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VISCLOSKY CELEBRATES WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. Speaker: It is with great admiration that I rise today to honor Women's History Month and its 2012 theme: *Women's Education and Empowerment*. Recently, President Barack Obama once again called upon Americans to observe Women's History Month and to celebrate the many contributions and accomplishments of American women throughout our nation's history. During this month, we are also reminded of the many struggles women have faced in search of equality.

The remarkable dedication and strength of influential women from not only the United States but from around the world has shaped today's current state of freedom and equality for every woman. They have played an irreplaceable role in changing our country for the better. In our nation's history, we have fine examples of courageous women who, in the face of tremendous opposition, have paved the way to success, freedom, and equality. We are reminded of women like Elizabeth Cady Stanton, a leading figure in the Women's Rights Movement, Susan B. Anthony, the great leader who helped introduce women's suffrage in the United States, and Sojourner Truth, the women's rights activist and abolitionist who would not be silenced because of her race or gender. These exceptional women paved the way for great leaders such as Jeanette Rankin, the peaceful Montana native who would become the first woman to serve in the United States Congress, and Sandra Day O'Connor, the first female Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

These pioneering figures, as well as many other brave women throughout the United States and beyond, have brought to light the struggle for human rights. Throughout history in America, women have faced enormous obstacles with regard to educational opportunities. Although it was once an unimaginable statistic, in American colleges and universities today, women outnumber men in overall enrollment. Reflecting upon the 2012 Women's History Month theme, *Women's Education and Empowerment*, it is fitting that we pay tribute to all of the great leaders in the movement to ensure that the opportunity to learn is an opportunity for all. If these individuals had not stood up for what is right, many of the great advances brought about by women in the fields of medicine, business, law, and science, to name a few, would never have become realities. Today, thanks to the outstanding examples that have been set for them in the past, many proud women are empowered to continue their fight.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to join in celebrating Women's History Month and to recognize the tremendous contributions women have made to improve the lives of generations to follow. In search of equality, these brave women have carried on to create an influential legacy unlike any other. I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in remembering the countless women that have persevered and those who continue to do so today. They are worthy of the highest praise. We will continue to move forward in our nation and our world due to their dreams of, and struggles for, equality and freedom for women everywhere.