Congress of First and Second Ladies' who did not testify. A chart for quick reference is also attached.]

### MARY ELIZABETH "TIPPER" GORE (1993 - present)

#### Testimony as Second Lady<sup>1</sup>

- April 29, 1993 on behalf of mental health care before the House Mental Health Working Group (with WH working group on mental health).
- May 13, 1993 on behalf of mental health care before Sen. Kennedy's Labor and Human Resources Committee.
- July 15, 1993 on behalf of mental health and the aging before Sen. Pryor's Special Committee on the Aging. MEG's remarks were part of a background briefing, not on behalf of specific legislation.

#### Testimony before Second Lady

- September 28, 1985 on behalf of record labeling with the Parents Music Resource Center (PMRC) before Sen. Danforth's Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee.<sup>2</sup>
- December 15, 1986 on behalf of the homeless mentally ill before Rep. Waxman's House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee. The hearing was background for legislation regarding "crisis assistance" for the homeless.<sup>3</sup>

### MARILYN TUCKER QUAYLE (1989 - 1993)

#### Testimony as Second Lady

- April 23, 1990 at a hearing on HR 4222, the "Breast and Cervical Cancer Mortality Act of 1990" before Rep. Waxman's House Subcommittee on Health and the

Environment. The purpose of Quayle's testimony was to urge women to have mammograms; she did not take a position on the bill.<sup>4</sup>

- **May 15, 1990** on behalf of women's health before the Health and Long-Term Subcommittee of the House Select-Aging Committee.<sup>5</sup>

### Result

HR 2224 was signed into law in 1990, and was part of the Women's Health Equity Act of 1990 sponsored by Rep. Waxman and Sen. Mikulski. The law establishes a program through the Centers for Disease Control to provide grants to states to provide mammograms and pap smears to low income women without health coverage. Current funding levels of \$71-2 million allow 12 states to provide a comprehensive program, and 18 states to be in a "capacity building" stage. To provide comprehensive programs to all 50 states, \$200 million is needed. President Clinton has requested a funding increase to \$85 million. The bill was for a three year program, and has been reauthorized by the House and is pending final passage in the Senate labor committee.<sup>6</sup>

## **ROSALYNN CARTER (1977 - 1981)**

### Testimony as First Lady

- **July 19, 1977** before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to brief Members on her trip to South America.<sup>7</sup>
- **February 7, 1979** on behalf of the "Mental Health Systems Act," President Carter's proposal to improve mental health care services, before Sen. Kennedy's Human Resources Committee, Subcommittee on Health and Scientific Research.<sup>8</sup>
- **April 30, 1979** on behalf of solar and advanced technology before the Subcommittee on Energy Development and Applications and the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Subcommittee on Energy Conservation and Supply.<sup>9</sup>

### Testimony after First Lady

- **March 2, 1988** on behalf of "Mental Health and Aging."<sup>10</sup>
- **May 16, 1991** on behalf of "Community Mental Health Services."<sup>11</sup>
- **May 14-16, or 21, 1991** on behalf of "Departments of Labor, Health, and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations for 1992."<sup>12</sup>

## Timeline of President Carter's Commission on Mental Health

- **2/ 17/ 77** - President Carter creates President's Commission on Mental Health, names RC Honorary Chair.<sup>13</sup>

- Though RC was 'honorary chair,' "there was never any question that Mrs. Carter intended to be intimately involved in the work of the commission." The Commission held public hearings, which RC attended, interviewed hundreds of people, and spent almost a year amassing data.<sup>14</sup>

- **4/ 21/ 77** - First official meeting of Presidential Commission on Mental Health. RC addresses meeting in Chicago; says recommendations are due in one year.<sup>15</sup>

- **5/ 24/ 77** - First public hearing of Presidential Commission on Mental Health. RC presides at hearing in PA.<sup>16</sup>

- **9/ 15/ 77** - Presidential Commission on Mental Health produces report; RC, Honorary Chair, and Dr. Thomas E. Bryant, Chair, discuss report with President Carter.<sup>17</sup>

- **2/ 7/ 79** - RC testifies before Congress on behalf of President's Commission on Mental Health to present Commission's report and recommendations.<sup>18</sup>

- Her testimony was widely cited as the first congressional appearance by a First Lady since Eleanor Roosevelt.<sup>19</sup>

- RC "helped develop the bill and was its chief lobbyist."<sup>20</sup>

- Photo<sup>21</sup>

- **4/ 27/ 79** - The Commission presents its recommendations to the President.<sup>22</sup>

- On that day, RC made appearances on "Good Morning America" and the "McNeil-Lehrer Report" to discuss the recommendations.<sup>23</sup>

- **5/ 15/ 79** - President Announces Proposal.<sup>24</sup>

- "Both [Sen.] Kennedy and [Rep.] Waxman praised first lady Rosalynn Carter, at her husband's side as the proposal was announced Tuesday, for her efforts in promoting mental health care advances. She is expected to be the administration's chief lobbyist on Capitol Hill for the measure."<sup>25</sup>

- **10/ 7/ 80** - President signs Mental Health Systems Act into law.<sup>26</sup>

## Result

President Carter signed the Mental Health Systems Act into law on 10/7/80 after its passage in the House and Senate. President Carter gave the pen with which he had signed the Act to RC, who stood behind him during the ceremony. (AP, 10/8/80) President Reagan repealed the Act in 1981 in his quest to trim the Federal budget. Federal funds for three programs under the Act were combined into one block grant given to states with broad discretion.<sup>27</sup>

## **JOAN MONDALE (1977 - 1981)<sup>28</sup>**

### Testimony as Second Lady

- Mondale served as Honorary Chair of the Federal Council of the Arts.
- **September 25, 1979** on behalf of "The General Service Administration's Art-in-Architecture Program" before the House Committee Post Office and Civil Service Committee, Subcommittee on Civil Service and General Service.
- **February 7, 1980** on behalf of "Arts and the Older American" before the House Select Committee on Aging.
- **March 3, 1980** on behalf of "Field Hearings on the Reauthorization of the National Foundation for the Arts and the Humanities Act and the Museum Services Act" before the House Education and Labor Committee, Subcommittee on Post-Secondary Education.
- **June 26, 1980** on behalf of the "Arts, Humanities, and Museums Act of 1979," before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, Subcommittee on Education, Arts and the Humanities.

### Testimony after Second Lady

- **April 3, 1984** on behalf of the "Federal Pay Equity Act of 1984" before the House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, Subcommittee on Compensation and Employee Benefits.

## **ELEANOR ROOSEVELT (1933 - 1945)**

### Testimony as First Lady<sup>29</sup>

- Eleanor Roosevelt was the first First Lady to testify before Congress.<sup>30</sup>

- **December 10, 1940** on behalf of "Interstate Migration" before the House Select Committee to Investigate Interstate Migration of Destitute Citizens.<sup>31</sup>

- **January 14, 1942** on behalf of "National Defense Migration: Relating to the Maintenance of Civilian Morale" before the House Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration.<sup>32</sup>

Testimony after First Lady<sup>33</sup>

- **April 22, 1955** on behalf of a "Review of the United Nations Charter" before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on the United Nations Charter.<sup>34</sup>

- **February 24, 1956** on behalf of "International Organizations and Movements" before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on International Organization and Movements.<sup>35</sup>

- **May 14, 1959** on behalf of "Amending the Fair Labor Standards Act" before the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, Subcommittee on Labor.<sup>36</sup>

- **Dec. 7, 1959** on behalf of "Migratory Labor" before the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, Subcommittee on Migratory Labor.<sup>37</sup>

- **April 27, 1962** on behalf of "Equal Pay for Equal Work" before the House Committee on Education and Labor, Select Subcommittee on Labor.<sup>38</sup>

- **April 18, 1962** on behalf of "Prices of Hearing Aids" before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Antitrust and Monopoly.<sup>39</sup>

- **Date Unknown:** on behalf of the wretched conditions of nursing homes in the nation's capital before the District of Columbia Committee.<sup>40</sup>

## **FIRST AND SECOND LADIES WHO DID NOT TESTIFY BEFORE CONGRESS**

**NANCY REAGAN (1981 - 1989)**

**BARBARA BUSH (1989 - 1993)**

**BETTY FORD (1974 - 1977)<sup>41</sup>**

- **March 25, 1991** on behalf of including alcohol addiction in the "War on Drugs" before House Subcommittee.<sup>42</sup>
- As First Lady, lobbied individual states on behalf of ERA, but did not testify before Congress on its behalf.<sup>43</sup>

**PATRICIA NIXON (1969 - 1974)**

**LADY BIRD JOHNSON (1965 - 1969)<sup>44</sup>**

Lady Bird did not testify before Congress, though she "lobbied behind the scenes" for passage of the Highway Beautification Act, including personally calling swing votes in Congress.<sup>45</sup>

As Congress was about to recess without its passage, President Johnson told members of his Cabinet and Congress that he loved his wife, that she wanted the bill passed, and that he intended that she and the country should have it.<sup>46</sup> The President then hosted a party for all of Congress, but told Members that they needn't come until they passed the bill; wives in party dresses sat waiting in the House's family gallery until 12:51 am, when the bill finally passed.<sup>47</sup>

**JAQUELINE KENNEDY (1961 - 1963)<sup>48</sup>**

**MAIME EISENHOWER (1953 - 1961)**

**BESS TRUMAN (1949 - 1953)**

**ELLEN WILSON (1913-1921)**

Ellen Wilson focused on public housing issues, assuming the post as Honorary Chair of the National Civic Federation, which drafted the Slum Clearance Act of 1913, a law to renovate or demolish Washington's slum dwellings. She lobbied members of Congress on its behalf, but did not testify before Congress.<sup>49</sup>

1. Skila Harris, Chief of Staff to Mrs. Gore, and Aracelli Ruano, Office of the Second Lady
2. *New York Times*, 9/29/85
3. *Los Angeles Times*, 12/16/86
4. *Washington Post*, 4/24/90
5. UPI, 5/16/90
6. Susan Wood, Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, 8/93
7. *New York Times*, July 20, 1977
8. Jim Herring, Carter Library, 8/18/93
9. *CIS Annual Abstracts of Congressional Publications and Legislative Histories*, 1979
10. *CIS Annual Abstracts of Congressional Publications and Legislative Histories*, 1988
11. *CIS Annual Abstracts of Congressional Publications and Legislative Histories*, 1991
12. *CIS Annual Abstracts of Congressional Publications and Legislative Histories*, 1991
13. Fact Sheet, Office of the First Lady's Press Secretary, 4/19/77
14. Myra Greenberg Gutin, *The President's Partner*, 1983
15. *New York Times*, 4/22/77
16. *New York Times*, 5/25/77
17. *New York Times*, 9/16/77
18. *New York Times*, 2/8/79
19. *Chicago Tribune*, 2/7/90; Betty Boyd Caroli, *First Ladies*, 1987; Lewis Gould, "Modern First Ladies in Historical Perspective," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Summer 1985; others.
20. AP, 10/7/80
21. *New York Times*, 2/8/79 (story, p.1)
22. Gutin, 1983
23. Gutin, 1983



24.AP, 5/16/79

25.AP, 5/16/79

26.*New York Times*, 10/8/80

27.*New York Times*, 10/15/81

28.CIS *U.S. Congressional Committee Hearings Index* and Goody Marshall, Director of Vice President Gore's Senate Office

29.CIS *U.S. Congressional Committee Hearings Index, Part IV*, and Goody Marshall

30.Gutin, 1983; Caroli, 1987

31.*New York Times*, 12/11/40

32.*New York Times*, 1/15/42

33.CIS *U.S. Congressional Committee Hearings Index*

34.U.S. Congress, Committee Hearings, 84th Congress, Vol. 1137, 1955

35.U.S. Congress, Committee Hearings, 84th Congress, Vol. 1561, 1956

36.U.S. Congress, Committee Hearings, 86th Congress, Vol. 1330, 1959

37.U.S. Congress, Committee Hearings, 86th Congress, Vol. 1434, 1959

38.U.S. Congress, Committee Hearings, 87th Congress, Vol. 1935, 1962

39.U.S. Congress, Committee Hearings, 87th Congress, Vol. 1491, 1962

40.*New York Times*, 2/5/93. [NOTE: We were reluctant to pursue this information after an archivist violated our confidentiality in obtaining it. If this is not a problem, we will be happy to continue.]

41.Gerald R. Ford Library

42.*New York Times*, 3/26/91

43.Gerald R. Ford Library, 8/18/93

44.Lyndon B. Johnson Library

45.Gould, 1985

46.*Washington Post*, 6/18/93



**47.***Washington Post*, 4/29/88

**48.**John F. Kennedy Library

**49.***New York Times*, 8/10/88

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**FIRST AND SECOND LADIES WHO TESTIFIED BEFORE CONGRESS  
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| FIRST LADY            | DATE             | SUBJECT                                                   | COMMITTEE                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tipper Gore           | April 29, 1993   | Mental Health                                             | House Mental Health Working Group                                                                                                                     |
| Tipper Gore           | May 13, 1993     | Mental Health Care                                        | Senate Labor and Human Resources                                                                                                                      |
| Tipper Gore           | July 15, 1993    | Mental Health and Aging                                   | Senate Special Committee on Aging                                                                                                                     |
| Marilyn Tucker Quayle | April 23, 1990   | HR 4222, Breast and Cervical Cancer Mortality Act of 1990 | House Subcommittee on Health and the Environment                                                                                                      |
| Marilyn Tucker Quayle | May 15, 1990     | Women's Health                                            | Health and Long-Term Subcommittee of the House Select-Aging Committee                                                                                 |
| Rosalynn Carter       | July 19, 1977    | South America trip                                        | Senate Foreign Relations Committee                                                                                                                    |
| Rosalynn Carter       | February 7, 1979 | "Mental Health Systems Act"                               | Senate Human Resources Committee                                                                                                                      |
| Rosalynn Carter       | April 30, 1979   | Solar and Advanced Technology                             | Subcommittee on Energy Development and Applications and Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Subcommittee on Energy Conservation and Supply |

|                   |                    |                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                             |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Joan Mondale      | September 25, 1979 | "General Service Administration's Art in Architecture Program"                                                                     | House Committee Post Office and Civil Service Committee, Subcommittee on Civil Service and General Services |
| Joan Mondale      | February 7, 1980   | "Arts and the Older American"                                                                                                      | House Select Committee on Aging                                                                             |
| Joan Mondale      | March 3, 1980      | "Field Hearings on the Reauthorization of the National Foundation for the Arts and the Humanities Act and the Museum Services Act" | House Education and Labor Committee, Subcommittee on Post-Secondary Education                               |
| Joan Mondale      | June 26, 1980      | "Arts, Humanities, and Museums Act on 1979"                                                                                        | Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and the Humanities          |
| Eleanor Roosevelt | December 10, 1940  | "Interstate Migration"                                                                                                             | House Select Committee to Investigate Interstate Migration of Destitute Citizens                            |
| Eleanor Roosevelt | January 14, 1942   | "National Defense Migration: Relating to the Maintenance of Civilian Morale"                                                       | House Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration                                             |

Report and Chart prepared by: Amy Nemko, Kim Tilley (WH Communications Research)  
Date: August 31, 1993



It is especially important to explain how Republicans are redistributing government benefits to special rich interests.

Analyze each spending cut and challenge those who propose them to explain whether they affect their constituency. For example, what is Gingrich proposing that would cut benefits to his district; Kasich; etc.

Demand the line item veto before they propose budget so President can protect middle class and defund pork for special interests.

The Budget must be a political statement so it should include everything we think we'll keep the middle class so if the Congress does not deliver we can say they have taken something away the President wanted to do.

The reason all this is so important is because the middle class, which built America is not preordained; each generation has to build and protect it. For example, Lincoln promoted the building of railroads, land grant colleges, Homestead Act, ideas which had been around for years but blocked by Southern/conservative Congressmen and only passed after the Southerners left Congress.

This is déjà vu with respect to historic cycles. The Southerners are back in charge (look at Republican leadership - all but Gregg (who is a Newtman) and Dole) and just as in previous periods, they will promote the interests of the rich and hand out favors where everybody sells out to interests.

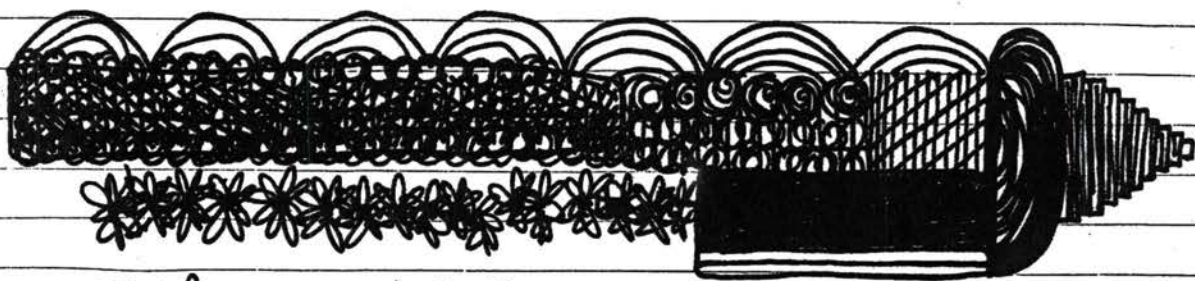
Try to blow up differences between House and Senate Republicans, especially with regard to spending cuts and particular issues, like food stamps where Dole and McGovern cosponsored.

The President needs to be the leader of the nation, not the government.

Tell everyone to remember that specificity is not our friend but our weapon against the Republicans. We should stay above the fray on the level of principles, using the bully pulpit and avoid the Fallacy of Misplaced Concreteness which hurt us so much.

Finally, ignore the elite media and pander to the middle class no matter what they say. Most people in the middle class believe somebody always benefits from the national government's self dealing but not them. So perception and reality are on the President's side when he promotes the Middle Class Bill of Rights.





The President is building a new middle class especially for people without college degrees. The Republicans say they have a contract with America, but when you read the fine print it's Republican politics as usual which is to favor and take care of the rich and special interests.

The President believes, as he said in his speech, everything Congress does should be judged by whether or not it helps build the new middle class.

That's why it's so important we know who influences Newt Gingrich and the Republican majority.

Demand that Gingrich open the books on GOPAC. Who are his secret contributors? What has he promised them? Who really owns the 104th Congress? Is there a For Sale sign on the Congress?

See if it is possible to obtain any memos or other evidence of connections between the right wing millionaires who support Gingrich and what they want from Congress. The Mendo Jr connection is obvious and ABC should be interested in promoting it. There are many others. Talk to lawyers in DC who are being hired to deliver the new breaks and benefits wanted by the right wing.

Also demand and have OMB produce impact statements of every Republican proposal. Monitor each committee so we can explain whether what Republicans propose is helping to build new middle class, neutral (if possible) or undermining. The President/Admin. Can then say he will not permit the mindless destruction of the middle class which includes protecting the infrastructure that supports the middle class. Republicans nationalized election; denationalize spending cuts both with respect to effects on groups and location.