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## Analyzing Roles of Eleanor Roosevelt, Nancy Pelosi, and Ivanka Trump in U.S. Politics

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# Analyzing Roles of Eleanor Roosevelt, Nancy Pelosi, and Ivanka Trump in U.S. Politics

*Kishor Dere\**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

This Article is a modest attempt to understand the contributions of Eleanor Roosevelt, Nancy Pelosi, and Ivanka Trump to United States politics. It is an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of women in politics and introspect on what needs to be done to ensure greater participation of women in politics. A lot has already been said and written in popular literature and scholarly work about the accomplishments of women in politics. Readers should note that this Article is not intended to be a complete comparative analysis of the roles of Eleanor Roosevelt, Nancy Pelosi, and Ivanka Trump in U.S. politics. Rather, it intends to highlight the stories and success of three unique women operating within the realm of U.S. politics. Their political experiences represent how women have successfully exercised political influence through socio-political positions, elected positions, and appointed positions. Comparison of all three women is complicated by virtue of the fact that each one hails from a different era of U.S. politics (although Nancy Pelosi and Ivanka Trump are both still active politically) and occupies or occupied different positions. Each one of them played or continues to play a unique role in the U.S. government as a result of the novel way they approached their positions and the circumstances of their times.

## II. ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

Eleanor Roosevelt (“ER”) (October 11, 1884 to November 7, 1962) was the First Lady of the United States from March 4, 1933 to April 12, 1945.<sup>1</sup> ER is famous not merely as the First Lady, but also as a woman who before, during, and after her stay in the White House played a multifaceted role as an activist, author, lecturer, and public speaker.<sup>2</sup> In order to understand ER’s contribution to U.S. politics, it may be useful to familiarize oneself with her background, her personal life, and her experiences in politics.

Subsection A below will undergo an effort to demonstrate how ER’s background laid the groundwork for her political contribution. ER “shattered the ceremonial mold in which the

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<sup>1</sup> *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, NAT’L FIRST LADIES’ LIBR., <http://www.firstladies.org/biographies/firstladies.aspx?biography=33> [http://perma.cc/XG67-BP6T] (last visited Mar. 2, 2020); see also *Eleanor Roosevelt Biography (1884–1962)*, BIOGRAPHY, <http://www.biography.com/us-first-lady/eleanor-roosevelt> [http://perma.cc/PLE8-Z6FL] (last updated Mar. 2, 2020).

<sup>2</sup> *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1; see also GARE THOMPSON, WHO WAS ELEANOR ROOSEVELT? 2 (2004); STEPHEN DRURY SMITH, THE FIRST LADY OF RADIO 10 (2014).

role of the first lady had traditionally been fashioned” by reshaping it around her life experiences, skills, and dynamic vision.<sup>3</sup> ER’s name had become synonymous with autonomy.<sup>4</sup> At the age of nineteen, while serving as a volunteer, ER had inspected sweatshops in New York for the National Consumers League.<sup>5</sup> This experience exposed her to the difficult conditions immigrant families were living in and the health risks faced by the children in those families, who worked with their parents.<sup>6</sup> ER was ahead of her times and enjoyed having discussions with older people about politics or philosophy, but she was ill at ease having casual conversation with people her own age.<sup>7</sup> At a time where her husband was focused on World War II, ER’s agenda was focused on the best interests of American society on the home front.<sup>8</sup> ER told the Democratic Convention of 1940, “[t]his is no ordinary time, and no time for weighing anything except what we can best do for the country as a whole.”<sup>9</sup> She was inspired and guided by this noble conviction.<sup>10</sup> Relying on this conviction, ER and her husband accomplished unprecedented achievements in spite of difficult obstacles faced by the nation at the time.<sup>11</sup> It is noteworthy that ER’s political exposure and interest occurred prior to her involvement in her husband’s political life. This distinction reflects the power and strength behind ER’s role and contribution to U.S. politics.

Before becoming the First Lady of the U.S., she was the First Lady of New York from 1929 to 1933.<sup>12</sup> Subsection B below analyzes how ER’s position as the First Lady of New York further defined her socio-political persona. During her time as the New York Governor’s wife, ER remained socially and politically active. She used her broader platform as the First Lady of New York to go beyond politics and reform movements; she specifically advocated for the entry of more women in new roles in society.<sup>13</sup>

Subsection C demonstrates how ER, by melding her interests and past experiences with the public role of First Lady, was highly active in U.S. policy. Since her husband, President

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3 See DORIS KEARNS GOODWIN, *NO ORDINARY TIME* 10 (1994).

4 PATRICIA BELL-SCOTT, *THE FIREBRAND AND THE FIRST LADY* 357 (2016).

5 *Id.* at 5.

6 *Id.*

7 GOODWIN, *supra* note 3, at 374.

8 *Id.* at 10.

9 *Id.* at 11.

10 *Id.*

11 *Id.*

12 *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1.

13 *Id.*

Franklin D. Roosevelt (“FDR”), was affected by polio, ER worked closely with him and his staff on policy-related issues.<sup>14</sup> She was active amidst the devastation caused by the Great Depression across American society.<sup>15</sup> Her unique background in progressive advocacy policy, media, education, and women’s issues enabled her to establish a distinct agenda and call upon professional contacts.<sup>16</sup>

As the First Lady, ER visited veterans, held press conferences in the White House for female reporters, kept working in mass media and communications, was a monthly magazine columnist, ran radio shows, took an active interest in newsreels and movies, had the largest ever public correspondence, and dominated popular culture.<sup>17</sup> ER was deeply involved in both the New Deal and the fight for racial and gender equality, justice, dignity, labor rights, civil rights, human rights, and democracy, among several others.<sup>18</sup> She opposed Fascism, Nazism, and Communism, promoted peace, supported international institutions like the United Nations, sympathized with Israel, and visited several foreign countries.<sup>19</sup> ER served as the First Lady for the longest period ever: twelve years, one month, one week and one day.<sup>20</sup> During this period, the U.S. witnessed two national traumas: the Great Depression and World War II.<sup>21</sup>

Finally, subsection D concludes by articulating how ER’s impact did not halt when she left the role of First Lady of the U.S., but how it was really a culmination of her lifetime of experiences.

#### A. Impact of Privileged Ancestry, Broken Childhood, and a Good Teacher

ER had a privileged and influential ancestry. Her childhood experiences contributed to the formation of her political and social beliefs and were the foundation of her drive and ambitions. ER was the daughter of Elliott Roosevelt and Anna Rebecca Hall.<sup>22</sup> She was the niece of the 26th President of the U.S.

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<sup>14</sup> *Id.*

<sup>15</sup> *Id.*; see also *Eleanor Roosevelt*, HISTORY, <http://www.history.com/topics/first-ladies/eleanor-roosevelt> [<http://perma.cc/5H52-R5KW>] (last updated Mar. 25, 2020).

<sup>16</sup> *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1.

<sup>17</sup> *Id.*

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*; see also *Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 15.

<sup>19</sup> *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1.

<sup>20</sup> *Id.*

<sup>21</sup> *Id.*

<sup>22</sup> *Id.*; *Eleanor Roosevelt Biography*, FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT PRESIDENTIAL LIBR. & MUSEUM, <http://www.fdrlibrary.org/er-biography> [<http://perma.cc/7GQB-RLNB>] (last visited Mar. 30, 2020).

Theodore Roosevelt.<sup>23</sup> ER had one of the closest blood connections to a President, besides her husband FDR. ER's maternal grandmother, Mary Livingston Ludlow (1843 to 1919), was the great-granddaughter of Robert R. Livingston, chancellor of New York.<sup>24</sup> Robert R. Livingston had administered the presidential oath of office to founding father and first President, George Washington in 1789 and served on the Second Continental Congress committee that helped draft the Declaration of Independence.<sup>25</sup> He, however, did not sign the document because it would have harmed some of his commercial interests. ER's paternal grandfather, Theodore Roosevelt Sr. (1831 to 1878), was a leading philanthropist in New York.<sup>26</sup> He supported the establishment of the New York Orthopedic Hospital.<sup>27</sup> He also funded the set-up of the American Museum of Natural History, provided that the museum would be kept open seven days a week to ensure that working-class people—who worked six days a week—could access it.<sup>28</sup> He was also a member of the fundraising committee that paid for the stone pedestal of the iconic Statue of Liberty.<sup>29</sup> ER's politically active family tree helped to expose her to politics at a time when women were not necessarily on the front lines of politics.

Despite these extensive family connections, ER's immediate family structure endured multiple hardships that shaped her experiences as a young girl. ER's father suffered from alcoholism and a narcotic addiction.<sup>30</sup> His addictions were thought to be a result of “nervous sickness,” or epilepsy.<sup>31</sup> ER's childhood was emotionally challenging. Within a span of two years, ER's sense of family was devastated. She lost her mother at the age of eight, her four-year-old brother the following year, and her father when she was ten.<sup>32</sup> ER had been orphaned. She and her surviving

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<sup>23</sup> *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1; see also *Eleanor Roosevelt Biography*, *supra* note 22.

<sup>24</sup> *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1.

<sup>25</sup> See *id.*; Robert Livingston, REVOLUTIONARY WAR (Feb. 15, 2020), <http://revolutionary-war.net/robert-livingston/> [<http://perma.cc/U2J5-3CBY>].

<sup>26</sup> *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1; see also Theodore Roosevelt, Sr., NAT'L PARK SERVICE, <http://www.nps.gov/thrb/learn/historyculture/theodorerooseveltsr.htm> [<http://perma.cc/EYZ6-8C5L>] (last updated Aug. 14, 2019).

<sup>27</sup> *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1; see also Theodore Roosevelt, Sr., *supra* note 26.

<sup>28</sup> *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1; see also Theodore Roosevelt, Sr., *supra* note 26.

<sup>29</sup> *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1.

<sup>30</sup> Stacy A. Cordery, *Roosevelt, Elliot*, in THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT ENCYCLOPEDIA 446–47 (Maurine H. Beasley et al. eds., 2001); *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1.

<sup>31</sup> Cordery, *supra* note 30.

<sup>32</sup> *Id.* at 86; see also *Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 15.

sibling, second brother Gracie Hall, became the ward of her maternal grandmother, who lived in the Hudson River Valley.<sup>33</sup>

Nonetheless, ER was blessed to have a teacher like Marie Souvestre who influenced her educational and emotional development.<sup>34</sup> Souvestre taught ER dance, painting, music, composition, drawing, as well as German, French, Italian, and English literature.<sup>35</sup> Souvestre privately directed ER's pursuit of history, geography, and philosophy, as the school did not offer classes in these subjects.<sup>36</sup> Souvestre also took ER as a fellow traveler through France and Italy during school holidays. This exposed the young pupil to new worlds, including low-income areas of the working-class, which were far away and much different from the standard tourist attractions.<sup>37</sup> These experiences were very distinct from her upbringing as a member of a politically prominent family. Moreover, Souvestre was known for questioning the political status quo and working to safeguard the rights of the working-class.<sup>38</sup> Souvestre's bold and compassionate approach molded ER's outlook and motivated her to pursue activism. ER recalled her three years at Allenswood Academy in London, which was run by Souvestre, as the "happiest years" of her life.<sup>39</sup> However, ER's big regret was that she never received a college education.<sup>40</sup> The experiences she received through her childhood, and as a result of her invaluable teacher, dictated how she chose to tackle life moving forward.

### 1. ER Joins Social Reform Movement Rather than Making a Social Debut

In deference to the wishes of her grandmother, ER returned from the UK to the U.S. a year early.<sup>41</sup> However, instead of making her social debut, ER chose to participate in the social reform movement of the Progressive Era. She was inspired by the example of the reform-oriented incumbent of the White House, her uncle, President Theodore Roosevelt.<sup>42</sup> This led her to meet with people of different socio-economic classes and learn about their problems. Through these interactions, she learned the

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<sup>33</sup> See J. William T. Youngs, *Childhood*, in THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT ENCYCLOPEDIA, *supra* note 30, at 83, 85–86.

<sup>34</sup> See Russell Freedman, *Souvestre Marie*, in THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT ENCYCLOPEDIA, *supra* note 30, at 488–90.

<sup>35</sup> See *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1.

<sup>36</sup> *Id.*

<sup>37</sup> *Id.*

<sup>38</sup> *Id.*

<sup>39</sup> *Id.*; see also GOODWIN, *supra* note 3, at 60.

<sup>40</sup> *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1.

<sup>41</sup> See *id.*; see also Freedman, *supra* note 34, at 490.

<sup>42</sup> *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1.

strength of organized political reform and the process required to lawfully implement fair labor practices.<sup>43</sup>

## B. Politically Active First Lady of New York

In 1928, ER's position in politics took on a different shape, as she became the First Lady of New York through her husband's election as governor. Although ER now played a new role as governor's wife, she did not let this role supersede her political activity. As First Lady of a state, ER sought to avoid as many potential conflicts of interest as possible.<sup>44</sup> "She continued her own private enterprises at the Todhunter School and Val-Kill Industries, splitting her time between the capital city of Albany and her private home in New York City."<sup>45</sup> "Although she quit most of her political affiliations, [ER] remained highly politically active, if not always in public."<sup>46</sup> "She continued to broadcast her 'Women in Politics' series on NBC radio for the Women's City Club, and edited without credit the Women's Democratic News."<sup>47</sup> She also "became the Women's Trade Union League's legislative advocate in the statehouse in support of a five-day work week."<sup>48</sup> "She voiced her support for the International Ladies Garment Workers Union and its president David Dubinsky in their famous 1930 Dressmaker's Strike."<sup>49</sup> "She also was able to make the case to the national Democratic Party chairman John Raskob to increase funding for the New York State Democratic Committee, and on her own did considerable fundraising for the National Democratic Committee's Women's Activities Committee."<sup>50</sup> While not necessarily staying in the spotlight of politics, ER continued her work and passions in a more subtle way.

"With her own formidable and independent political experience and skill, ER could not help bring her background to her role as a supportive wife of the governor."<sup>51</sup> "In this context, her considerable political influence was simply an outgrowth of

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<sup>43</sup> *Id.*

<sup>44</sup> See Agnes Hooper Gottlieb, *Hickock, Lorena A.*, in THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT ENCYCLOPEDIA, *supra* note 30, at 232; *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1.

<sup>45</sup> *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1; see also Hooper Gottlieb, *supra* note 44, at 232; Ginger Rideseal Carter, *Lehand Marguerite "Missy,"* in THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT ENCYCLOPEDIA, *supra* note 30, at 316, 317; Kelly A.J. Powers, *Travels*, in THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT ENCYCLOPEDIA, *supra* note 30, at 518, 520.

<sup>46</sup> *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1.

<sup>47</sup> *Id.*

<sup>48</sup> *Id.*

<sup>49</sup> *Id.*

<sup>50</sup> *Id.*

<sup>51</sup> *Id.*

her natural interests, passions and beliefs, but adapting it all to a manner which aided her husband.”<sup>52</sup> “She was instrumental in FDR’s reforming the Public Employment Service, as well as his promoting labor leader Frances Perkins from a committee member to head of the State Industrial Relations Commission.”<sup>53</sup> “She further made the case for Perkins as New York’s Secretary of Labor and for her replacement at the Industrial Relations Commission, Nell Schwartz.”<sup>54</sup>

ER stepped in to fill the void left by other political leaders. “She began to substitute for the Governor when either his immobility or his schedule precluded his presence at political meetings and conferences.”<sup>55</sup> Furthering this role, she began to inspect schools, orphanages, hospitals, homes for aged, and other state-supported institutions as what she called his “eyes and ears.”<sup>56</sup> “In this role, she learned to poke into kitchens and garages, and check out plumbing, food service and electricity, rather than just taking the word of the director of the institution in question.”<sup>57</sup> This is reflective of her exposure to low-income areas of the working-class during her childhood travels.

She also put to use her growing, but already considerable, tactical skill in managing political personalities.<sup>58</sup> “When the Governor was organizing a conference of the state’s mayors, she was successful in helping convince him to open the invitation to both Republicans and Democrats.”<sup>59</sup> “She often helped avoid intra-Democratic squabbles between FDR’s advisor Louis Howe and Jim Farley, manager of . . . FDR’s gubernatorial and FDR’s presidential campaigns.”<sup>60</sup> “It was on Eleanor Roosevelt’s urging that the Governor decided not to keep . . . Secretary of State Robert Moses and Personal Secretary Belle Moskowitz.”<sup>61</sup> ER’s tactical skill helped her manage personalities in her husband’s administration.

### C. Reluctant and Unusual First Lady with Courage of Conviction

When FDR became president in 1932, ER was obviously delighted. However, ER told her friend and Associated Press (“AP”) corespondent Lorena Hickok<sup>62</sup> that she “never wanted to

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<sup>52</sup> *Id.*

<sup>53</sup> *Id.*

<sup>54</sup> *Id.*

<sup>55</sup> *Id.*

<sup>56</sup> *Id.*

<sup>57</sup> *Id.*

<sup>58</sup> *Id.*

<sup>59</sup> *Id.*

<sup>60</sup> *Id.*

<sup>61</sup> *Id.*

<sup>62</sup> LORENA A. HICKOK, RELUCTANT FIRST LADY 2 (1962); BELL-SCOTT, *supra* note 4, at 16.

be a President's wife. And [she didn't] want it now."<sup>63</sup> In a letter to Hickock, soon after becoming the First Lady, ER wrote:

My zest in life is rather gone for the time being . . . If anyone looks at me, I want to weep . . . I get like this sometimes. It makes me feel like a dead weight & my mind goes round & round like a squirrel in a cage. I want to run, & I can't, & I despise myself. I can't get away from thinking about myself. Even though I know I'm a fool, I can't help it!<sup>64</sup>

This letter reflected her anxieties and concerns about her husband becoming president of the U.S. ER was worried that FDR's journey towards, and within, the White House meant she would have to give up several activities that gave her personal meaning and self-satisfaction.<sup>65</sup> For example, "her post as a teacher and administrator at the Todhunter School for girls in New York City."<sup>66</sup> While her husband was governor of New York, ER had commuted between Albany to Manhattan, and kept teaching.<sup>67</sup> As the president's wife, ER knew she would not be able to continue doing so. This realization made ER apprehensive of the life she would live as First Lady.<sup>68</sup>

However, ER did not allow her role as First Lady to impact how she conducted herself in social situations. ER did not wear makeup and had resolved to be the "common, ordinary Mrs. Roosevelt," despite her new role.<sup>69</sup> She continued to be autonomous and did not succumb to expectations of how a First Lady should act. ER drove herself to various events and refused the use of a driver or secret agent.<sup>70</sup> At an inaugural luncheon, ER astonished Washington's elites by positioning herself next to the wait-staff to serve ham sandwiches.<sup>71</sup> This was a manifestation of her innate desire to serve others and to be informal in spite of her position. ER did not censor herself in her new role and kept expressing her controversial opinions. She once hosted a garden party on the grounds of the White House for residents of the National Training School for Girls.<sup>72</sup> This school—which actually resembled a prison, lacked teachers or counselors, and had deplorable living quarters—provided education to both black and white students.<sup>73</sup> When ER was

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<sup>63</sup> *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1.

<sup>64</sup> GOODWIN, *supra* note 3, at 57.

<sup>65</sup> BELL-SCOTT, *supra* note 4, at 16.

<sup>66</sup> *Id.*

<sup>67</sup> *Id.*

<sup>68</sup> *Id.*

<sup>69</sup> *Id.*

<sup>70</sup> *Id.*

<sup>71</sup> *Id.*

<sup>72</sup> *Id.*

<sup>73</sup> *Id.*

advised that politicians might dislike her decision to host black and white girls together, she asserted, "It may be bad politics, but it's a thing I would like to do as an individual, so I'm going to do it."<sup>74</sup>

ER did not let her husband's presidency limit her involvement in social reform and activism. Six years prior to her becoming the First Lady, ER was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct when she joined 300 picketers in solidarity with a strike by paper box makers in New York.<sup>75</sup> Even after her arrival in the White House, she continued her association and work with union leaders and lobbied for fair wages, better working conditions, and against child labor.<sup>76</sup> Additionally, ER dramatically altered the complexion of the White House by employing solely black maids.<sup>77</sup> The First Lady's dinner guests were typically friends, artists, young people, and sometimes even "destitute" men she had come across in the park.<sup>78</sup> This reflected her desire to get to know people from diverse backgrounds.<sup>79</sup> A journalist once said ER used to prefer "unconventional thinkers and 'people who do things' over 'stuffed shirts, fat-heads and very proper people.'"<sup>80</sup> ER had even secretly shared with a friend that, had FDR not been a presidential candidate, she would have voted for the socialist candidate Norman Thomas.<sup>81</sup>

Following a suggestion by her friend and journalist Hickok, ER set a new precedent by holding weekly press conferences with female journalists.<sup>82</sup> She even urged people to write to her about their problems and promised to try to help them. In her first year as First Lady, over 300,000 individuals responded to her request.<sup>83</sup> Though she could not help everyone, she responded to each letter or passed the letter on to someone who could help.<sup>84</sup> ER's determination to scrutinize social issues and engage in social reform captivated the public. The far-off places she traveled to and the conditions she exposed herself to in the name of social reform were unusual for a First Lady.<sup>85</sup> She endured the dirt, filth, squalor, soot, and ash of a West Virginia mining town

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<sup>74</sup> *Id.*

<sup>75</sup> *Id.* at 17.

<sup>76</sup> *Id.*

<sup>77</sup> *Id.*

<sup>78</sup> *Id.*

<sup>79</sup> *Id.*

<sup>80</sup> *Id.*

<sup>81</sup> *Id.*

<sup>82</sup> *Id.*

<sup>83</sup> *Id.*

<sup>84</sup> *Id.*

<sup>85</sup> *Id.*

to learn about the living conditions of black miners.<sup>86</sup> She stomped through an army bonus camp to discuss the unpaid pensions of World War I veterans in shoes covered with mud.<sup>87</sup> “An able-bodied man at the pink of condition would have difficulty in keeping up with her when she walks,” noted a reporter for the *Washington Post*.<sup>88</sup> The Secret Service aptly nicknamed her “Rover.”<sup>89</sup>

While ER may have been concerned with how the role of First Lady would impact her social and political work, she managed to not only stick to her beliefs, but also used her new platform to advance her goals.

### 1. Women’s Movement and White House Press Conferences for Female Reporters

The position of First Lady allowed ER an opportunity to reach a much broader audience for her social and political messages. The things ER witnessed and learned from working with women in the labor movement, as well as the FDR administration, led her to host three White House conferences on the needs of women.<sup>90</sup> One of the proposals presented at the second conference was a program of camps for unemployed women.<sup>91</sup> Hosting these conferences was not the only way that she promoted women during her time in the White House.

ER also advanced her agenda and impacted the women’s movement by employing the tool of press conferences. ER was and is a unique First Lady who held as many as 348 press conferences in the White House between March 6, 1933 and April 12, 1945.<sup>92</sup> These conferences impacted the history of first ladies and female journalists. Except during World War II, ER used to exclusively invite female journalists to attend the weekly events.<sup>93</sup> Many female journalists attending these press conferences covered topics only related to female readers. This situation helped to encourage the employment of women in the news corps. As men were refused entry to these events, some of the news organizations recruited female journalists to cover

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<sup>86</sup> *Id.*

<sup>87</sup> *Id.*

<sup>88</sup> *Id.*

<sup>89</sup> *Id.*

<sup>90</sup> *Id.*; Martha H. Swain, *White House Conferences*, in THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT ENCYCLOPEDIA, *supra* note 30, at 557–58.

<sup>91</sup> Swain, *supra* note 90, at 558.

<sup>92</sup> Ann Cottrell Free, *Press Conferences*, in THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT ENCYCLOPEDIA, *supra* note 30, at 411.

<sup>93</sup> *Id.* at 411–12.

them.<sup>94</sup> Gradually, the First Lady's press conferences created more opportunities for female correspondents, although women had established themselves in journalism much before ER arrived at the White House. ER, however, permitted male journalists to cover her press conferences when she was not in Washington D.C. and her interactions with the press at the Office of Civilian Defense in her capacity as its assistant director from 1941 to 1942.<sup>95</sup> She did not allow male reporters at the White House conferences except once, when she came back from the Pacific war zone.<sup>96</sup> ER's press conferences occasionally were used to focus on young generations, the elderly, and low-income people.<sup>97</sup> This drew attention to socio-economic inequalities, especially in the District of Columbia, and thereby paved the way for adopting necessary measures to take corrective action through public and political institutions. For instance, in 1940, the U.S. administration's focus on Social Security and the welfare of elderly low-income people was reflected in press conference discussions on not so satisfactory conditions in the District of Columbia's Blue Plains home for the indigent senior citizens.<sup>98</sup> ER testified about Blue Plains before a Congressional committee, and efforts were made to ameliorate the conditions.<sup>99</sup>

The White House press conferences of ER brought greater recognition to quite a few female reporters because their coverage of news from the White House was occasionally published in main news sections. Thus, ER—as well as the female correspondents—got more visibility due to the White House press conferences.<sup>100</sup> The press conferences are remembered as historic, as neither ER's predecessors nor successors met with the press in such a manner. ER was of the view that frequent press conferences could serve a public purpose.<sup>101</sup> She used the White House to further her activist agenda when she attempted to better the situation during the Great Depression.<sup>102</sup> Immediate predecessor of ER, Lou Henry Hoover, made radio broadcasts urging individuals to help others, yet, Hoover herself did not interact with the press like ER did.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> *Id.*

<sup>95</sup> *Id.*

<sup>96</sup> *Id.*

<sup>97</sup> *Id.*

<sup>98</sup> *Id.*

<sup>99</sup> *Id.*

<sup>100</sup> *Id.*

<sup>101</sup> *Id.* at 412.

<sup>102</sup> *Id.*

<sup>103</sup> *Id.*

The idea of holding the women's press conferences was a brainchild of Lorena Hickok.<sup>104</sup> The latter subsequently became ER's close friend while covering her in 1932.<sup>105</sup> Hickok believed that female reporters needed their own news sources for job security during the Great Depression.<sup>106</sup> Also, it would be easier for ER and the female reporters to meet at a particular time and venue instead of fixing individual appointments.<sup>107</sup> Hickok, however, resigned from her job with the AP because she thought that her relationship with the First Lady would impact the objectivity of her reporting.<sup>108</sup> In fact, Hickok avoided covering any of the women's conferences in the White House.<sup>109</sup>

There has been quite a heated debate over the contributions of ER to the movement of modern women. It is argued by some that ER was far from being a feminist because she opposed the setting up of the National Women's Party and passage of the Equal Rights Amendment ("ERA").<sup>110</sup> Gloria Steinem, cofounder of *Ms. Magazine*, however, begs to differ.<sup>111</sup> In Steinem's opinion, since ER used her influence to support women against inequality and injustice, the First Lady was certainly a feminist.<sup>112</sup> Pauli Murray argues that ER was a feminist par excellence not in the popular sense of the term, but by her actions, which catalyzed the women's movement.<sup>113</sup> Murray adds that ER was not alone in opposing the Women's Party or ERA.<sup>114</sup> Moreover, ER and others' opposition to the ERA was based on an apprehension that it would weaken the protection afforded by labor laws to women.<sup>115</sup> Later on, ER revised her position and supported the ERA.

While Mrs. Roosevelt's brand of feminism did not lead her to give active support to the Equal Rights Amendment [ERA] which she and many women reformers had earlier opposed for fear the adoption of ERA would undermine state protective labor laws for women, by the 1950's she had dropped her strong objections to a constitutional guarantee of equality. Also, while the [President's] Commission [on the Status of Women] itself did not recommend ERA, several of the women who worked with the Commission under her leadership,

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<sup>104</sup> *Id.*

<sup>105</sup> *Id.*

<sup>106</sup> *Id.*

<sup>107</sup> *Id.*

<sup>108</sup> *Id.*

<sup>109</sup> *Id.*

<sup>110</sup> BELL-SCOTT, *supra* note 4, at 356.

<sup>111</sup> *Id.*

<sup>112</sup> *Id.*

<sup>113</sup> *See id.* at 356–57.

<sup>114</sup> *Id.* at 357.

<sup>115</sup> *Id.*

including myself, were the founders of the NOW which became the foremost advocate of ERA . . . .<sup>116</sup>

According to Murray, ER was an icon for women of her time.<sup>117</sup> Her presence in public life from the 1920s to the 1960s made her a living example of a bold and courageous woman not only in the U.S., but also abroad.<sup>118</sup>

Perhaps Mrs. Roosevelt's greatest contribution to feminism during the forty years, which spanned the period from securing the vote for women in 1920 to the resurgence of the women's movement in the 1960's, was the example she set. . . . Eleanor Roosevelt was the most visible symbol of autonomy and therefore the role model of women of my generation. Although she did not live to see many of the spectacular gains—both substantive and symbolic—women have made in the past two decades, her own life and work pointed the way and helped to set in motion forces which made these gains possible. Just as she became the First Lady of the World, in a very real sense she was also the Mother of the Women's Revolution.<sup>119</sup>

## 2. Opposition to Communism and Support for a Democratic Finland

ER also advocated for a democratic Finland and pushed to use U.S. resources. In September of 1939, the only European country to withstand the military attacks of authoritarian regimes and to retain its independence by mid-summer of 1940 was Finland.<sup>120</sup> In northern Europe, neutral Sweden and fighting Finland survived as the lone democracies neither conquered nor occupied. The American public opinion, save the American Communist Party, generously supported Finland.<sup>121</sup> A Gallup poll revealed eighty-eight percent of Americans favored Finland and only one percent supported Russia.<sup>122</sup> President FDR, hamstrung by isolationist criticism and the Neutrality Acts prohibiting military aid, could initially offer Finland only moral support.<sup>123</sup> By the end of the war, however, a \$30 million loan for foodstuffs and agricultural credits was sanctioned by the federal government.<sup>124</sup> The president supported Finland and openly lambasted the pro-Moscow American Youth Congress ("AYC") that did not favor aid to Finland.<sup>125</sup> FDR told them that

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<sup>116</sup> *Id.*

<sup>117</sup> *Id.*

<sup>118</sup> *Id.*

<sup>119</sup> *Id.*

<sup>120</sup> MELVIN G. HOLLI, *THE WIZARD OF WASHINGTON* 101 (2002).

<sup>121</sup> *Id.*

<sup>122</sup> *Id.*

<sup>123</sup> *Id.* at 101–02.

<sup>124</sup> *Id.*

<sup>125</sup> *Id.*

ninety-eight percent of the Americans stood by the Finns and that the Communist argument that aid to Finland was part of an imperialist war, smacked of ignorance. ER too was upset by the AYC's dogmatic opposition to the President and by their adherence to the Moscow line.<sup>126</sup> ER sarcastically said their opposition—to all and any aid by U.S. to democracies under attack in Europe by the despots—relented only when the Nazis pounced on the USSR.<sup>127</sup>

### 3. Diversity Recruitment in Defense Forces in an Effort to Win All Wars and Make the U.S. a Better Place

ER was committed to making the U.S. a better place where everyone, irrespective of race or other differences, could live equally and with opportunity. She promised to offer her “faith, cooperation and energy” to realize this dream.<sup>128</sup> In ER's view, the proper meaning of national defense was the mobilization of all Americans, so that every American could receive training to overcome poverty and make the community a better place in which to live.<sup>129</sup> ER was very much concerned about racial discrimination in various walks of life, including jobs in defense and its impact on national security.<sup>130</sup> During the World War II, ER's main preoccupation was domestic affairs—such as race relations—which in her view determined the present as well as the future of the nation.<sup>131</sup> After the Pearl Harbor attack, ER told a few Washington church women that “[t]he nation cannot expect colored people to feel that the U.S. is worth defending if they continue to be treated as they are treated now.”<sup>132</sup> She travelled from coast to coast to convince the people about the critical significance of recruiting blacks into defense jobs.<sup>133</sup> This infuriated the white supremacists in the south. ER, however, continued to pursue her progressive stance on civil rights.<sup>134</sup>

When FDR was busy fighting and winning the World War II, ER firmly believed that the war at home would not be won in any real sense as long as orthodoxy and conservatism prevailed in American society.<sup>135</sup> She favored the renewal of democracy at home so that the U.S. efforts to establish democracy abroad could

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<sup>126</sup> *Id.*

<sup>127</sup> *Id.* at 101–02.

<sup>128</sup> GOODWIN, *supra* note 3, at 167.

<sup>129</sup> *See id.*

<sup>130</sup> *See id.* at 249.

<sup>131</sup> *See id.* at 10, 328.

<sup>132</sup> *See id.* at 328.

<sup>133</sup> *Id.* at 330.

<sup>134</sup> *See id.* at 330–31.

<sup>135</sup> *See id.* at 10.

succeed.<sup>136</sup> Of course, ER was not alone in this struggle against inequality and injustice. She was supported by many civil-rights leaders, labor leaders, and liberal spokesmen in search for social justice.<sup>137</sup> Without her sustained support in the top echelons of the decision-making circles, the priority of the administration would have remained to succeed in the international war, without getting distracted by the domestic war.<sup>138</sup> ER, however, changed the course.

#### 4. ER Honored for Her Work on Civil Rights and Poverty

On May 3, 1940, ER was honored at New York's Astor Hotel by *The Nation* magazine for her phenomenal work on civil rights and poverty.<sup>139</sup> Over a thousand people came to watch her receive a bronze plaque for "distinguished service in the cause of American social progress."<sup>140</sup> One of the speakers that night, Stuart Chase, praised the First Lady's exclusive focus on domestic problems.<sup>141</sup> Chase said:

I suppose she worries about Europe like the rest of us, but she does not allow this worry to divert her attention from the homefront. She goes around America, looking at America, thinking about America . . . helping day and night with the problems of America. . . . New Deal is supposed to be fighting a war, too, a war against depression.<sup>142</sup>

Author John Gunther began speaking by asking a question, "What is an institution?"<sup>143</sup> He observed, "An institution [is] something that had fixity, permanence, and importance . . . something that people like to depend on, something benevolent as a rule, something we like."<sup>144</sup> And going by that definition, he opined that the lady being felicitated that night was no less an institution than her husband was, who was already being talked about for a record third term.<sup>145</sup> Reflecting Gunther's feelings, National Association for Advancement of Colored People head, Walter White, turned to ER and said, "My dear, I don't care if the President runs for the third or fourth term as long as he lets you run the bases, keep the score and win the game."<sup>146</sup> ER, in her acceptance speech, said she was quite puzzled and embarrassed to see people whom she respected so

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<sup>136</sup> *Id.*

<sup>137</sup> *Id.*

<sup>138</sup> *See id.*

<sup>139</sup> *Id.* at 18.

<sup>140</sup> *Id.*

<sup>141</sup> *Id.*

<sup>142</sup> *Id.*

<sup>143</sup> *Id.*

<sup>144</sup> *Id.*

<sup>145</sup> *Id.*

<sup>146</sup> *Id.*

much, laud and grant her an honor.<sup>147</sup> She said her feeling was that they ought to have been talking about someone else.<sup>148</sup> She went on to add:

I will do my best to do what is right, . . . not with a sense of my own adequacy but with the feeling that the country must go on, that we must keep democracy and must make it mean a reality to more people. . . . We should constantly be reminded of what we owe in return for what we have.<sup>149</sup>

It was this unstinted commitment of ER to democracy that made Americans, in a Gallup poll taken in the spring of 1940, rate her even higher than her husband, with sixty-seven percent of those interviewed endorsing her activities.<sup>150</sup> The survey suggested:

Mrs. Roosevelt's incessant goings and comings have been accepted as a rather welcome part of the national life. Women especially feel this way. But even men betray relatively small masculine impatience with the work and opinions of a very articulate lady. . . . The rich, who generally disapprove of Mrs. Roosevelt's husband, seem just as friendly toward her as the poor. . . . Even among those extremely anti-Roosevelt citizens who would regard a third term as a national disaster there is a generous minority . . . who want Mrs. Roosevelt to remain in the public eye.<sup>151</sup>

ER has been honored and recognized for her work through tangible awards and public approval.

#### D. ER Continues Her Work During Her Post-White House Years

Even when ER and her husband left the White House, her social and political work did not stop. In December 1945, President Harry B. Truman called up ER, as the first ever meeting of the United Nations General Assembly was to take place in January 1946 in London.<sup>152</sup> He asked whether she would be interested in serving as a member of the U.S. delegation.<sup>153</sup> She refused, saying that she had neither expertise nor experience in international affairs.<sup>154</sup> Truman, however, did not give up and asked her to seriously consider this matter and promised that she was qualified for the job.<sup>155</sup> ER weighed the pros and cons before finalizing her decision.<sup>156</sup> She used to treat the United Nations as the most important legacy of her husband, and she

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<sup>147</sup> *Id.* at 19.

<sup>148</sup> *Id.*

<sup>149</sup> *Id.*

<sup>150</sup> *Id.*

<sup>151</sup> *Id.*

<sup>152</sup> *Id.* at 633.

<sup>153</sup> *Id.*

<sup>154</sup> *Id.*

<sup>155</sup> *Id.*

<sup>156</sup> *Id.*

aspired to be part of the U.S. delegation.<sup>157</sup> Unfortunately, she feared failure.<sup>158</sup> Eventually, she overcame her apprehensions and accepted the position, setting a new path in the arena of human rights that made her the most respected person of that time both nationally and internationally.<sup>159</sup> She sought to make the rest of her life worthy of her husband's memory by fighting for his ideals.<sup>160</sup>

Thus, ER continued to be an influential political person until her sad demise in 1962 at the age of seventy-eight.<sup>161</sup> She was a catalyst behind the Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the United Nations in 1948.<sup>162</sup> She was also a champion of the Jewish homeland in Israel, a leading player in New York politics, a prominent backer of politician Adlai Stevenson, and one of the founders of Americans for Democratic Action.<sup>163</sup> In her advanced age, she was affectionately referred to as "the greatest woman in the world."<sup>164</sup> Tributes to ER came from around the world after her death from anemia and tuberculosis on November 7, 1962 in New York City.<sup>165</sup> ER's funeral was attended by the who's who of U.S. politics at that time, including President John F. Kennedy and Mrs. Kennedy, Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson, former Presidents Harry B. Truman and General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Chief Justice Earl Warren, Adlai Stevenson, Frances Perkins, James Farley, and Sam Rosenman.<sup>166</sup> About 10,000 people attended a memorial service held for her at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine in New York City on November 17, 1962.<sup>167</sup> Adlai Stevenson paid glowing tributes to ER and recalled her contribution to world peace and vulnerable people.<sup>168</sup>

ER's portrayal in all obituaries was not totally reverential.<sup>169</sup> Commentators drew attention towards ER's "unhappy childhood,"<sup>170</sup> her "perception of herself as plain,"<sup>171</sup> her

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<sup>157</sup> *Id.*

<sup>158</sup> *Id.*

<sup>159</sup> *See id.*

<sup>160</sup> *Id.*

<sup>161</sup> *Id.* at 636.

<sup>162</sup> *Id.*

<sup>163</sup> *Id.*

<sup>164</sup> *Id.*

<sup>165</sup> *See* Mieke van Thoor, *Death of Eleanor Roosevelt*, in THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT ENCYCLOPEDIA, *supra* note 30, at 122; *see also* *First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt*, *supra* note 1.

<sup>166</sup> *See* GOODWIN, *supra* note 3, at 636.

<sup>167</sup> *See* Thoor, *supra* note 165, at 123.

<sup>168</sup> *See id.*

<sup>169</sup> *See id.*

<sup>170</sup> *Id.*

<sup>171</sup> *Id.*

“protruding teeth,”<sup>172</sup> and her “long-lasting difficulties with her mother-in-law, Sara Delano Roosevelt.”<sup>173</sup> *Chicago Tribune* on November 9, 1962 ran a story with a headline, “Red Bloc Joins in Tribute to F.D.R. Widow.”<sup>174</sup> An AP dispatch from New York on November 8, 1962 stated, “Mrs. Roosevelt was as controversial as she was prominent. . . . But loved or despised, she was a woman too vital ever to be ignored.”<sup>175</sup> *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner* on November 9, 1962 published a tribute by AP feature writer Cynthia Lowry to ER.<sup>176</sup> Lowry wrote, “[ER] was a curious mixture of kindly, deep concern for people and impersonality”<sup>177</sup> and “Mrs. Roosevelt really became interested in individuals only when they had problems.”<sup>178</sup> Journalist May Craig wrote in *Kennebec (Maine) Journal* on November 10, 1962 that ER did a praiseworthy job of supporting FDR’s return to politics after his polio attack.<sup>179</sup> Craig wrote:

[ER became] his “legs” and his eyes and ears, painfully overcoming her natural shyness, as a political campaigner and public speaker in her efforts to keep him from becoming “a crippled invalid, pampered in the Hyde Park mansion by his mother.”<sup>180</sup>

News of ER’s passing was widely reported across the world.<sup>181</sup> *The Daily Telegraph* (London), published on November 8, 1962, specifically mentioned her “admiration and friendship for Britain,”<sup>182</sup> applauded her association with causes “of peace and of the welfare of humanity,”<sup>183</sup> and for her “personal quality of selflessness.”<sup>184</sup> *De Haagse Courant*, a Dutch daily, described ER as “one of the most influential women of the century.”<sup>185</sup> *The Times of India*, on November 9, 1962, referred to ER as “a Friend of the Common People”<sup>186</sup> and noted her deep influence “on the thought and manners of the women of her country for more than a quarter of century,”<sup>187</sup> besides her global activities that “prompted writers to call her the ‘First Lady of the World’<sup>188</sup> and

172 *Id.*

173 *Id.*

174 *Id.*

175 *Id.*

176 *See id.*

177 *Id.*

178 *Id.*

179 *See id.*

180 *Id.*

181 *See id.*

182 *Id.* at 124.

183 *Id.*

184 *Id.*

185 *Id.*

186 *Id.*

187 *Id.*

188 *Id.*

the ‘Number One World Citizen.’”<sup>189</sup> *Le Monde* (France), published on November 9, 1962, wrote that ER’s activities “greatly increased in importance after her husband’s death.”<sup>190</sup> *Japan Times*, on that very day, reported that even after the death of FDR, she “continued to retain her international fame as a traveler, writer and broadcaster, and active promoter of her political and social ideals.”<sup>191</sup> On November 9, 1962, the then-USSR, or by now ex-Soviet Union newspaper, *Pravda*, quoted an excerpt from Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko’s telegram to ER’s family.<sup>192</sup> It read, “Those who were personally acquainted with Eleanor Roosevelt . . . will always have the best memories of her.”<sup>193</sup> *China News* (Taipei), on November 9, 1962, reported an executive order issued by President John F. Kennedy on November 8, 1962 that “flags be flown at half mast at all U.S. government buildings until the burial of ER.”<sup>194</sup> *Morning News* (Sudan), in its edition of November 9, 1962, reported a dispatch from New York highlighting that Adlai Stevenson managed to find time “to go to ER’s bedside at the height of the crises between the United States and the Soviet Union over missiles in Cuba.”<sup>195</sup>

ER’s contributions to social and political issues were a culmination of her extensive and varied life experiences. She serves as a model for what women can achieve in various occupations. Despite the time period in which she lived, ER is an extremely noteworthy individual and many lessons can be learned from understanding her story.

### III. NANCY PELOSI

Nancy Pelosi has served and continues to serve as a model of powerful women in U.S. politics. Like ER, Pelosi exemplifies a female political figure that created her own path and has left behind lasting impacts.<sup>196</sup> Unique to Pelosi is the fact that her work is not done yet. This section aims to provide an overview of Pelosi’s career and breakthroughs in politics, key areas of

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<sup>189</sup> *Id.*

<sup>190</sup> *Id.*

<sup>191</sup> *Id.*

<sup>192</sup> *Id.*

<sup>193</sup> *Id.*

<sup>194</sup> *Id.*

<sup>195</sup> *Id.*

<sup>196</sup> See Sheryl Gay Stolberg, *Nancy Pelosi, Icon of Female Power, Will Reclaim Role as Speaker and Seal a Place in History*, N.Y. TIMES (Jan. 2, 2019), <http://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/02/us/politics/nancy-pelosi-house-speaker.html?auth=login-email&login=email> [<http://perma.cc/LHW6-ST8B>].

legislation and policy that she has supported, and how her actions serve as a model for other women.

#### A. Public Service: A Noble Cause

Similar to both ER and Ivanka Trump, Nancy Pelosi comes from a family of politically inclined and prominent individuals. Pelosi's father, Thomas D'Alesandro Jr., was Mayor of Baltimore for twelve years.<sup>197</sup> He then represented Baltimore for five terms in Congress.<sup>198</sup> Pelosi's brother, Thomas D'Alesandro III, also was Mayor of Baltimore.<sup>199</sup> Her mother, Annunciata D'Alesandro, was an active strategist and organizer.<sup>200</sup> Pelosi studied at Trinity College in Washington, D.C.<sup>201</sup> She, along with her husband, Paul Pelosi, are the parents of five grown children and grandparents of nine grandchildren.<sup>202</sup>

Pelosi has achieved a lot in U.S. politics, and she continues to lead. Many of her accomplishments are breakthroughs and records for women in politics. In the early 2000s, Pelosi accomplished many firsts. In 2001, she was elected as the Democratic Whip, becoming the first woman to hold that position.<sup>203</sup> Following on the heels of that success, Pelosi was elected the Democratic leader, again achieving a first for women.<sup>204</sup> Pelosi made history in 2007 when she was elected as the first woman to serve in the capacity of Speaker of the House.<sup>205</sup> Today, she is in her third term as Speaker.<sup>206</sup> She once again made history in January 2019, when she regained her position, second-in-line to the presidency.<sup>207</sup> Pelosi is the first person to accomplish this feat in over six decades.<sup>208</sup> Currently, Pelosi is the 52nd Speaker of the House of Representatives.<sup>209</sup> Pelosi cares about trying to minimize health care costs, enhancing the pay of workers through robust economic growth, rebuilding America, and cleaning up corruption by making Washington work for all.<sup>210</sup> Pelosi has successively represented

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<sup>197</sup> *Full Biography*, CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI CAL.'S 12TH DISTRICT, <http://pelosi.house.gov/biography-0> [<http://perma.cc/8J9X-LAGR>] (last visited Feb. 7, 2020).

<sup>198</sup> *Id.*

<sup>199</sup> *Id.*

<sup>200</sup> Stolberg, *supra* note 196.

<sup>201</sup> *Full Biography*, *supra* note 197.

<sup>202</sup> *Id.*

<sup>203</sup> Stolberg, *supra* note 196.

<sup>204</sup> *Id.*

<sup>205</sup> *Full Biography*, *supra* note 197.

<sup>206</sup> *Id.*

<sup>207</sup> *Id.*

<sup>208</sup> *Id.*

<sup>209</sup> *Id.*

<sup>210</sup> *Id.*

San Francisco, California's 12th Congressional District, for thirty-one years.<sup>211</sup> She has been leader of House Democrats for sixteen years and has also been a House Democratic Whip.<sup>212</sup> Her name was included in the National Women's Hall of Fame in 2013 at a ceremony in Seneca Falls, where the American women's rights movement was launched.<sup>213</sup>

Under the leadership of [Speaker] Pelosi, the 111th Congress was heralded as 'one of the most productive Congresses in history' by Congressional scholar Norman Ornstein.<sup>214</sup>

President Barack Obama called Speaker Pelosi "an extraordinary leader for the American people," and the Christian Science Monitor wrote: "... make no mistake: Nancy Pelosi is the most powerful woman in American politics and the most powerful House Speaker since Sam Rayburn a half century ago."<sup>215</sup>

During the Obama presidency, Pelosi led the House adoption of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in 2009.<sup>216</sup> It was done to generate and save a lot of American jobs, offer relief for American families, and provide tax reductions to over ninety percent of working Americans.<sup>217</sup> In collaboration with the House Democratic Caucus, Pelosi continues to focus on the need to create jobs in America.<sup>218</sup>

Pelosi pioneered the work on the Affordable Care Act ("ACA") that has provided protections to Americans with pre-existing medical conditions, stopped annual and lifetime limits on health care coverage, and offered affordable health care coverage to several millions, while slashing healthcare expenditures in the long run.<sup>219</sup> In the 111th Congress, Pelosi also led Congress in passing strong Wall Street reforms to regulate big banks and protect consumers, as well as the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act to widen educational opportunities and reform the financial aid system to save taxpayers' money.<sup>220</sup> Another law was passed under her leadership—Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act—to restore the ability of women and all workers to access the judicial system to fight pay discrimination.<sup>221</sup> Pelosi also led in passing law to provide

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<sup>211</sup> *Id.*

<sup>212</sup> *Id.*

<sup>213</sup> *Id.*

<sup>214</sup> *Id.*

<sup>215</sup> *Id.*

<sup>216</sup> *Id.*

<sup>217</sup> *Id.*

<sup>218</sup> *Id.*

<sup>219</sup> *Id.*; see Stolberg, *supra* note 196.

<sup>220</sup> *Full Biography, supra* note 197.

<sup>221</sup> *Id.*

healthcare for 11 million American children, as well as national service legislation, and hate crimes legislation.<sup>222</sup> Pelosi led Congress in passing child nutrition and food safety legislation, as well as rescinded the biased “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy in 2010 that prevented gays and lesbians from “openly serving” in the defense services.<sup>223</sup>

Nancy Pelosi has an impressive track record of firsts for women in U.S. politics. The below sections highlight multiple key legislative and political issues that Pelosi greatly impacted.

## B. Pelosi’s Stance and Impacts on Noteworthy Issues

### 1. Leadership in Environmental Issues and Climate Crisis

In a statement marking the fourth anniversary of the Paris Agreement, Pelosi said, the “landmark Paris Climate Agreement” represents a commitment by the nations “to boldly tackle the existential threat posed by the climate crisis.”<sup>224</sup> She opined, U.S. leadership is now critical to protect the people and places to ensure “a healthy sustainable future for our children and grandchildren to grow and thrive.”<sup>225</sup> She has criticized policies of President Donald Trump and stated that the Trump Administration “recklessly abandoned” the Paris agreement.<sup>226</sup> She added that Democrats were committed to taking action on the climate crisis.<sup>227</sup> That was the message delivered to the international allies at the COP25 in Madrid in November 2019.<sup>228</sup> She said, “House Democrats have delivered on this commitment with bold action.”<sup>229</sup> She reiterated commitment to invest in a clean energy future capable of creating decent jobs and leading to 100 percent clean energy by 2050.<sup>230</sup> Pelosi warned this was time for action, as inaction would have disastrous consequences for our children and our future.<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> *Id.*

<sup>223</sup> *Id.*

<sup>224</sup> *Pelosi Statement on the Fourth Anniversary of the Paris Climate Agreement*, CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI CAL.’S 12TH DISTRICT (Dec. 12, 2019), <http://pelosi.house.gov/news/press-releases/pelosi-statement-on-the-fourth-anniversary-of-the-paris-climate-agreement> [<http://perma.cc/2Q6T-9QPQ>].

<sup>225</sup> *Id.*

<sup>226</sup> *Id.*

<sup>227</sup> *Id.*

<sup>228</sup> *Id.*

<sup>229</sup> *Id.*

<sup>230</sup> *Id.*

<sup>231</sup> *Id.*

Pelosi has accorded priority to the climate crisis.<sup>232</sup> She helped enact comprehensive energy legislation in 2007 to raise vehicle fuel efficiency standards for the first time in thirty-two years and made a historic commitment to use home grown biofuels.<sup>233</sup> In 2009, under her leadership, the House passed the American Clean Energy and Security Act to create clean energy jobs, curb the climate crisis, and move America to a clean energy economy.<sup>234</sup> Although the legislation was stalled by Republicans in the Senate, it sent a strong message to the world about U.S. commitment to combating climate change.<sup>235</sup> She helped pass the “Pelosi Amendment” in 1989 to assess the potential environmental impacts of development.<sup>236</sup> In San Francisco, Pelosi drafted the law to establish the Presidio Trust and transform a former military post into an urban national park.<sup>237</sup> In order to promote accountability and transparency in government, Pelosi led the House in passing ethics reform legislation, including the creation of an independent ethics panel, and increased accountability and transparency in House operations.<sup>238</sup> Pelosi struggled to pass the DISCLOSE Act in the House to fight a corporate takeover of U.S. elections and assure additional disclosure.<sup>239</sup> Other laws passed under Pelosi’s leadership include: “[A]n increase in the minimum wage for the first time in 10 years; the largest college aid expansion since the GI bill; a new GI education bill for veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars; and increased services for veterans, caregivers, and the Veterans Administration.”<sup>240</sup>

## 2. Legislative Wins Amidst a Republican Majority

As House Democratic leader, Pelosi secured legislative wins from the GOP majority. In the 114th Congress, she spearheaded a bipartisan agreement to strengthen Medicare.<sup>241</sup> After the Iran Nuclear Agreement, Pelosi made the effort to secure votes to override a possible presidential veto of the Republican effort to disapprove the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.<sup>242</sup> Pelosi’s negotiating skills have resulted in a significant rise in funds for

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<sup>232</sup> *Id.*

<sup>233</sup> *Full Biography, supra* note 197.

<sup>234</sup> *Id.*

<sup>235</sup> *Id.*

<sup>236</sup> *Id.*

<sup>237</sup> *Id.*

<sup>238</sup> *Id.*

<sup>239</sup> *Id.*

<sup>240</sup> *Id.*

<sup>241</sup> *Id.*

<sup>242</sup> *Id.*

key Democratic priorities.<sup>243</sup> In the fiscal year 2016 omnibus, Pelosi got the permanent authorization of the World Trade Center Health Program, as well as a massive five-year extension of expiring wind and solar renewable energy tax credits.<sup>244</sup> During the fiscal year 2018 omnibus, Pelosi secured striking increases in domestic investments, “including a \$3.2 billion increase in opioid epidemic funding, a \$3 billion increase for NIH medical research, and the largest single year funding increase for Child Care Development Block Grants in the initiative’s history.”<sup>245</sup> Despite the Republican tirade against Americans’ healthcare, Pelosi held the House Democrats together through dozens of votes to weaken the ACA.<sup>246</sup> She used Democrats to mobilize a nationwide campaign to block House Republicans’ “Trumpcare” legislation.<sup>247</sup> Under her dynamic leadership, House Democrats also unanimously opposed the GOP tax concessions to the affluent.<sup>248</sup>

### 3. Inspiration to Face Challenges with Hope and Courage

Like ER, Pelosi has also been recognized for her achievements. On December 13, 2019, Pelosi was honored with the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Ripple of Hope Award in recognition of her steadfast commitment to social change and humanitarian advocacy.<sup>249</sup> In her acceptance speech, Pelosi quoted a statement made in 1964 by Attorney General Robert Kennedy at the World Assembly of Youth about his hopes for the future: “Modern industry gives us the capacity for great wealth—but do we have the capacity to make that wealth meaningful to the poor of the world?”<sup>250</sup> This was her concern for bridging the income gap among peoples of the world. She added that hope is needed to face the challenges of our time, including assaults on the U.S. Constitution, climate change, gun violence, and poverty.<sup>251</sup> Pelosi recalled that in the same speech, Robert Kennedy quoted the renowned historian Arnold Toynbee, who wrote, this is “the first age since the dawn of history in which mankind has dared to believe it practicable to make the benefits of civilization available

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<sup>243</sup> *Id.*

<sup>244</sup> *Id.*

<sup>245</sup> *Id.*

<sup>246</sup> *Id.*

<sup>247</sup> *Id.*

<sup>248</sup> *Id.*

<sup>249</sup> *Speaker Pelosi Remarks Upon Accepting the RFK Human Rights Ripple of Hope Award*, CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI CAL'S 12TH DISTRICT (Dec. 13, 2019), <http://pelosi.house.gov/news/press-releases/speaker-pelosi-remarks-upon-accepting-the-rfk-human-rights-ripple-of-hope-award> [<http://perma.cc/26NL-AADM>].

<sup>250</sup> *Id.*

<sup>251</sup> *Id.*

to the human race.”<sup>252</sup> Toynbee had further said, in his work, *A Study of History*, in a hopeful country the political leadership was a “creative minority” that encouraged the blossoming of a civilization.<sup>253</sup> But in certain nations, leaders turned out to be a “dominant minority” of “exploiters.”<sup>254</sup> Thus, two mindsets—hopeful and exploitive—divide the society and the polity. Pelosi is certainly in favor of the “creative minority.” Looking around the room, she said she saw “faith and human goodness.”<sup>255</sup> She saw in the work of Robert F. Kennedy human rights which have made, in his own words, “tame the savageness of man and make gentle the life of this world.”<sup>256</sup> Pelosi praised the courage of young Americans who are striving for equality, protecting rights of women, combating climate action, and in the unfortunate case of gun violence, saving their precious lives.<sup>257</sup> She congratulated other awardees too.<sup>258</sup> For instance, while praising J.K. Rowling, the celebrated author of the *Harry Potter* books, Pelosi said: “[Y]ou taught—you encouraged many, many, many children—more than you could imagine to read.”<sup>259</sup> She called Rowling “a magician [who turned her] compassion into improving the lives of so many children.”<sup>260</sup> Talking about yet another awardee, Wendy Abrams, Pelosi highlighted her passion for “making a difference in [the] world.”<sup>261</sup>

Pelosi said in her acceptance speech she was brought up with the Kennedy philosophy: “[P]ublic service was a noble cause, and that we all had a responsibility to help those in need.”<sup>262</sup> She emphasized the need to respect fellow human beings, as all of us are the children of the same God.<sup>263</sup> She added:

[W]e carried reverence that we’re all God’s children, and we were brought up to believe that there is a spark of divinity in every person in this world and everyone must respect that spark of divinity and be good stewards of every one of God’s children. And not only that, we must respect the spark of divinity in ourselves and the responsibility that goes with it.<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>252</sup> *Id.*

<sup>253</sup> *Id.*; see generally ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE, *A STUDY OF HISTORY* 1 (1946).

<sup>254</sup> *Speaker Pelosi Remarks Upon Accepting the RFK Human Rights Ripple of Hope Award*, *supra* note 249.

<sup>255</sup> *Id.*

<sup>256</sup> *Id.*

<sup>257</sup> *Id.*

<sup>258</sup> *Id.*

<sup>259</sup> *Id.*

<sup>260</sup> *Id.*

<sup>261</sup> *Id.*

<sup>262</sup> *Id.*

<sup>263</sup> *Id.*

<sup>264</sup> *Id.*

#### 4. Congressional Oversight Supports People

In a statement regarding Congressional oversight, Pelosi said the courts have time and again upheld the Congressional authority to conduct oversight on behalf of the American people.<sup>265</sup> They have categorically recognized that the Committees' subpoenas of the President's financial records are legal and enforceable. She added that the courts have stated that there are "no special privileges for information unrelated to the President's official duties," but related to "Congress's need for legislation and oversight."<sup>266</sup> She regretted that Americans would have to wait months for final rulings.<sup>267</sup> She hoped that the Supreme Court would uphold the Constitution and the rulings of the lower courts besides guaranteeing that Congressional oversight could proceed.<sup>268</sup> She added that Congress would continue to conduct oversight for the people and uphold the cardinal constitutional principle of separation of powers.<sup>269</sup> This shows Pelosi's commitment to the constitutional principles and norms to strengthen the democratic form of government.

#### 5. A Democrat Committed to Internet Freedom and Privacy

On December 14, 2017, Pelosi issued a statement in the wake of the Federal Communications Commission's ("FCC") decision to do away with the historic net neutrality protections.<sup>270</sup> She said that an arbitrary manner of rule change imposed higher costs on consumers and curtailed their choices, strangled competition, and penalized small businesses and entrepreneurs.<sup>271</sup> Her concern was that its enforcement would deprive users of the control of their own browsing experience, and make them pawns in the hands of giant internet providers.<sup>272</sup> Pelosi stated:

The FCC's radical, partisan decision to dismantle net neutrality strikes a stunning blow to the promise of a free and open Internet. . . . FCC Chairman Ajit Pai is proving himself an eager executor of the Trump Administration's anti-consumer, anti-competition agenda. . . . [T]oday's dangerous rule change saddles consumers with higher costs and less

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<sup>265</sup> *Pelosi Statement on Next Steps in Court Cases on Congressional Oversight*, CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI CAL.'S 12TH DISTRICT (Dec. 13, 2019), <http://pelosi.house.gov/news/press-releases/pelosi-statement-on-next-steps-in-court-cases-on-congressional-oversight> [<http://perma.cc/25CW-V9A4>].

<sup>266</sup> *Id.*

<sup>267</sup> *Id.*

<sup>268</sup> *Id.*

<sup>269</sup> *Id.*

<sup>270</sup> *Pelosi Statement on Net Neutrality Ruling*, CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI CAL.'S 12TH DISTRICT (Dec. 14, 2017), <http://pelosi.house.gov/news/press-releases/pelosi-statement-on-net-neutrality-ruling> [<http://perma.cc/DK7M-JLGG>].

<sup>271</sup> *Id.*

<sup>272</sup> *Id.*

choice, throttles competition and punishes entrepreneurs and small businesses. If implemented, these changes would rip away users' control of the own browsing experience, and put it in the hands of big providers.<sup>273</sup>

[Pelosi] contended that the FCC's decision-making process on rule change was hasty, secretive, and technically erroneous.<sup>274</sup> It was made without holding any public hearing and amidst stiff resistance from Internet experts and technology practitioners.<sup>275</sup> A disturbing element was the refusal of FCC to curb the risk of internet users' identity theft and bogus comments in the record of the agency.<sup>276</sup> The FCC had also disregarded the Freedom of Information (FOIA) requests or requests for information from the New York Attorney General's Investigation.<sup>277</sup>

Pelosi said Americans want an open and dynamic Internet without interference by the providers.<sup>278</sup> She urged Congressmen and Congresswomen to stand by the American people by implementing Rep. Mike Doyle's resolution to undo the decision of the FCC by exercising the authority vested in them by the Congressional Review Act.<sup>279</sup> Pelosi said if Republicans overlooked the demands of their electors, Democrats would go to the courts.<sup>280</sup> Her expectation was that the courts would adjudicate upon the matter as per the law and the views of the American people.<sup>281</sup>

On October 1, 2019, Pelosi issued a statement after the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals' ruling that permitted the FCC repeal of net neutrality protections to go forward, but simultaneously struck down provisions preventing states from implementing their own net neutrality laws.<sup>282</sup> She expressed her disappointment over the court ruling, which according to her, was beneficial to the corporate world and big providers, but harmful to the U.S. economy and the spirit of entrepreneurship.<sup>283</sup> She urged Senator McConnell to hold a vote on the House-passed Save The Internet Act to bring back net

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<sup>273</sup> *Id.*

<sup>274</sup> *Id.*

<sup>275</sup> *Id.*

<sup>276</sup> *Id.*

<sup>277</sup> *Id.*

<sup>278</sup> *See id.*

<sup>279</sup> *Id.*

<sup>280</sup> *Id.*

<sup>281</sup> *Id.*

<sup>282</sup> *Pelosi Statement on Net Neutrality Appeals Court Ruling*, CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI CAL.'S 12TH DISTRICT (Oct. 1, 2019), <http://pelosi.house.gov/news/press-releases/pelosi-statement-on-net-neutrality-appeals-court-ruling> [<http://perma.cc/LR72-CUYX>].

<sup>283</sup> *Id.*

neutrality provisions and provide a level playing field for U.S. small businesses, entrepreneurs, and consumers.<sup>284</sup>

Pelosi, however, hailed the court ruling for compelling the FCC to reexamine how revoking net neutrality jeopardized vulnerable communities, and ordering the FCC not to forbid states from enforcing their better net neutrality laws.<sup>285</sup> She said that when the federal government did not protect hard-working families, California's stewardship in enforcing the strongest net neutrality protections in America was a model to assure that the internet remained available and accessible to all, promoted innovation, created jobs, and safeguarded freedom of speech.<sup>286</sup>

Pelosi spoke in the House of Representatives to demand rescission of a FCC rule on privacy and internet service providers.<sup>287</sup> She accused the Trump Administration and the FCC of selling internet users' intimate personal information without their knowledge or consent.<sup>288</sup> She termed this as an attack on innovation, competition, and entrepreneurship—which are hallmarks of the internet.<sup>289</sup> While appreciating the role of such technologies in promoting prosperity and innovation, she pointed out that these technologies can also challenge people's privacy and freedom, which are sacrosanct in a democracy.<sup>290</sup> In her opinion, free and open internet that provides a level playing field to all (irrespective of their ideas), not just to those who have deep pockets, can only guarantee its success.<sup>291</sup> She sought robust rules to protect innovators and consumers in addition to ensuring free, fair, fast, competitive, and equal access to the internet.<sup>292</sup> Pelosi reiterated the commitment of Democrats to safeguard the openness and freedom that characterizes the internet and U.S. culture of innovation in the new millennium.<sup>293</sup> Pelosi promised Americans internet neutrality and privacy.<sup>294</sup>

## 6. Advocating for Middle Class Economics and Pay Equity

Pelosi has also been an advocate for middle class economics and pay equity, similar to ER's priorities. Pelosi addressed the

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<sup>284</sup> *Id.*

<sup>285</sup> *Id.*

<sup>286</sup> *Id.*

<sup>287</sup> *Internet Freedom*, CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI CAL.'S 12TH DISTRICT, <http://pelosi.house.gov/issues/internet-freedom> [<http://perma.cc/2CB8-54L7>] (last visited Feb. 28, 2020).

<sup>288</sup> *Id.*

<sup>289</sup> *Id.*

<sup>290</sup> *Id.*

<sup>291</sup> *Id.*

<sup>292</sup> *Id.*

<sup>293</sup> *Id.*

<sup>294</sup> *Id.*

Department of Labor's San Francisco Forum on Working Families.<sup>295</sup> She sought to communicate to people the plan of the Democratic Party to raise the minimum wage, guarantee equal pay for women, and create good-paying jobs for the middle class.<sup>296</sup> In order for the American economy to progress, active efforts should be made to provide a secure financial future for all.<sup>297</sup> This would help hardworking families buy a home, send their children to school, and save for unforeseen circumstances.<sup>298</sup>

Pelosi credited the U.S. labor force for contributing to the nation's success and observed that they deserve an economy that suits them.<sup>299</sup> In her opinion, Americans need middle-class economics, not the trickle-down system that protects the rich and powerful.<sup>300</sup> It is imperative to increase the federal minimum wage, assure overtime pay, cement collective bargaining rights and the right to organize in the workplace, combat discrimination, and guarantee equal pay for equal work.<sup>301</sup>

American workers drive our nation's success and deserve an economy that works for them. . . . We need middle-class economics, not the failed trickle-down economics that drove our economy into a ditch as House Republicans continue to stack the deck for the wealthy. We must raise the federal minimum wage, extend overtime pay, secure collective bargaining rights and the right to organize in the workplace, protect workers from discrimination and ensure equal pay for equal work.<sup>302</sup>

## 7. Republicans Obstruct Prevention of Gun Violence

Gun violence and regulation is a topic of high importance in today's society, one which Pelosi has been working on for some time. On the National Day of Action for Commonsense Gun Violence Prevention, Pelosi joined Bay Area members of Congress, law enforcement, community leaders, and survivors of gun violence.<sup>303</sup>

Tragically, each day ninety-one people in America are killed by guns. Too many families in our nation bare the painful stories of loved ones lost to gun violence and this heartbreak ripples through our

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<sup>295</sup> *Jobs and Economic Justice*, CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI CAL'S 12TH DISTRICT, <http://pelosi.house.gov/issues/jobs-and-economic-justice> [<http://perma.cc/CTT9-ZKN5>] (last visited Feb. 28, 2020).

<sup>296</sup> *Id.*

<sup>297</sup> *Id.*

<sup>298</sup> *Id.*

<sup>299</sup> *Id.*

<sup>300</sup> *Id.*

<sup>301</sup> *Id.*

<sup>302</sup> *Id.*

<sup>303</sup> *Gun Violence Prevention*, CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI CAL'S 12TH DISTRICT, <http://pelosi.house.gov/issues/gun-violence-prevention> [<http://perma.cc/BDM4-63KH>] (last visited Feb. 28, 2020).

communities with each new gun death. Americans deserve a nation where their homes, their neighborhoods, their dance clubs, their places of worship and their classrooms are free from fear.<sup>304</sup>

Pelosi reminded members of Congress of the pledge they made while assuming their offices; they promised to safeguard the American people.<sup>305</sup> In order to keep it, Congressmen and Congresswomen ought to do whatever possible to protect their communities from the menace of gun violence.<sup>306</sup> Although she favored former President Barack Obama's holistic approach to check antecedents and implement extant law, her view was that such simple steps cannot supplant any Congressional action.<sup>307</sup> Her work on gun violence regulation has crossed many years and spans more than one presidency.

Pelosi lamented that even after the horrible mass shooting at Pulse Night Club in Orlando, Republicans in the House of Representatives blocked a vote on legislation aimed at introducing rigorous background checks and the No Fly, No Buy bill to prevent individuals on the terrorist watch list from purchasing guns.<sup>308</sup> Interestingly, this demand was supported by eighty-five percent of U.S. citizens.<sup>309</sup>

On December 16, 2019, Pelosi issued a statement to commemorate the tragic gun shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut in 2012.<sup>310</sup> Twenty-six innocent lives were lost in that frightening incident.<sup>311</sup> Recalling the measures taken by Democrats in the House of Representatives to stop spiraling gun violence and protect lives, Pelosi regretted that Republicans invariably impeded such legislative initiatives.<sup>312</sup> She added that the resistance by Republicans persisted in spite of the fact that shooter lockdown drills had become order of the day for a generation.<sup>313</sup> Listening to the voices of young leaders struggling to save their lives, House Democrats passed the Bipartisan Background Check Act and the Enhanced Background Checks Act, to stop routines of gun

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<sup>304</sup> *Id.*

<sup>305</sup> *Id.*

<sup>306</sup> *Id.*

<sup>307</sup> *Id.*

<sup>308</sup> *Id.*

<sup>309</sup> *Id.*

<sup>310</sup> *Pelosi Statement Marking Seven Years Since the Shooting in Newtown*, CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI CAL.'S 12TH DISTRICT (Dec. 16, 2019), <http://pelosi.house.gov/news/press-releases/pelosi-statement-marking-seven-years-since-the-shooting-in-newtown> [<http://perma.cc/Y6VT-MYPN>].

<sup>311</sup> *Id.*

<sup>312</sup> *Id.*

<sup>313</sup> *Id.*

violence and safeguard children.<sup>314</sup> Unfortunately, Senate Leader Mitch McConnell was reluctant to pass these crucial bills which could stop the bloodshed.<sup>315</sup> Senate Leader McConnell remains a mute spectator to the loss of 100 innocent lives to senseless violence.<sup>316</sup> Despite the common need to reduce gun violence, finding bipartisan support has been a difficult process. Pelosi has been fighting against the opposition from the Republican Party.

Pelosi stressed that Americans want effective action to end the horrible gun violence because it devastates families and communities.<sup>317</sup> She promised that: “In memory of those we lost in Newtown, and in cities and town across the country, House Democrats will never rest until we make our schools, houses of worship and other public places safe for our children to grow and thrive.”<sup>318</sup>

Unfortunately, Pelosi is not new to issuing commemorative statements. On February 14, 2020, Pelosi issued a statement to commemorate the conclusion of two years since the shooting in Parkland, Florida, in which seventeen innocent people were killed and seventeen others were injured at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.<sup>319</sup> She said this tragedy was “part of an epidemic of gun violence”<sup>320</sup> that has “torn families and communities apart across the country.”<sup>321</sup> She again criticized Senator McConnell for miserably failing to do anything to stop the deadly tragedy of gun violence that occurs almost daily across the nation.<sup>322</sup> Pelosi reiterated the commitment and support of Democrats to the cause of ending the menace of gun violence.<sup>323</sup>

## 8. Commitment to Quality and Affordable Health Care

One of Pelosi’s most prominent legislative moments has been her involvement in affordable health care.<sup>324</sup> On February 6, 2020, Pelosi issued a statement after the House of Representatives passed House Resolution 826.<sup>325</sup> The Resolution shows the

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<sup>314</sup> *Id.*

<sup>315</sup> *Id.*

<sup>316</sup> *Id.*

<sup>317</sup> *Id.*

<sup>318</sup> *Id.*

<sup>319</sup> *Pelosi Statement on Two Years Since Parkland Shooting*, CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI CAL.’S 12TH DISTRICT (Feb. 14, 2020), <http://pelosi.house.gov/news/press-releases/pelosi-statement-on-two-years-since-parkland-shooting> [<http://perma.cc/D2YK-SWKV>].

<sup>320</sup> *Id.*

<sup>321</sup> *Id.*

<sup>322</sup> *Id.*

<sup>323</sup> *Id.*

<sup>324</sup> Stolberg, *supra* note 196.

<sup>325</sup> *Pelosi Statement on the Passage of Disapproval Resolution Against President Trump’s Attack on Medicaid*, CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI CAL.’S 12TH DISTRICT (Feb. 6, 2020),

House's disapproval of the Trump Administration's detrimental measures toward Medicaid.<sup>326</sup> This was in response to the Administration's illegal Medicaid block grant plan to limit and reduce Medicaid.<sup>327</sup> The statement criticized the White House's Medicaid block grant scheme as it directly attacked an essential lifeline for hundreds of thousands of families.<sup>328</sup> It cautioned the Administration against depriving Medicaid recipients of lifesaving drugs, extracting unaffordable premiums, or leaving vulnerable families exposed to whopping medical bills.<sup>329</sup> Democrats, and Pelosi, were against the actions taken by the current administration. Pelosi stated:

In the courts and in Congress, House Democrats are fighting to protect the right of every American to access quality, affordable health care. While the President continues his all-out attack on Americans' health care, Democrats are working to lower health care costs and the price of prescription drugs, protect individuals with pre-existing conditions and strengthen the pillars of health and financial security for every American.<sup>330</sup>

In order to further sharpen her principled fight with Republicans on the issue of health care in the public domain, on February 4, 2020, Pelosi announced the names of her guests for the State of the Union address who have suffered because of President Donald Trump's policy offensive against "protections for people with pre-existing conditions, broken promise to negotiate lower prescription drug prices, and broader health care sabotage."<sup>331</sup> It is noteworthy that House and Senate Democrats brought over eighty health care advocates, doctors, and patients from across the nation as guests to the State of the Union.<sup>332</sup> They included California Surgeon General, Dr. Nadine Burke Harris, an award-winning physician, researcher, and San Francisco-based advocate known for serving vulnerable communities and fighting the basic causes of health disparities.<sup>333</sup> Another such guest was San Francisco-based twelve-year-old Jonah Cohen and his mother Jennifer Pliner.<sup>334</sup>

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<http://pelosi.house.gov/news/press-releases/pelosi-statement-on-the-passage-of-disapproval-resolution-against-president> [<http://perma.cc/9ANA-D3KS>].

<sup>326</sup> *Id.*

<sup>327</sup> *Id.*

<sup>328</sup> *Id.*

<sup>329</sup> *Id.*

<sup>330</sup> *Id.*

<sup>331</sup> *Pelosi Announces State of the Union Guests with Health Care Stories*, CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI CAL.'S 12TH DISTRICT (Feb. 4, 2020), <http://pelosi.house.gov/news/press-releases/pelosi-announces-state-of-the-union-guests-with-health-care-stories> [<http://perma.cc/RBG4-88W8>].

<sup>332</sup> *Id.*

<sup>333</sup> *Id.*

<sup>334</sup> *Id.*

In 2017, Jonah was diagnosed with Type I diabetes.<sup>335</sup> He is afraid of needles, but he tries to live a normal life.<sup>336</sup> Other guests were twins Cheyanne Faulkner and Morgan Faulkner from San Francisco that have Type I diabetes and volunteer as patient advocates.<sup>337</sup> Both of them were active members of the Young Leadership Committee that offered emotional, social, and practical support to young adults with Type I diabetes and their families.<sup>338</sup> Yet another guest announced by Speaker Pelosi was a Maryland-based courageous Little Lobbyist, Xiomara Hung, along with her mother, Elena Hung.<sup>339</sup> Xiomara spent the first five months of her life in the hospital and then wanted to see the world outside.<sup>340</sup> Xiomara had Tracheobronchomalacia, Chronic Lung Disease, Chronic Kidney Disease, and Global Development Delays.<sup>341</sup> She had a tracheostomy and heavily depended upon ventilators and oxygen. She required a feeding tube as well for her nutrition.<sup>342</sup> For Xiomara, access to quality health care covered by health insurance meant she received the required level of care during an extended NICU hospitalization, and thereafter she could be at home with her family and be regularly monitored by specialists in outpatient appointments.<sup>343</sup> Medicaid enormously helped Xiomara get habilitative therapies.<sup>344</sup> In such a challenging scenario, if lifetime ceilings or pre-existing conditions restrictions were to be restored, she could not be insured, her family could go bankrupt, and she would not get the requisite medical care thereby irreversibly deteriorating the quality of her life.<sup>345</sup> These individuals represented the people and values that Pelosi was advocating for with her efforts on affordable health care.

This unique mobilization of the affected people by Speaker Nancy Pelosi, on the occasion of State of the Union address, was a marvelous effort to reach out to the helpless and hapless patients and their families. It helped draw the attention of all stakeholders towards the scale, magnitude, and gravity of the problem of healthcare millions of Americans face.

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<sup>335</sup> *Id.*

<sup>336</sup> *Id.*

<sup>337</sup> *Id.*

<sup>338</sup> *Id.*

<sup>339</sup> *Id.*

<sup>340</sup> *Id.*

<sup>341</sup> *Id.*

<sup>342</sup> *Id.*

<sup>343</sup> *Id.*

<sup>344</sup> *Id.*

<sup>345</sup> *Id.*

### 9. Pelosi Reiterates Her Support for Abortion Rights

Pelosi has also been a supporter of abortion rights. On January 22, 2020, Pelosi issued a statement to mark the 47th anniversary of the landmark *Roe v. Wade*<sup>346</sup> decision of the U.S. Supreme Court that upheld women's right to make decisions on reproductive issues.<sup>347</sup> The statement said that the principle laid down by the Court in *Roe v. Wade* ensures that "a woman's reproductive health decisions are her own."<sup>348</sup> This basic principle has its genesis in the American values of liberty and equality for all.<sup>349</sup> It should be zealously upheld amidst desperate efforts to weaken constitutional rights of women.<sup>350</sup> Pelosi criticized Republicans for attempting to "insert themselves into women's private health care decisions."<sup>351</sup> According to Pelosi, for American women and their families, the brazen Republican conspiracy against abortion rights of women threatens to "jeopardize their future"<sup>352</sup> and reverse years of "progress towards women's equality."<sup>353</sup> Pelosi praised American women for boldly resisting Republicans' "outrageous efforts to undermine the landmark *Roe v. Wade* decision."<sup>354</sup> She expressed solidarity with these women, and reaffirmed unwavering commitment of House Democrats to "end[] the attack on women's health care and fundamental rights,"<sup>355</sup> and promised "to protect and build upon the legacy of *Roe v. Wade*."<sup>356</sup> The Democratic leader promised to provide "all women . . . access to the comprehensive health care they need and [ensure they] are treated equally under the law."<sup>357</sup> This is an endeavor by Pelosi to uphold constitutional and legal rights of American women, especially abortion rights.

### 10. Commitment to Reducing the Incidence of HIV and AIDS

Since her first day in Congress, Pelosi consciously made combating the epidemic of HIV and AIDS a paramount

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<sup>346</sup> 410 U.S. 113 (1973).

<sup>347</sup> *Pelosi Statement on the Anniversary of Roe v. Wade*, CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI CAL'S 12TH DISTRICT (Jan. 22, 2020), <http://pelosi.house.gov/news/press-releases/pelosi-statement-on-the-anniversary-of-roe-v-wade-0> [<http://perma.cc/R5L6-RL4J>].

<sup>348</sup> *Id.*

<sup>349</sup> *Id.*

<sup>350</sup> *Id.*

<sup>351</sup> *Id.*

<sup>352</sup> *Id.*

<sup>353</sup> *Id.*

<sup>354</sup> *Id.*

<sup>355</sup> *Id.*

<sup>356</sup> *Id.*

<sup>357</sup> *Id.*

concern.<sup>358</sup> Pelosi said, in her maiden speech on the House floor on June 9, 1987, “now we must take leadership of course in the crisis of AIDS. And I look forward to working with you on that.”<sup>359</sup> On the basis of the lessons drawn from the communitycentered care model of San Francisco, Pelosi sought to expedite development of an HIV vaccine, broaden access to Medicaid for people suffering from HIV, and enhance funds for the Ryan White CARE Act, the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (“ADAP”), the Minority HIV/AIDS Initiative, and other research, care, treatment, prevention, and search for a cure initiatives essential to people either living with HIV/AIDS or vulnerable to HIV/AIDS.<sup>360</sup> It may be recalled that in 1989, Pelosi and Representatives Jim McDermott and Charles Schumer introduced the AIDS Opportunity Housing Act.<sup>361</sup> It led to the Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS initiative.<sup>362</sup> This was a critical lifeline for people who had contracted HIV and AIDS.<sup>363</sup>

Pelosi happened to engage in some of the earliest meetings for the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt.<sup>364</sup> She embroidered her own patch for the flower girl in her wedding who unfortunately died of AIDS.<sup>365</sup> Pelosi also helped secure the much needed permits from the National Park Service to pave the way for displaying the AIDS memorial quilt on the National Mall.<sup>366</sup> In 1996, Pelosi led the passage of legislation to designate San Francisco’s AIDS Memorial Grove, located in Golden Gate Park, as a national memorial.<sup>367</sup>

Pelosi’s efforts to control HIV/AIDS were not confined to the U.S. alone.<sup>368</sup> In order to control the global pandemic, in her capacity as ranking Democrat on the State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, Pelosi mobilized the efforts to increase the U.S. funding for bilateral AIDS initiatives in dire need of international attention and lacking adequate funds.<sup>369</sup> In 2000, she provided leadership in the House Appropriations Committee to provide the first U.S. contribution

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<sup>358</sup> *HIV/AIDS*, CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI CAL.’S 12TH DISTRICT, <http://pelosi.house.gov/issues/hiv aids> [<http://perma.cc/JH3C-3QZ2>] (last visited Mar. 11, 2020).

<sup>359</sup> *Id.*

<sup>360</sup> *Id.*

<sup>361</sup> *Id.*

<sup>362</sup> *Id.*

<sup>363</sup> *Id.*

<sup>364</sup> *Id.*

<sup>365</sup> *Id.*

<sup>366</sup> *Id.*

<sup>367</sup> *Id.*

<sup>368</sup> *Id.*

<sup>369</sup> *Id.*

to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria.<sup>370</sup> She also led efforts to pass amendments on the House floor to raise U.S. bilateral AIDS funding and debt waivers for the poorest nations.<sup>371</sup> During her role as Speaker of the House, and the Bush and Obama Administrations, the U.S. contribution for global health initiatives doubled from less than \$4 billion annually in the 2006 fiscal year to over \$8 billion in the 2010 fiscal year.<sup>372</sup> The House doubled bilateral funding for global AIDS, and also doubled the U.S. contribution to the Global Fund.<sup>373</sup>

In 2008, the House of Representatives, under the dynamic leadership of Pelosi, raised the international AIDS initiatives by adopting the Lantos-Hyde U.S. Global Leadership Act against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. This move had authorized \$48 billion over five years from fiscal year 2009 through fiscal year 2014.<sup>374</sup> There was an increase of \$35 billion as compared to the immediately preceding five years, and \$20 billion more than had been advocated for by President Bush.<sup>375</sup>

During her time as House Speaker, Pelosi also witnessed the domestic discretionary funding for HIV/AIDS rise by over half a billion dollars between the 2006 fiscal year and the 2010 fiscal year.<sup>376</sup> Congress has lifted the ban on federal funding for syringe exchange and the travel ban for people with HIV/AIDS.<sup>377</sup> Pelosi relentlessly pursued these legislative battles for several years in Congress.<sup>378</sup> She also fought for the adoption of the ACA.<sup>379</sup> The ACA helped those diagnosed with HIV/AIDS by widening access to Medicaid for people with HIV, improving Medicare Part D (prescription drug coverage) for people participating in the ADAP, stopping discrimination based on pre-existing conditions, and removing annual as well as lifetime restrictions on health benefits.<sup>380</sup> These initiatives rescued millions from the death trap by offering testing, counseling, and better care to highly vulnerable patients globally.<sup>381</sup>

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<sup>370</sup> *Id.*

<sup>371</sup> *Id.*

<sup>372</sup> *Id.*

<sup>373</sup> *Id.*

<sup>374</sup> *Id.*

<sup>375</sup> *Id.*

<sup>376</sup> *Id.*

<sup>377</sup> *Id.*

<sup>378</sup> *Id.*

<sup>379</sup> *Id.*

<sup>380</sup> *Id.*

<sup>381</sup> *Id.*

## 11. Support for LGBTQ Rights

Pelosi's support and activism also spreads to equality and support for LGBTQ rights. Pelosi attended the ceremony to commemorate the Harvey Milk Forever Stamp's first day of issue.<sup>382</sup> It was an attempt to honor the life and legacy of Harvey Milk, a San Francisco native who devoted his life to equality.<sup>383</sup> Pelosi underlined San Francisco's large and vibrant LGBTQ community and its reputation for advocacy to ensure equal rights for all.<sup>384</sup> She said that since her arrival in Congress, "ending discrimination against gays and lesbians has been a top priority."<sup>385</sup> She invariably supported laws "to better reflect the diverse society in which we live."<sup>386</sup> She acknowledged the role of Congress in helping move towards the goal of "equal rights for every American."<sup>387</sup> Pelosi highlighted protection against violence by passage of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, besides providing equal visitation rights for all hospital patients and bringing an end to discrimination in the military by repealing the discriminatory "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.<sup>388</sup> Pelosi joined Democratic leaders in the House and Senate to introduce the Equality Act.<sup>389</sup> It is a comprehensive bill to stop discrimination against LGBTQ Americans forever.<sup>390</sup> She promised to continue her struggle until there was an end to discrimination in the workplace, all American families are treated equally under the law, and bullying of LGBTQ youth in American schools and in society would cease.<sup>391</sup> She added that policies ought to be based on the ideals of "fairness, equality and justice."<sup>392</sup>

## 12. Israel-Palestine Conflict

Pelosi's work also expands beyond the confines of the U.S. On February 13, 2020, Pelosi issued a statement on the United Nations Human Rights Council's announcement on Israel.<sup>393</sup>

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<sup>382</sup> *LGBTQ*, CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI CAL.'S 12TH DISTRICT, <http://pelosi.house.gov/issues/lgbtq> [<http://perma.cc/C49U-KR5C>] (last visited Feb. 29, 2020).

<sup>383</sup> *Id.*

<sup>384</sup> *Id.*

<sup>385</sup> *Id.*

<sup>386</sup> *Id.*

<sup>387</sup> *Id.*

<sup>388</sup> *Id.*

<sup>389</sup> *Id.*

<sup>390</sup> *Id.*

<sup>391</sup> *Id.*

<sup>392</sup> *Id.*

<sup>393</sup> *Pelosi Statement on United Nations Human Rights Council's Announcement on Israel*, CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI CAL.'S 12TH DISTRICT (Feb. 13, 2020), <http://pelosi.house.gov/news/press-releases/pelosi-statement-on-united-nations-human-rights-council-s-announcement-on-israel> [<http://perma.cc/STE2-7ERC>].

Pelosi said, on the issue of setting up a code of conduct for businesses operating in Israel, that the U.S. House of Representatives has been quite clear. For example, on July 23, 2019, the House of Representatives voted to:

Oppose the Global Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement (BDS) targeting Israel, including efforts to target United States companies that are engaged in commercial activities that are legal under United States law, and all efforts to delegitimize the State of Israel.<sup>394</sup>

As a result, the U.S. House of Representatives was concerned that the United Nations Human Rights Council's announcement hardly helps settle the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.<sup>395</sup> The statement added, "Therefore, we are concerned that the U.N. Human Rights Council's announcement is not in furtherance of resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict."<sup>396</sup>

### 13. War Powers Resolution and Commitment to Upholding the Constitution

Pelosi's world influence also went to matters distinct from the Israel-Palestine conflict. On February 13, 2020, Pelosi's press office issued a statement in light of the Senate adopting a Joint War Powers Resolution.<sup>397</sup> Senator Tim Kaine played a key role in passing this resolution, which seeks to curb the President's military action in Iran.<sup>398</sup> In her statement, Pelosi suggested that the passage of the robust War Powers Resolution by the Senate showed that it was aligning with the House of Representatives to discharge its primary Congressional obligation of safeguarding the people of the U.S.<sup>399</sup> Pelosi criticized the policy of the Trump Administration to embark on the path of conflict with Iran without ever involving Congress.<sup>400</sup> This policy harms Americans working in that region.<sup>401</sup> The White House neglects views of ordinary Americans facing the consequences of such policies.<sup>402</sup>

The President's reckless decision to engage in hostilities against Iran without consulting Congress continues to endanger our servicemembers, diplomats and others. Yet, for weeks now, the

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<sup>394</sup> *Id.*

<sup>395</sup> *Id.*

<sup>396</sup> *Id.*

<sup>397</sup> *Pelosi Statement on Senate Passage of Joint War Powers Resolution*, CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI CAL.'S 12TH DISTRICT (Feb. 13, 2020), <http://pelosi.house.gov/news/press-releases/pelosi-statement-on-senate-passage-of-joint-war-powers-resolution> [<http://perma.cc/T84U-3GTA>].

<sup>398</sup> *Id.*

<sup>399</sup> *Id.*

<sup>400</sup> *Id.*

<sup>401</sup> *Id.*

<sup>402</sup> *Id.*

Administration has kept the Congress and American people in the dark about its actions and lack of strategy, including the resulting threats to our troops. More than 100 servicemembers have now been diagnosed with Traumatic Brain Injury from Iran's retaliatory strike, yet the President dismisses their wounds of war as 'headaches' and as being "not very serious."<sup>403</sup>

Pelosi stated that the House of Representatives is leading this legislative struggle to curtail the presidential powers on declaring wars.<sup>404</sup> Representative Elissa Slotkin also provided leadership in this matter.<sup>405</sup>

The House has maintained a drumbeat of action to limit the President's dangerous military action and to save American lives by passing our War Powers Resolution under the leadership of Congresswoman Elissa Slotkin. We have also passed Congresswoman Barbara Lee's legislation to repeal the 2002 Iraq Authorization for Use of Military Force and legislation under Congressman Ro Khanna to prohibit funding for military action against Iran not authorized by Congress. Now, we will prepare to take up Senator Kaine's Joint Resolution in the coming weeks.<sup>406</sup>

The House leader reiterated the need for the President to take cognizance of the views of Congress and fellow citizens on lessening rising tensions and avoid wars.<sup>407</sup> Her press statement read:

The President needs to listen to the will of Congress and the American people and work with Congress on a de-escalatory strategy that will protect American lives and interests. America and the world cannot afford war.<sup>408</sup>

### C. The Cumulative Impacts of Women on U.S. Politics

Many of Pelosi's efforts and triumphs demonstrate not only that women can excel, but that America reaps the benefits of successful women in U.S. politics.

In 2014, Pelosi recalled her trip to Seneca Falls, New York, where she was inducted in the National Women's Hall of Fame.<sup>409</sup> This was of course a moment of pride to her. She was thrilled because after the votes, nineteen of her House colleagues—women colleagues—came up there.<sup>410</sup> She vividly recounted how the crowd reacted to seeing a diverse group of

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<sup>403</sup> *Id.*

<sup>404</sup> *Id.*

<sup>405</sup> *Id.*

<sup>406</sup> *Id.*

<sup>407</sup> *Id.*

<sup>408</sup> *Id.*

<sup>409</sup> Nancy Pelosi, *When Women Succeed, America Succeeds*, 25 HASTINGS WOMEN'S L.J. 173, 173 (2014).

<sup>410</sup> *Id.*

women Congressional Members.<sup>411</sup> Pelosi said that was, however, a secondary issue to paying respects to what happened at Seneca Falls 165 years ago.<sup>412</sup> When the women colleagues gathered, it showed their courage. Once upon a time, women were not even allowed to speak in mixed company, but there, those women were breaking out, fighting for women's rights. They quoted the Declaration of Independence, that every man and woman is created equal. Then they said: "Such is now the necessity which constrains [women] to demand the equal station to which they are entitled."<sup>413</sup> According to Pelosi, it was quite exciting.<sup>414</sup> While the work of women in U.S. politics did not start with Pelosi—and it certainly will not end with her—she is a force to be reckoned with and has achieved many noteworthy firsts that serve as a model for future generations of American women.

Thus, Pelosi has made remarkable contributions to U.S. politics by leading from the front and giving priority to public service.

#### IV. IVANKA TRUMP

Ivanka Trump is the First Daughter of the nation and serves in the capacity of advisor to her father President Donald Trump.<sup>415</sup> While Nancy Pelosi's career highlights the influence a woman can wield in elected office, Ivanka demonstrates that influence can also be found by serving in unofficial and appointed capacities. Her story shares similarities with ER's, as each hails from a family with pre-existing social and political connections. It also shares characteristics with Nancy Pelosi's story, because both of these women have taken a front-line role in modern-day U.S. politics.

In her capacity as Advisor to the President, Ivanka has focused her attention "on the education and economic empowerment of women and their families."<sup>416</sup> She also has focused on "job creation and economic growth through workforce development, skills training and entrepreneurship," which all harken back to her business background.<sup>417</sup> Before her father was elected the forty-fifth President of the United States, "Ivanka oversaw development and acquisitions at the Trump Organization."<sup>418</sup> Ivanka negotiated "some of the company's

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<sup>411</sup> *Id.*

<sup>412</sup> *Id.*

<sup>413</sup> *Id.*

<sup>414</sup> *Id.*

<sup>415</sup> *Ivanka Trump*, WHITE HOUSE, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/people/ivanka-trump/> [<http://perma.cc/X9W8-P2K3>] (last visited Feb. 27, 2020).

<sup>416</sup> *Id.*

<sup>417</sup> *Id.*

<sup>418</sup> *Id.*

largest and most complex transactions.”<sup>419</sup> As with ER and Pelosi, Ivanka has used her upbringing and experiences to shape her involvement in U.S. politics. “Ivanka graduated from the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania in 2004.”<sup>420</sup> She has written two books that have been deemed bestsellers by *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal*.<sup>421</sup> Ivanka’s name was featured “in *Fortune* magazine’s prestigious ‘40 Under 40’ list (2014).”<sup>422</sup> She was noted “as a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum in 2015.”<sup>423</sup> Ivanka also appeared “in Time’s [sic] 100 Most Influential list (2017) and Forbes’ [sic] ‘World’s 100 Most Powerful Women’ (2017).”<sup>424</sup> Ivanka has a unique pedestal to stand upon given her public background and notable awards. Each of those accolades has assisted in shoring up her status as a public figure. This public position, along with her political role as advisor to her father, made it possible for her to advocate for women, families, and economic growth.

#### A. Leadership in Workforce Reform

Exercising her position as Advisor to the President, Ivanka Trump made efforts to promote the re-training of the American workforce, in order to combat the shortage of qualified applicants for open positions. In an article entitled “Trump Administration’s Industry-Recognized Apprenticeships Will Keep America Working,” dated June 25, 2019, Ivanka wrote that the surging U.S. economy created “abundant job opportunities.”<sup>425</sup> She claimed, “Tax cuts and deregulation have boosted job creation.”<sup>426</sup> She further claimed, “Since President Donald Trump’s inauguration in January 2017, 5.4 million jobs [were] created and more people [were] working in America than ever before.”<sup>427</sup> She went on to note that “[t]he unemployment rate has dropped to 3.6%,” and that in 2018 the U.S. witnessed “the highest share of people joining [the] labor force from the sidelines . . . .”<sup>428</sup> She pointed out that “job creators around the nation have committed

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<sup>419</sup> *Id.*

<sup>420</sup> *Id.*

<sup>421</sup> *Id.*

<sup>422</sup> *Id.*

<sup>423</sup> *Id.*

<sup>424</sup> *Id.*

<sup>425</sup> Ivanka Trump, *Trump Administration’s Industry-Recognized Apprenticeships Will Keep America Working*, WHITE HOUSE (June 25, 2019), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/articles/trump-administrations-industry-recognized-apprenticeships-will-keep-america-working/> [<http://perma.cc/GPE5-HT79>].

<sup>426</sup> *Id.*

<sup>427</sup> *Id.*

<sup>428</sup> *Id.*

to nearly 10 million training, upskilling or reskilling opportunities for American students and workers.”<sup>429</sup> Ivanka noted that a booming market posed challenges of its own, with “7.4 million open jobs, and for fourteen months in a row, it has had more job openings than job seekers.”<sup>430</sup> She advocated for the U.S. to “look for new ways to empower America’s workforce with the in-demand skills” sought after by employers.<sup>431</sup>

She went on to write:

Our nation needs to empower more industries and professions to embrace apprenticeship opportunities. That is why the Trump administration is proposing a second apprenticeship model: the Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship. The Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship program would stand alongside the Labor Department’s existing registered apprenticeships, which have found success in the building trades. This program would enable industries to come together through associations, consortia, nonprofits and other mechanisms to offer skills education to American students and workers.<sup>432</sup>

### 1. Empowered Women Lead Towards Economic Progress

Ivanka has further used her position to advocate for the economic empowerment of women abroad, as well as at home. Ivanka wrote on April 30, 2019, that the empowerment of women leads to economic progress.<sup>433</sup> She visited Africa to promote the White House’s Women’s Global Development and Prosperity Initiative, “which seeks to reach 50 million women in the developing world by 2025.”<sup>434</sup> She noted that the White House sought to accomplish “this goal by supporting women in the workplace, helping them succeed as entrepreneurs, and by advancing legal reforms that will create greater gender equality.” She considered “the most remarkable part of [her] trip” to be the opportunity it presented to “[connect] with women from across the continent who have overcome tremendous barriers to pave the way to change.”<sup>435</sup> She wrote that the stories of these women served as “tangible proof of what is possible if we deliver smart development assistance to empower women to succeed in their economies.”<sup>436</sup> Ivanka wrote of her experience in Ethiopia, where she met a woman named Sara Abera, who had started a textiles

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<sup>429</sup> *Id.*

<sup>430</sup> *Id.*

<sup>431</sup> *See id.*

<sup>432</sup> *Id.*

<sup>433</sup> *See* Ivanka Trump, *Empowered Women Pave the Way to Economic Progress*, WHITE HOUSE (Apr. 30, 2019), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/articles/empowered-women-pave-way-economic-progress/> [http://perma.cc/F5M5-EDPF].

<sup>434</sup> *Id.*

<sup>435</sup> *Id.*

<sup>436</sup> *Id.*

and pottery manufacturing business fourteen years prior.<sup>437</sup> “With assistance from the United States Agency for International Development (“USAID”) and private sector partners,” Sara “[grew] her business from less than ten to nearly 600 employees.”<sup>438</sup> She noted that the initial investment the USAID made in Sara “creat[ed] a direct multiplier effect, benefiting thousands of families far past the initial investment of American foreign development assistance.”<sup>439</sup>

## 2. Building Workers’ Skills More Effectively

Ivanka has used her position to advocate for increased investment in American workers. In a newspaper column, she wrote about the need for further and better investment in workers.<sup>440</sup> She argued that by developing the skills of workers, and augmenting the strength of the workforce by increasing the engagement of nonworking individuals, the U.S. “economic future could be even brighter.”<sup>441</sup> She noted that initiatives to help American workers re-skill were imperative as artificial intelligence and automation loomed large over the economy.<sup>442</sup> Ivanka advocated for re-skilling efforts to bridge the gap faced by American employers in order to overcome the shortage of skilled employees.<sup>443</sup> She observed, “Smarter investment in our workers will ensure that a more flexible workforce is ready to continue this growth into the future.”<sup>444</sup> She noted that the economic outlook of the country hinged upon how it responded to an economy undergoing rapid and uncertain change in the face of increased automation in manufacturing.<sup>445</sup>

## B. Advancing the Cause of Paid Family Leave

Another area in which Ivanka has expressed support in her political capacity has been on the issue of paid family leave. Ivanka recalled in an opinion piece that in September 2016, then-Republican presidential candidate Donald J. Trump’s call

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<sup>437</sup> *Id.*

<sup>438</sup> *Id.*

<sup>439</sup> *Id.*

<sup>440</sup> See Ivanka Trump, *We Must Build Workers’ Skills More Effectively to Ensure a Bright Economic Future*, WHITE HOUSE (July 24, 2018), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/articles/must-build-workers-skills-effectively-ensure-bright-economic-future/> [<http://perma.cc/9TTJ-BBGC>].

<sup>441</sup> Ivanka Trump, *Paid Family Leave is an Investment in America’s Families—It Deserves Bipartisan Support*, WHITE HOUSE (July 11, 2018), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/articles/paid-family-leave-investment-americas-families-deserves-bipartisan-support/> [<http://perma.cc/R68S-4S2Y>].

<sup>442</sup> *Id.*

<sup>443</sup> *Id.*

<sup>444</sup> *Id.*

<sup>445</sup> *Id.*

for a national family paid leave plan was termed by political commentators as a break from the past, “a striking departure from GOP orthodoxy.”<sup>446</sup> She endorsed the views of commentators and pointed out that after the election of Donald Trump as President, conservatives were building a majority in support of this policy.<sup>447</sup> While social conservatives hailed paid leave “as a way to forge more tightly bonded families and protect infants and parents at their most vulnerable,”<sup>448</sup> the fiscal conservatives conceded that such a policy would enhance “efficiency of increasing workforce attachment”<sup>449</sup> and “minimiz[e] government dependence.”<sup>450</sup> Ivanka claimed there was consensus that birth rates in the U.S. were the lowest ever and this phenomenon would have far-reaching consequences upon the American society and economy.<sup>451</sup> Proper implementation of such a policy would make American citizens more independent.<sup>452</sup> In her view, “[i]f executed responsibly, paid family leave is targeted government action with the right incentives—designed to increase the independence, health and dignity of our citizens.”<sup>453</sup> The advantage of paid family leave is that parents can pay attention to both work and family life.<sup>454</sup> She urged members of Congress to build on the progress made by the nation since the passage of Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.<sup>455</sup> This law enabled eligible American workers to take advantage of unpaid leave for twelve weeks.<sup>456</sup> Although Democrats and Republican Congressmen and Congresswomen individually support the idea of paid family leave, they are unable to secure majority or reach a bipartisan consensus.<sup>457</sup> Republicans want effective solutions to “empower American working families.”<sup>458</sup>

### C. Women’s Global Development and Prosperity Initiative

On February 15, 2020, Ivanka visited Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates (“UAE”), ahead of two-day-long Global Women’s

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<sup>446</sup> *Id.*

<sup>447</sup> *Id.*

<sup>448</sup> *Id.*

<sup>449</sup> *Id.*

<sup>450</sup> *Id.*

<sup>451</sup> *Id.*

<sup>452</sup> *Id.*

<sup>453</sup> *Id.*

<sup>454</sup> *See id.*

<sup>455</sup> *Id.*

<sup>456</sup> *Id.*

<sup>457</sup> *See id.*

<sup>458</sup> *Id.*

Forum in Dubai.<sup>459</sup> She interacted with women business leaders at Louvre Abu Dhabi.<sup>460</sup> Ivanka discussed economic empowerment of women in the UAE with businesswomen and government officials.<sup>461</sup> She also announced that Senators Lindsey Graham and Jeanne Shaheen supported her Women’s Global Development and Prosperity Initiative.<sup>462</sup> She claimed that the proposed law would make economic empowerment of women a top priority of the U.S. foreign policy.<sup>463</sup> This would ensure that such initiatives continue even after the Trump administration.<sup>464</sup> Passage of such a law is a “long overdue goal.”<sup>465</sup> The Graham-Shaheen Bill ought to be passed by both the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives and Republican-led Senate before the President can sign it into law.<sup>466</sup>

On February 16, 2020, Ivanka fortified her position “as the global spokesperson for women’s economic empowerment.”<sup>467</sup> She told attendees at the Global Women’s Forum Dubai and World Bank Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (“We-Fi”) Middle East and North Africa Regional Summit in Dubai that efforts made by her and international banks during the last two years could lead to a \$7 trillion boost in the world gross domestic product, with a \$600 billion boost in the Middle East itself.<sup>468</sup> In her opinion, this staggering figure is not just an indicator of economic growth.<sup>469</sup> Ivanka noted:

That number represents far more than an economic boom—it represents millions of lives full of promise—mothers who could provide for their children, daughters who could be the first to graduate high school, and young women who could start businesses and become job creators. This is the future we can and must achieve together.<sup>470</sup>

In her capacity as a senior advisor to the U.S. President, Ivanka “has emerged as the domestic jobs czar,” and globally “as a champion of women” in search of funds aspiring to run

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<sup>459</sup> The Associated Press, *Ivanka Trump in Abu Dhabi Ahead of Women’s Conference*, BLOOMBERG (Feb. 15, 2020, 7:55 AM), <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-02-15/ivanka-trump-in-abu-dhabi-ahead-of-women-s-conference> [http://perma.cc/444L-FWFT].

<sup>460</sup> *Id.*

<sup>461</sup> *Id.*

<sup>462</sup> *Id.*

<sup>463</sup> *Id.*

<sup>464</sup> *Id.*

<sup>465</sup> *Id.*

<sup>466</sup> *Id.*

<sup>467</sup> Paul Bedard, *Ivanka Trump Takes Lead in Global Fight to Empower Women, Could Boost GDP \$7 Trillion*, WASH. EXAMINER (Feb. 16, 2020, 8:15 AM), <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/washington-secrets/ivanka-trump-takes-lead-in-global-fight-to-empower-women-could-boost-gdp-7-trillion> [http://perma.cc/223G-QKNL].

<sup>468</sup> *Id.*

<sup>469</sup> *Id.*

<sup>470</sup> *Id.*

businesses, especially in those nations where “sexual discrimination is often crushing.”<sup>471</sup>

#### D. Women Charting their Own Courses

The 2017 Global Entrepreneurship Summit (“GES”), held at Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh, India, was co-hosted by the Indian and U.S. governments.<sup>472</sup> Its theme was “Women First, Prosperity for All.”<sup>473</sup> Ivanka, in her opening address to the GES, congratulated women entrepreneurs because they constituted the majority of the 1,500 attendees.<sup>474</sup> Ivanka said, “Only when women are empowered to thrive, will our families, our economies, and our societies reach their fullest potential.”<sup>475</sup> She recalled her experience as a former entrepreneur, employer, and executive in an industry which is heavily male-dominated.<sup>476</sup> Ivanka went on to note that women are required to do more work than men and are at the same time expected to look after their families.<sup>477</sup> She expressed regret that in some countries, women do not have property rights, are prohibited from travelling freely, or are prohibited from seeking jobs without their husbands’ permission.<sup>478</sup> Ivanka further noted that in other nations, due to tremendous cultural and family pressure, women lack time and freedom to work outside their homes.<sup>479</sup> She hailed progress made by developed and developing nations in passing equitable laws, but added that much more needed to be done.<sup>480</sup>

After her father’s election, Ivanka left her “businesses for the privilege of serving our country, and empowering all Americans—including women—to succeed.”<sup>481</sup> She observed that, despite the phenomenal growth in the last few years of the rate at which women become entrepreneurs, women in the U.S. encounter obstacles to “starting, owning, and growing their businesses.”<sup>482</sup> Ivanka further asserted that the Trump administration was pursuing policies that help women, impart

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<sup>471</sup> *Id.*

<sup>472</sup> *Ivanka Trump Gets the Red Carpet Treatment in Indian City of Hyderabad*, FORTUNE (Nov. 28, 2017, 3:38 AM), <http://fortune.com/2017/11/28/ivanka-trump-visit-to-hyderabad/> [<http://perma.cc/Y22W-EYBK>].

<sup>473</sup> *Complete Text of Ivanka Trump’s Hyderabad Speech*, NDTV (Nov. 28, 2017, 5:51 PM), <http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/complete-text-of-ivanka-trumps-hyderabad-speech-1781045> [<http://perma.cc/U8Q3-J8P8>].

<sup>474</sup> *Id.*

<sup>475</sup> *Id.*

<sup>476</sup> *Id.*

<sup>477</sup> *Id.*

<sup>478</sup> *Id.*

<sup>479</sup> *Id.*

<sup>480</sup> *Id.*

<sup>481</sup> *Id.*

<sup>482</sup> *Id.*

skills to workers, remove unnecessary official obstacles to innovation, and encourage entrepreneurship.<sup>483</sup> Addressing the Trump administration's response to the plight of female business owners, Ivanka said:

Our administration is advancing policies that enable women to pursue their careers and care for their families, policies that improve workforce development and skills training, and policies that lift government barriers and fuel entrepreneurship so that Americans can turn their dreams into their incredible legacies.<sup>484</sup>

Referring to a report published in *Harvard Business Review*, Ivanka said "investors ask men questions about their potential for gains"<sup>485</sup> while women are asked "questions about their potential for loss."<sup>486</sup> She attributed this mindset in part as the reason why female entrepreneurs received less than three percent of venture capital funding in 2016.<sup>487</sup> She further noted that the Trump Administration was attempting to alter this trend.<sup>488</sup> She cited the U.S. Small Business Administration's increased lending to women by more than 500 million dollars in 2017 alone.<sup>489</sup> Ivanka added that the Hyderabad Summit was concrete proof of a U.S. initiative to connect entrepreneurs across the globe.<sup>490</sup> She congratulated and thanked the more than 350 U.S. business leaders present at Hyderabad who were selected to represent the business talent of America.<sup>491</sup>

Critics, however, blamed Ivanka for doing little to raise her voice on labor and human rights violations in China.<sup>492</sup> They claimed China is the principal source of her merchandise and lamented that Ivanka did not take a public stand on blatant violations of rights in her brand's own supply chain.<sup>493</sup>

An online newspaper wrote that there were several reasons for Ivanka to visit India.<sup>494</sup> *Daily O* noted that Ivanka's visit to India could be explained in part by her personal interest in

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483 *Id.*

484 *Id.*

485 *Id.*

486 *Id.*

487 *See id.*

488 *Id.*

489 *Id.*

490 *Id.*

491 *Id.*

492 *See Ivanka Trump's India Visit Raises Questions About Her Brand*, CNBC (Nov. 28, 2017, 9:49 AM), <http://www.cnbc.com/2017/11/28/ivanka-trumps-india-visit-raises-questions-about-her-brand.html> [<http://perma.cc/6ANM-V5PN>].

493 *Id.*

494 *5 Reasons Why Ivanka Trump is Visiting India*, DAILY O (Nov. 28, 2017), <http://www.dailyo.in/variety/ivanka-trump-narendra-modi-hyderabad-global-entrepreneurship-summit-2017/story/1/20813.html> [<http://perma.cc/4AHS-Q9NS>].

business, the importance of affirming the U.S.-India geopolitical relationship, laying the groundwork for a visit by President Trump to India, and Ivanka's own desire to consolidate her place in the White House.<sup>495</sup> This was her first visit to India as a senior advisor to the U.S. President.<sup>496</sup> Her rising influence in the White House had raised questions, "as she was on her way to becoming the most 'influential first daughter.'"<sup>497</sup> This was reportedly the reason why then-Secretary of State Rex Tillerson disallowed senior State Department officials from accompanying Ivanka during her visit to India.<sup>498</sup> Over 1,200 young entrepreneurs from 127 nations, mostly women, attended the three-day summit in Hyderabad.<sup>499</sup> Ivanka was behind the U.S. World Bank We-Fi.<sup>500</sup> Former Secretary of State John Kerry had previously represented the U.S. in this high-profile event.<sup>501</sup> Attending this prestigious event was likely to strengthen Ivanka's position in the White House.<sup>502</sup>

## V. CONCLUSION

Eleanor Roosevelt, Nancy Pelosi, and Ivanka Trump have each made unique contributions to United States politics. Politics does not merely mean participating in elections and winning votes. Public service, progressive reform, advocacy, lobbying for social issues, and using one's influence to support needy people are among the many political objectives. There cannot be doubt that from time to time notions of what is truly in the public interest will change, and advocated-for reforms will change along with them. And yet, these three remarkable women have demonstrated that regardless of the political era, women can and have made their voices heard, whether through traditional positions of power or by reinventing the roles assigned to them. Eleanor Roosevelt, Nancy Pelosi, and Ivanka Trump come from very different times, political persuasions, and walks of life. And yet, each has advocated for women's rights and empowerment during their time in government.

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<sup>495</sup> *Id.*

<sup>496</sup> *Id.*

<sup>497</sup> *Id.*

<sup>498</sup> *Id.*

<sup>499</sup> *See id.*

<sup>500</sup> *Id.*

<sup>501</sup> *Id.*

<sup>502</sup> *Id.*