THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

WEBINAR

GENDER EQUALITY 100 YEARS AFTER
THE 19TH AMENDMENT

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PARTICIPANTS:

Welcome:

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Introduction and Moderator:

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Keynote Remarks:

TINA TCHEN
President and Chief Executive Officer
TIME'S UP Foundation

Moderated Conversation:

TAMARA COFMAN WITTES, Moderator
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Discussants:

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P R O C E E D I N G S

GENERAL ALLEN: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. My name is John Allen and I'm the president of the Brookings Institution. It's a great pleasure to welcome you today to our event, "Gender equality 100 years after the 19th Amendment." The text of the 19th Amendment to our constitution reads as follows: "the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or bridged by the United States or any state on account of sex. Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation."

Our event this afternoon celebrates the ratification of that powerful text, as well as reflects upon all that it has meant for our nation's history, and for us as a people. By granting women the right to vote, the 19th Amendment, confirmed the citizenship and the rights of thousands of American women.

Affirming the success of a decade's long struggle waged by courageous and pioneering women across America, often a great personal sacrifice. The significance of this cannot be overstated. After all, the mere ability to vote equates the ability to be seen, to be recognized, and to affect change, all as part of our sacred democratic process. And it confirms our long-held belief that all people are created equal. However, as hard earned as this victory was, the 19th Amendment did not achieve a higher promise of universal suffrage. It wasn't perfect. For as much as it guaranteed this right to some women, it did not guarantee this truth to all.

Indeed, despite the precious, long, yet long, overlooked contributions of many black suffragists; such as Ida B. Wells and Mary B. Talbot. Another generation of young black women and men would have to again take up the mantle to secure this right and more, both through the Civil Rights Movement and the Women's Rights Movement of the 1960s.

Similarly, Native American, Hispanic, and Asian American women would have to fight and wait decades after the ratification of the 19th Amendment until they too are granted their full and rightful ability to cast their ballots. The story of these individuals is that of our nation and that story and our nation is laid bare by it. And it's one we're seeing play out again today, as daughters and sons of

many of these same brave Americans, again and again, fight for equity and for justice. And for the true promise of America that we all hold so dear. That journey and that fight is never truly over.

We have a long way to go and we all have a duty, I believe a sacred duty, to ensure the sacrifices of those courageous individuals are not forgotten, and are never, ever in vain.

Now, happily despite these many challenges, women have achieved significant political representation in the past 100 years. And they have been appointed to or elected to some of our highest offices in Congress, in our most Senior positions in government. Indeed, in recent decades, we've seen women surge in the entering into politics. With women in both political parties running for and ultimately achieving nominations for both the vice presidency and the presidency of the United States and we're here again, it's a great moment.

And one need only look at the 2018 elections to see the spectacular array of female leaders, many of them from diverse backgrounds taking up the banner of new generation of political leadership. These electoral achievements have been complimented by women serving in the most important and senior positions in the executive branch of our government, as ambassadors, as secretaries of department, and as women who have held and led our national security, and national foreign policy processes as well, as Secretaries of State and as National Security Advisors. We should celebrate these achievements, these victories. But we should also remain cognizant to where we fall short and remain vigilant in our commitment to remedy these shortcomings. After all, despite our constitution, modified over the years through amendments, having granted and enfranchisement to most Americans, there remain major social and economic barriers that keep many, especially women of color, from exercising such rights.

It is then during anniversaries such as these, where we are often quick to celebrate our achievements, that we must be just as quick to acknowledge our commitment to ensure we do not repeat these mistakes.

Especially as we turn to the 2020 presidential election, where the votes of American women may very well decide the final outcome, and thus, the future trajectory and the character of our

nation. We have a special obligation to reflect on these many challenges that have brought us to this moment. And for me, it comes down to this, 100 years from the 19th Amendment, believe on 3 November, American women will determine what the United States will become in the 21st century.

Now against that backdrop, Brookings remains an organization dedicated to supporting the public good and to defending and uplifting the shared and cherished values that have brought out the very best of America and the world. That is why this year, we are very proud to launch our 19A Brookings Gender Equality series, which examines the legacy of the 19th Amendment across the country, and the state of gender equality around the world, featuring essays and including some of those who are joining us here today. 19A illustrates both, the progress and the work, needed to advance a more equitable society.

So, with that, let me preview and introduce some of our keynote speakers today, who will be able to speak to the importance of the 19th Amendment, and much more.

In speaking order, we're delighted to first be joined by Tina Tchen. Tina is the president and the CEO of TIME'S UP NOW, and the TIME'S UP Foundation. Her organization, which started as a grassroots movement combating workplace harassment in the entertainment industry, has fast become a true leader in fighting to make the workplace an equal and fair environment for all. Prior to her current role, Tina served on behalf of the Obama administration, notably, both as the Chief of Staff to First Lady Michelle Obama, and then later as the executive director of the White House counsel's Women and Girls Initiative. Tina, thank you for being here and joining us today. Yyou truly honor us by your presence.

Following Tina's remarks, we're equally pleased to welcome Dr. Madeleine Albright, who will have a discussion with Brookings senior fellow Dr. Tamara Cofman Wittes, Tammy. And Dr. Albright was named the first female US Secretary of State, under the Clinton administration. And it is in my, and many, many others view, one of the truly great American leaders and icons of our modern era.

Since leaving government, Dr. Albright has served as the chair of the Albright Stonebridge Group, and is the author of multiple best-selling books, including her recent book, Fascism: pA Warning," which was discussed with former Brookings President Strobe Talbot here at Brookings, and

we were honored for that evening. And not surprisingly, Secretary Albright is a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Madam Secretary, thank you so much for joining us, and it is a great personal honor for me to welcome you to Brookings.

After that conversation, we'll hear from historian and writer, Dr. Susan Ware, in 20th century, women's political and societal history. Susan has authored several seminal books on this topic, including, most recently, Why They Marched: Untold Stories of the Women Who Fought for the Right to Vote. Thank you, Dr. Ware, for your scholarship on this vital segment of American history and for joining us here today.

And finally, in the second half of our event, we'll move over to a panel, featuring several of our superb Brookings scholars, Drs. Makada Henry-Nickie, Elaine Kamarck, and Isabel Sawhill. And they will be moderated in that conversation by Dr. Camille Busette.

But before I turn the floor over to Tina, a brief reminder that we are very much on the record today, and we're streaming live. Throughout the event, please feel free to submit your questions via email to events@brookings.edu or to Twitter at the #19A. So, with that, thank you all for joining us today. It's an important moment in our history, one that will set the trend for the future, I truly believe. And Tina, thank you for starting this event with us today, and the floor is yours.

MS. TCHEN: Well, thank you President Allen, it is my true pleasure to be here with Brookings, here virtually. Brookings was such a great partner when I was in the Obama White House on issues of gender equity, and you know, it is always a delight and an honor to be anywhere, even virtually, with Madeleine Albright, I have to say. And I'm just deeply, deeply honored to be on this program with you, Madam Secretary.

And, you know, I'm here to talk about the 19th Amendment, and yet the road we have ahead, as President Allen laid out, you know, as we celebrate the passage of the 19th Amendment, it was the culmination of a struggle that dates as far back as our nation's founding, because many of you will remember when Abigail Adams admonished her husband, John, to, as you know, quote "remember the ladies" when constructing the quote "new code of laws and the vision of America." He forgot, and so

began the fight, you know, for recognition that would not be won, as President Allen noted, until courageous women spoke up, protested, went to jail, even sacrificed their bodies to lay the groundwork for an inclusive future.

And as, again, President Allen noted, even as hard-fought as that victory won, it was not complete, it was not complete for Black, Asian, and Native American women, who would not fully realize voting rights for another half-century. And it's about battle for the battle box, that I will sadly say continues to this day as voter suppression still threatens our democracy, with people of color in particular, being the victims of targeted disenfranchisement.

And we also know that voting rights didn't translate fully into political power. Today, women make up only a quarter of Congress, even though they are 50 percent of the population. Black women make up less than 5 percent of Congress, but they are 7.6 percent of the population.

The 2020 presidential race was met with the promise of six female candidates, but that number slowly reduced to zero. So, 100 years after the 19th Amendment, although as President Allen noted, we have had women nominated for the two highest offices in the land, we still have yet to have a women President. And, a woman has been nominated for Vice President by one of the major parties only three times.

And we also know that despite our efforts in diversity and inclusion, over these same decades, many of which I participated in my legal, own legal profession, the numbers remain dismal. The most recent data shows that of Fortune 500 companies, only 7 percent of CEOs are women. Only three are women of color.

Today, in 2020, not a single Fortune 500 CEO is a black woman. And this is before the pandemic and the economic crisis unfolded. What the pandemic has revealed are the pressures on working women that many of us have known for years and struggled with for years, but now the country as a whole sees them. The work we took for granted, like healthcare, caregiving, food retail workers, they are now essential. And women workers are the majority of those workers.

According to the New York Times, one in three jobs held by women have been designated as essential jobs in this pandemic, with nine out of 10 nurses and nursing assistants are women. Women are the most respiratory therapists, the majority of pharmacists, they are the overwhelming majority of pharmacy aides and technicians. More than two-thirds of the workers at grocery store checkouts and fast food counters are women.

And in the face of these multiple pandemics of COVID-19, of racial violence, of injustice, of economic free-fall, we run the risk of an additional pandemic of invisibility, of dialing back on our efforts to achieve gender and racial equity in the workforce.

I watched it happened in the last Great Recession in 08 and 9, when, in the struggle to get back to work and our economy back on track, key issues like equal pay, paid leave, fair payment motion practices were put on the back burner as we work to bring back the economy and get people back to work. I'll say that back then, we were only just beginning to understand that making sure that women, people of color, LGBTQ+, and disabled workers are able to fully participate in our economy as it's not just a nice thing to do when times are good, it is essential to building successful and resilient businesses and economies.

As workers, we ourselves also didn't think of these issues, like childcare, paid leave, or flexible scheduling as public policy issues. Instead, we ourselves also thought of them as personal issues from employees to figure out on our own, not for employers or public policy makers to address. How wrong we were.

I'm proud that during my time in the Obama administration, through our White House Council of Women and Girls, we made addressing working family issues key. I was a single working mom my entire career, as was Valerie Jarrett, who shared the Council with me, and the Obamas were two working parents with young children when they entered the White House. So, we all had lived the experience of balancing work and home and yet, we all acutely knew that we were the lucky ones. We all had means and support to raise our children while working full-time. And it was still hard. How

exponentially harder must it be for those working at minimum wage, with not even paid sick days, let alone paid family leave.

So, one part of our working families' agenda was to compile and showcase the grand research that show that working family policies. Those policies that address the structure barriers that keep women and other vulnerable workers from succeeding in the workplace were actually profitable investments -- not just costs to be managed. We held the first ever White House Summit on Working Families to showcase this research and the steps employers or policy makers can make now and work to change the narrative. So, the -- we all understand how critical these issues are. Not just for individual working women and their families but our entire economy.

So, the opportunity exists now that we didn't have 10 years ago to take this unprecedented worldwide, economy-wide crisis and do better. We know that companies that have more diverse leadership are more profitable. We know that diverse teams make better business decisions 87 percent of the time. We now know that if workers are given paid leave, they can be more productive when they're on the job, and that turnover for employees goes down, so that these worker investments save money, not cost money. And we now know that if companies are more diverse, if women and people of color are fully represented up and down the wage scale, then workplaces are safer, more dignified, more equitable.

The lesson for the 19th Amendment where the constitutional victory was not the end, but only the beginning of a fight to realize full voting rights for all women is also what we see what we see in our fight for fair, safe, and dignified workplaces for all.

It was in the Civil Rights Act in 1964 where Title VII was enacted, prohibiting employee discrimination on the faces of race or sex. It was not until 1986 that the USF Public Record recognized sexual harassment as a form of sex discrimination outlawed by Title VII. But legislative and tradition changes were not enough.

Indeed, more than 30 years later, we know from the EOC study in 2015 that 85% percent women saying they've experienced sexual harassment at some point in their careers, that three out of

four instances of sexual harassment go unreported. And likely because the same study said that out of those who do report, three out of four say they suffered retaliation for making the report. And black women experience sexual harassment at the workplace at three times the rate of white women.

Women are overrepresented in low-paid jobs, jobs that are less likely to have worker protections, and most likely to have incidents of sexual harassment. And then, in October 2017, it was through the courageous voices, as it was a 100 years ago, of women survivors, and the reporting that brought their stories to light, that exposed the true extent and problems of sexual harassment.

That led to the outcry that became TIME'S UP, and our first initiative, the TIME'S UP legal defense fund, which for the first time provided access to legal support. And if survivors chose to speak publicly, to PR support. For those women who either faced the threat of defamation lawsuits, when they said #metoo, or the thousands of low-income women who had no access to lawyers to bring lawsuits, because their claim for wages was so low.

And I'm proud to say that in the last two and a half years, the TIME'S UP legal defense fund has connected over 4,800 people with resources, three-quarters of whom are low-income women, 38 percent of whom are women of color.

But while we continue to stand with survivors for justice, we also want to deal not just with the aftermath of sexual harassment, after it occurs. Our bigger goal is a world where women are safe at work, and able to reach their full potential, a place that is truly equitable and respectful for all.

This is the transformational moment we were in back when I became the CEO of TIME'S UP in November of last year. A moment when I believe we had reached a tipping point, where public policy, private sector leaders, and workers had come to the realization that change was needed.

And then the pandemic hit, followed by an economic meltdown, followed by a long overdue reckoning about racial injustice. So now, what can we do?

At TIME'S UP, we have just issued a guide to equity inclusion during crisis. In the immediate term, we need to do the work to be anti-racist -- to not be silent in this moment. We need to care for our people as I am thinking about diversity and inclusion in all our decisions and equalizing our

workplaces. Especially realizing the different ways this pandemic, or working from home, are affecting workers. And remembering that sexual harassment doesn't end just because work is remote, and to demonstrate leadership to lead with empathy and set the tone at the top.

And deeply, deeply we all need to seize this moment to re-examine our employment policies. And really think about how to address the structural barriers that keep women from succeeding in the workplace, by providing paid sick leave, paid family leave, pregnancy accommodations, and caregiving accommodations. Because these are not just nice-to-do policies when times are good. They are essential for building a diverse, talented workforce that can compete in the 21st century economy.

We remain one of the few industrialized nations in the world without a national paid sick leave policy. We had to scramble to put one together on an emergency temporary basis in the CARES Act. Think how much more prepared we would've been if we had national policy already. If businesses had already built paid sick leave into their business plans.

Businesses would have known what to expect, and workers would been able to stay at home when they were sick, or when their loved ones got sick, without fear of losing their paycheck or their job. And US businesses would not be competing at a disadvantage to global companies based in countries that have already provided basic working family policies. Employers don't have to wait for a national policy to act on their own, and now's the time to do it.

And finally, instead of creating a new economy where women and people of color can fully participate, we are entering a new crisis that may exclude working parents, especially working mothers, and reverse the gains we've made in women's labor force participation over the last several generations.

While schools remain closed, or only partially open, and childcare centers limited in capacity are going out of business, working women, especially hourly wage, and other workers without the means, or access to private in-home childcare options, are right now struggling with how to care for their children and keep their jobs. There are reports that many may opt to stay home and drop out of the workforce. There are many that don't have that choice, and don't know what they will do.

The New York Times yesterday published the result of their recent survey showing that 80 percent of parents working remotely are also doing childcare and education, and that falls to women. With 54 percent of women saying they are mostly teaching their children, 29 percent of men said they would be doing the work, but interestingly, just 2 percent of the women said that their partners would be doing the work. And this will fall disproportionately on low-income women who can't afford to hire additional help. A double hit. As their children will miss out on the education that has always been the pathway toward upward mobility.

This caregiving can no longer be seen as a personal issue for employees to figure out on their own. It is a public issue for private and private and public sector leaders to address. So, let's start collectively getting more creative and getting more nimble and flexible on how we solve these problems.

Business leaders can ask, do you have vacant space that can become a childcare center. Can you partner with other businesses in your neighborhood on a solution? Can you put in mechanisms to help your workers help each other on Slack channels? Or create pods for themselves? Or flexible scheduling so workers can alternate work schedules and share care responsibilities?

And policy makers need to start thinking outside the box, a new childcare and public school arrangements to meet this moment and make the investments we need to provide quality care and quality education for all.

So, our centennial celebration of the 19th amendment serves as a memory, as a reminder, as a clarion call to not just remember the ladies, and their achievement, but to redouble our efforts to make the kind of systemic structural change that will fully realize the change in women's lives that was imagined a 100 years ago. This is our 100-year challenge and it is our time to rise to meet it. Thank you.

DR. BUSETTE: Thank you, Tina Tchen, for that inspiring and insightful keynote address. We really appreciate it. I'm Camille Busette, a senior fellow and director of the Race, Prosperity, and Inclusion initiative here at the Brookings institution. I'll be serving as your moderator for the rest of the program. Welcome again, everyone.

As you've already seen, we have an all-star lineup of impressive women for today's program. Our next panel will be a conversation between Secretary Madeleine Albright and Brookings senior fellow, Tamara Cofman Wittes.

Now I hope that Secretary Albright is well-known to all of you, but it is always a pleasure to introduce women who have been pioneers in their domains. And Secretary Albright is certainly no exception. Dr. Madeleine K. Albright, as John Allen has already mentioned, is a professor, author, diplomat, and businesswomen who served as the 64th Secretary of State of the United States. In 1997, she was named the first female Secretary of State and became, at that time, the highest-ranking woman in the history of the US government.

Prior to her appointment as Secretary of State, from 1993-1997, Dr. Albright served as the US permanent representative to the United Nations and was a member of the President's cabinet. She is a professor in the Practice of Diplomacy at the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service.

Dr. Albright is chair of Albright's Stonebridge Group, a global strategy firm, and chair of Albright Capital Management LLC, an investment advisory firm focused on emerging markets. She also chairs the National Democratic Institute, serves as the President of the Truman's Scholarship Foundation, and is a member of the US Defense Department's defense policy board. In 2012, she was chosen by President Obama to receive the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, in recognition of her contributions to international peace and democracy.

Dr. Albright is a seven-time New York Times

bestselling author. Her most recent book, "Hell and Other Destinations," was published in April 2020. Her other books include, her autobiography, "Madam Secretary: A Memoir," published in 2003, and "Fascism: A Warning," published in 2018. Madam Secretary, welcome.

She is joined in conversation by my distinguished colleague, Tamara Cofman Wittes. Dr. Tamara Cofman Wittes is a senior fellow in the Center for Middle East Policy here at Brookings. Dr. Wittes served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern affairs from November of 2009 to January 2012 coordinating, being the US policy on democracy and human rights in the Middle East for

the State Department. Wittes also oversaw the Middle East partnership initiative and served as deputy special coordinator for Middle East transitions. She was central for organizing the US government's response to the Arab awakening. Dr. Wittes, welcome, and I will let you take it from here.

DR. WITTES: Well, Camille, thank you so much. This has been an educational and insightful and inspiring afternoon already. But I could not be more thrilled to be joined here by my mentor and friend, Secretary Albright, welcome.

MS. ALBRIGHT: Good to be with you. Wonderful Tammy.

DR. WITTES: So, Secretary Albright, as you've heard, one of our themes here in marking the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment is women who are trailblazers, women who work first. And Tina Tchen just spoke so powerfully about how few women are at the top still, either in the private sector or in government, despite all of the advances that we've made. But you have spent a lifetime being the only woman in the room or one of the only women in the room, whether you were working for Senator Musky or for President Carter at the UN and of course, as the first female Secretary of State.

So, I wonder as we think about this challenge of not having enough women in the room, if you can give us some insight about what -- what you found most difficult about being the only woman in the room. The trailblazer. How did it change the way you approached working as the leader?

MS. ALBRIGHT: Well, it's great to be able to do this Camille and Tina, it was wonderful to listen to them and delighted and President Allen. So, I'm delighted to be a part of this. But I've thought about this a little bit because I am often asked the question and the bottom line is my travel through life has gone up and down in many different ways. I went to a girls' high school and a women's college where we had all the leadership roles. I was on the student council or I started an international relations club and was president or I was one of the editors of my paper. And then all of a sudden, I get out of college and I am disregarded to the point where I decided that I was obsolete before I had even started. And so, getting jobs was not easy and I decided to get my -- go to school -- and get my graduate degrees.

And the bottom line, I don't know how many other women have experienced this, but it isn't always men that make life difficult. I think that women are very judgmental about each other, and there were those who say, why aren't you with your children instead of going to the library all the time? And so, I think we need to understand how we need to support each other, so that is one of the things.

What is interesting and that's why I say my depiction of all of this is a little different from most people. At the time, when people were looking for a woman for a job, the only job, I actually had my credentials together. So, when Ed Musky hired me to be his chief legislative assistant, I wasn't just his fundraiser friend, Madeleine, I was Dr. Albright. And, that was something that really helped, not only when I worked for him, but also when I went into the Carter administration, because Dr. Brzezinski had been my professor at Columbia. And, there were a couple of women on the National Security Council staff.

What was interesting was there were times I was the only woman in the room, and I would think to myself, well I should say something. And then I thought, well, people will think that what I say is stupid, so I won't speak. And then, some man said it, and everybody thought it was brilliant, and I got really mad at myself, and I had made up my mind that I would make myself speak in every meeting.

And when I went to teach at Georgetown -- I – this was my mantra that everybody had to interrupt, men and women. My classes -- not raise their hand but interrupt. My classes were a bit of a zoo, but it kind of taught me that one needed to interrupt if you're going to be heard.

So, then I go to the United Nations, and I was a member of, obviously, as the United States on the Security Council and I was the only woman. There were 14 men there. And on my first meeting, which didn't take place in that fancy room but in a back room, there are 14 men sitting there with their arms closed and looking at me. And I thought to myself, well, maybe I won't speak today. And then I saw the sign that said, United States. And I thought, I am here representing the United States. If I don't speak, the voice of the United States will not be heard.

But, it really didn't get easier in many ways because even though I was a cabinet member and I participated in what are known as the Principles' meetings on National Security decision-

making, I literally would be told not to be so emotional when I argued on behalf of doing something in Bosnia. Or, the National Security Advisory would tap his fingers while I spoke, in other words because I was taking too long. So, I did learn to argue differently, so that I would not be accused of being emotional but -- so in my kind of trek through all this has been a bit of up and down.

But I have to say, my youngest granddaughter, when she was ten, eight years ago, said, so what's the big deal about Grandma Maddy being Secretary of State? Only girls are Secretary of State? And that was when Condi and Hillary were Secretaries of State. So, it's the way you see it. It's kind of fun to see the things have been happening. And there are a couple of boys that have been trying to be Secretary of State.

DR. WITTES: Yes, we've seen them trying to measure up.

MS. ALBRIGHT: Yeah.

DR. WITTES: But, you're right to note that it doesn't take much to change the perspectives, especially of kids, and of young people who don't necessarily, you know, they say if you can't see it, you can't be it. And so, I wonder as we look at Kamala Harris now, taking on this historic role, not only is the third female nominee for vice president on a major party ticket but the first woman of color in that role. She's already facing the kind of sexist attacks that we knew she would face. She's already facing some racist attacks as well.

But we've also seen young women, and especially young black girls really inspired by seeing her in this role. How much do you think it matters to America, to our democracy, to have women in the roles that you've held as National Security Advisor, in the cabinet, as Vice President, and god willing one day soon, President?

MS. ALBRIGHT: I think it does make a difference and I have to tell you, the number of letters that I get from young women, girls that are saying, they're writing a paper about me, or they would like to be Secretary of State or president. And it's really very inspiring, in many different ways. I have to tell you, in ninth, we had an another woman named to be the vice presidential candidate, Geraldine Ferraro in 1984. And I was her foreign policy advisor, and it was interesting to travel with her and see

how many young girls would come up to her and would be really excited about what she was doing. And at the same time, there were other people who thought she couldn't do the job.

I mean it was, so it's a mixed bag, but I think that Senator Harris, Kamala Harris, is really a remarkable person. I do know her, I think she's going to be -- she already is a very strong public figure, and I think it will make a difference. And it is a big step forward, and it has made a difference that some, there have been women in other positions, but it will ultimately be one of the major, major changes in our life, if we have a woman vice president. And, if we could have a woman president.

DR. WITTES: And we can, and we will. I'm confident.

DR. ALBRIGHT: I think the part that drives me crazy is that we always want to be number one, but the bottom line is there are many countries in the world that actually have women presidents or prime ministers, so we are very much behind in this.

DR. WITTES: Yes, and I want to come back to that

and to your work with the National Democratic Institute on women in politics in just a minute. But, if I may, you know, just ask you a couple questions about being an American. You've often called yourself a grateful American. You came to this country as someone who was a refugee twice over. And I know your parents used to call you on July 4th, and your mother would make sure that you were celebrating July 4th, singing patriotic songs. Why was that so important to her, that she would actually call and check in?

DR. ALBRIGHT: Well, because we all were very grateful Americans, and very patriotic Americans. But I have to parenthetically say I came from Czechoslovakia, and what was interesting was the first president of Czechoslovakia was married to an American, Charlotte Garrigue Masaryk. He took her maiden name as his middle name, but the amazing part is the Czechoslovak constitution, written in 1918, was modeled on the American one, with a major exception. It had equal rights language in it then. So, I'm very proud of that part of it.

But I have to say, we really were so grateful to be in America, having spent World War II in London, and then when the communists took over Czechoslovakia, and my mother would call, and she

really cared as to whether the children were singing patriotic songs, and we were so -- There's no way to describe this, Tammy, in terms of our gratitude for being in America.

And when we came here, my father said, America was different from every country, because when we came, they said, we're so sorry, your country's been taken over by a terrible system, you're welcome here, what can we do to help you, and when will you become a citizen? And that was our major goal, to become American citizens.

DR. WITTES: So, I was reflecting about what it means to be a citizen and what it means to have the right to vote. This is obviously something we are having a huge national conversation about, not only because we are marking the anniversary of women's suffrage, but because there are a lot of challenges to the right to vote and to voter participation in this year's election.

And I have two kids, one is just over voting age and the second will be voting for the first time this year. And I think a lot about what his first vote is going to feel like. He feels very cynical, he feels frustrated, he feels angry. You know, and I remember my first vote, feeling really excited. I'm curious whether you remember the first time you were able to vote, and what that felt like to you?

MS. ALBRIGHT: Well, I certainly remember. We became citizens -- I became a citizen, a citizen in 1957 between my sophomore and junior year at Wellesley. And my first vote was in 1960 in Chicago for John Kennedy. And just being in Chicago at the time, there were these incredible parades before, and a great sense of that this was a major election and great joy with everything that was going on. I will never forget that vote. And it's one that made me the proudest, I have to say.

And then, we came to Washington and I was here when John Kennedy was president and it really was stunning. By the way, I had met him when he was running for the senate and I was at Wellesley and I was a reporter, and I got his autograph, which I still have. But, I really, I so remember my first vote, and it was spectacular in every way.

DR. WITTES: Wow. And that was a year, and a candidate, who really felt like a transformational candidate. A turnover of generations in politics and --

MS. ALBRIGHT: Very much. No question.

DR. WITTES: This year is a little different, I guess. But let's come back to that in a minute, but, you and I have gotten to know one another because I have the good fortune to serve with you on the board of the National Democratic Institute, which works to support democracy all around the world and help make democracy work for people. And you travel constantly to countries where NDI works, meeting, among others, with women activists and with women who are running for political office. And I know that one focused event of NDI, fortunately, has been on the challenges and especially the violence faced by women who have put themselves forward into the political sphere. I wonder if you can tell us a little about what you hear from those women that you meet with whether it's, you know, Cotavo or, you know, anywhere you go? What are the big challenges they're facing and what can we do here to better support women who are willing to put themselves out there?

MS. ALBRIGHT: Well, first of all let me say that when I became Secretary, I decided to put women's issues central to American foreign policy, not just because I'm a feminist, but because it makes sense. More than half the population in practically every country is female and it is a loss of a resource if women are not a part of political systems. At NDI, we have really made a point of supporting women candidates in countries and helping them, kind of, sort out about how one does elections and try to be as supportive as possible.

I have gone around a lot and the thing that I have found troubling is that you often find that the women that you have persuaded to run for office are actually then subjected to violence because there are those who don't want them there. They threaten them in some form or another -- or threaten their families, so that it makes them nervous about running.

And so, what NDI has done, and we started doing this in 2016, is to link up with a program at the United Nations called Not the Cost, trying to stop the violence against women in politics. And I remember, one of the trips I took actually was to Mexico where we had managed there were more women that were candidates and then, I did speak to them about this issue of being singled out and then attacked for what they were doing, or threatened. And so, I think that we need to understand the continuing violence against women in countries, generally. And then also, then to understand that once

they have made the step to run, that there has to be some way to make sure that there's not violence against them.

One of the issues that I have been very involved in recently is to try to figure out the women in Afghanistan, who interestingly enough had quite a lot of power and were able to participate in government before the horrors with the Taliban. And so, one of the things that I've been involved in is trying to make sure that they are involved now, in whatever negotiations are taking place for Afghanistan. Not just to be questioned about what their situation is but to be a part of the negotiations. So, it's important they have women that are -- that participate, they use their skills, and then are not punished for doing it. So, I think this is a very, very important issue.

DR. WITTES: Well, and we have a lot of data now that having women as an integral part of peace negotiations actually makes the resulting agreements more durable, right?

MS. ALBRIGHT: Absolutely.

DR. WITTES: So --

MS. ALBRIGHT: And it is the 25th anniversary of the Beijing women's conference, which also was a big step forward. And I think that we need to understand that this makes a big difference. And, by the way, if I -- if I may -- the countries that have been able to deal with the virus are ones that are run by women. You know, it hasn't been easy, New Zealand, Taiwan, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, you know, Iceland. It's interesting, and I do think that women do have special talents for governments. And that, it's important to be a part of a political -- to be politically and economically empowered.

DR. WITTES: Right. And of course, societies that

are willing to elect women as their senior leaders probably also have a set of values that are more inclusive and more ready to embrace the solutions that women leaders can offer.

DR. ALBRIGHT: Very much so.

DR. WITTES: So, Madeleine, you have spent the last few decades of your life not in government, not in the room where the decisions are being made, except on the Defense Policy Board, but as an advisor, and also, especially NDI and on women's empowerment, you are a very vocal

advocate. You are out there leading the charge and pushing those who are in government. And, you know, this has been a year of an incredible outpouring of public mobilization born out of frustration, but also, evidence saying a lot of passion and persistence and determination to make change.

I wonder as you reflect on the roles you played

inside the system, and as an advocate outside the system, how would you think about that relationship? That push and pull between pressure and advocacy and policymaking and politics? So how important are these protests that we see today? How important is my 18-year old's vote versus his going to a demonstration?

DR. ALBRIGHT: Well, let me just say what I have found most interesting in political systems, generally, is the relationship between those on the inside and those on the outside. And what is true and needs to be true in a democracy is that those in the government actually listen to those outside, which we call civil society. And really, understand that a democracy needs to respond to the needs of the people who have elected them.

And so -- And I have been on the inside and on the outside, and, by the way, it really did take me quite a long time to find my voice, and I'm not going to be quiet now. So, the bottom line is, I think that, and one of the things, and you know this, at NDI, we are very concerned also that -- how civil society operates.

And I do think that part of it is to be able to express views, to be able to have peaceful demonstrations to make clear what has to be done. And I think that a democratic government that really can function well needs to have that input from the outside. That is a major part.

And then an awful lot of our society is made up, obviously, of most of them are people that are on the outside. And I think it's interesting, when we talk about the private sector having a role in national security, making corporations, non-governmental organizations, various groupings, various ways now that people communicate through.

Well, what Tina, Tina Tchen was talking about, you know, or really having organizations. I do think that it's essential for people to express their views in a number of different ways. And it is what

makes democracy. And I've been saying over and over again, democracy is not a spectator sport. It is something that we all need to participate in, and make our views known in a peaceful way as to where change should come about. So, I think it's very, very important, and I cheer on those that are doing those kinds of things. And I am, I am trying to speak out as much as people will listen to me.

DR. WITTES: Well, Secretary Madeleine Albright, we are very grateful that you are not going to be quiet.

DR. ALBRIGHT: Thank you.

DR. WITTES: And we look forward to hearing from you for a long time to come. Thank you so much for joining us today and helping us mark this important centennial. And Camille, over to you.

DR. ALBRIGHT: Thank you so much for inviting me to do this, and Camille, thank you, and Tammy, it's great working with you, wherever we do this, you are fantastic. Thank you very, very much.

DR. WITTES: Thank you.

DR. BUSETTE: Thank you. What a fascinating and stimulating conversation. Thank you so much, Madam Secretary, and Dr. Cofman Wittes. Some of you have already submitted questions, so just a reminder that you can submit questions in two ways, events@brookinga.edu and #19A on Twitter.

So, our phenomenal lineup of speakers continues -- we are now going to turn our attention to the history of women's suffrage in the United States with one of the most authoritative experts on the topic, author Susan Ware.

Susan is a pioneer on the field of women's history and a leading feminist biographer. She is also the author and editor of numerous books on 20th century US history. Educated at Wellesley College and Harvard University, she has taught at New York University and Harvard, where she served as editor of the biographical dictionary, Notable American Women Completing the 20th Century, which is published in 2004.

Since 2012, she has served as the general editor of the American National Biography, published by Oxford University Press, under the auspicies of the American Council of the Learned Societies. Ware has long been associated with the Schlesinger Library at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Studies, Study, where she serves as the Honorary Women's Suffrage Centennial Historian. The Library of America will publish a women's suffrage anthology, edited by Ware, in 2020. Dr. Ware, welcome.

DR. WARE: Thank you. Thank you for having me. I have been tasked with providing a quick history lesson, a snapshot of the rich scholarship documenting the decades long fight to win the right to vote. So, let me start with the suffragists themselves.

Suffragists had a strong sense of history. In many ways, they were our first women's historians collecting volumes of material while the struggle was still going on. And, we should be grateful for their efforts, but we also need to recognize its limits. Marking the centennial of the 19th Amendment demands a history that not only documents the past, but also speaks to our own times. And fully telling the history of women's suffrage means putting race at the center of the story, not the periphery, and this cuts several ways.

The first is, the necessity to acknowledge the racism that plagued many of the leaders and no doubt, many of the followers from the very start, and not just Southerners. Leaders pandered to racist arguments and fears to advance their cause and were unwilling to welcome African American suffragists into mainstream suffrage organizations. That record has to be recognized as part of the movement's legacy.

Attention to race also leads in a different direction, to a much fuller appreciation of the contributions African American women made to the women's suffrage movement through their women's clubs, churches, and civic groups. African American women brought something that was often lacking among white suffragists, an intersectional vision that refused to separate gender from other factors such as race and class, and which made voting rights part of a larger conversation about social and political change. This story too must be recognized as a key part of suffrage history.

And finally, attention to race reminds us that the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920 was an incomplete victory, especially for women of color. In 1920, the vast majority of African Americans still lived in the South where their voting rights were effectively eliminated by devices such as whites only primaries, poll taxes, and literacy tests. For black women, it was the Voting Rights Act of 1965, not the 14th, 15th, or 19th Amendments, that finally removed the structural barriers to voting. In parallel, disenfranchisement, Native American women did not win the right to vote until 1924. All Puerto Rican women could not vote until 1935, and Chinese women, not until 1943. Whenever we say, women won the vote in 1920, there should always be a mental asterisk attached to that statement.

So why does the history of the 19th Amendment matter? The women's suffrage movement stands out as one of the most significant and wide-ranging moments of political mobilization in all of American history. As late as the first decades of the 20th century, a fundamental responsibility of citizenship was still arbitrarily denied to half the population. The 19th Amendment changed that increasingly untenable situation, representing a breakthrough for most, but not all, American women, as well as a major step forward for American democracy. Three generations of women honed their political skills in the women's suffrage movement and those skills were put to good use after the vote was won.

In their new roles as women citizens, women made a difference, which is another way of saying that women's history matters. Historian Ann Firor Scott provided an especially clear image of how winning the vote was part of larger changes in women's lives and in American society more broadly once she wrote, this is a quote, "suffrage was a tributary flowing into the rich and turbulent river of American social development". Think of the contributions of those three generations of women I mentioned as the tributaries that make up suffrage history. Each distinctive element flowed into the larger stream, creating something stronger and more powerful than the individual voices. And then, think of suffrage history as a powerful strand in the larger stream of U.S. history, especially its ongoing but still imperfect commitment to equality and diversity. That is why suffrage mattered and still does 100 years later. Thank you.

DR. BUSETTE: Thank you, Dr. Ware. Dr. Ware has certainly given us a deeply interesting, I would say, historical appetizer. And, for those of you who are interested in understanding

the story in much greater depth, I urge you to consult Dr. Ware's website, susanware.net, for her tremendous scholarship in this area. But what a fantastic lead in for today's panel discussion. I am joined by my colleagues here at the Brookings Institution, and I'm going to introduce them.

Dr. Isabel Sawhill, senior fellow for Economic Studies, whose research spans a wide array of economic and social issues, including fiscal policy, economic growth, poverty, social mobility, and inequality. Her latest book is "The Forgotten Americans: An Economic Agenda For a Divided Nation" published by Yale University Press in 2018.

We are also joined by Dr. Elaine Kamarck who is a senior fellow in the Governance Studies program, as well as the director of the Center for Effective Public Management at Brookings. She is an expert on American electoral politics and government innovation and reform in the United States, OECD nations, and developing countries. She focuses her research on the presidential nomination system and American politics, and has worked in many American presidential campaigns. Her most recent book, released last month, is "Picking the Vice President: How Picking the Vice President Has Changed — And Why it Matters".

Dr. Makada Henry-Nickie is a fellow in Governance Studies at the Brookings Institution. Dr. Henry-Nickie is also a resident fellow of the Race, Prosperity, and Inclusion Initiative, where her work is focused on the future of work, education, and financial well-being of marginalized communities. She is most recently the author of "Skills and Opportunity Pathways: Building an Inclusive Workforce for the Future".

So, welcome, colleagues. We've had three very compelling prologues to our discussion, and I wanted to frame our conversation here by starting with the recently released Pew survey, which found that 49 percent of men surveyed thought the U.S. had not done enough when giving equal rights to women. But, and I'm sure you're not shocked, an overwhelming majority, 64 percent of women, expressed the opinion that the country had not done enough when giving equal rights to women.

The same survey found that among women, 46 percent of white women say that the 19th Amendment was the most important milestone in advancing the position of women in the U.S., while only

36 percent of black women and 38 percent of Hispanic women identified the 19th Amendment as the most important milestone in advancing the position of women.

So a majority of women say we have more to do to provide equality to women and there's a difference by race when considering the importance of the 19th Amendment, one of the most significant social movements in the U.S.

Isabel, I'm going to start with you. In your view, have women made significant progress in the U.S.? We seem to have — Belle, I think you need to unmute.

MS. SAWHILL: Sorry about that. I said that I was very happy to be here in this distinguished company.

And in terms of your question, Camille, I think there's been a lot of progress. Women have opportunities to work in paid jobs that they didn't used to have, they have a lot more opportunity to get educated, they have an ability to control their own fertility that didn't exist back in the early part of the 20th century, they're able to control their own money. It goes on and on. And we have a number of wonderful essays on our 19A website that spell out in detail many of the trends in these areas.

For example, Janet Yellen has an essay on what's happened to women's education and labor force participation. Our colleague, Andre Perry has a very interesting paper on how black women have become more active and been elected to political office. And I was very pleased to see that essay come out about the same time that Kamala Harris was nominated to be vice president. We have another paper by Paula England on how progress largely stalled out in about 2000.

The biggest gains, both in employment and entering a broader range of occupations and in shrinking the pay gap occurred in the 1970s and 1980s and slowed down in the 1990s and have been virtually stagnant in the 2000s.

I have to say a word about my mother because it may be hard for younger people to understand why I am seeing so much progress. My mother was 17 when the 19th Amendment was enacted. She never graduated from high school, she never worked outside the home, she had an illegal and dangerous abortion because there was no effective birth control in those days that was legal, she

didn't get to make very many decisions in our family –- maybe the color of the draperies or what we were going to have for dinner, but not where we went for vacation and not even what kind of car we bought. My father made all those decisions. If she were still alive, she'd be 117 years old. And when I compare my own life to hers, I have to feel very lucky.

That doesn't mean more progress isn't needed, but I do want to take this moment to celebrate what we've already achieved.

I think in part because of what I saw in my mother's life I decided to get a Ph.D. and escape the typing pool. I was a typist in my early career years. I then wrote my doctoral dissertation on the pay gap between men and women. And, by the way, some of you may not know this, but when I was a young adult, if you wanted a job and you went to the classified ads in your local newspaper, they were all segregated in between help wanted female and help wanted male. There was just an assumption that women did certain kids of jobs and men did others and there was no mixing of the two.

I loved Secretary Albright's comments about being the only woman in the room and being afraid to speak up. She and I both represent that older generation. And I will add one more anecdote to the stories here, which is that I used to be on a board that met in a private club in New York City, and when I arrived for meetings I had to wait in the ladies room, the reason being that "ladies", as we were called then, were not allowed in the main rooms of the club.

So I'll stop there.

DR. BUSETTE: Well, thank you, Belle. Very, very interesting and great reflections.

Elaine, have we made a lot of progress?

MS. KAMARCK: Okay. I do think we've made a lot of progress, but frankly in the area of politics we've probably made less progress than we have in the area of economics, although Belle and I could go back and forth on that.

Clearly, there are a lot of women running for office, a lot more than there used to be, and a lot of women getting elected. And let me give you, from my own life as a scholar, a short preview of what's happened. The very first book I read on women in politics was by former ambassador Jane

Kirkpatrick. She wrote a 1974 book called “Women in Politics”. And the thesis of that book was well, women got into politics after they had raised their children. And because of that they tended to do fairly well. They got to be city council members or members of the state legislature, but by and large they just ran out of time. By the time their children were grown and they were in their 40s or 50s, some women did get their first legislative position, their first electoral position, but there was no way they were going to get to be president because they simply didn’t have enough years left to do that. And I thought that was a very — it’s a very interesting time capsule about, you know, where women were at that point in time.

In the intervening years there were various other explanations for why women were not running for office. Some of them was that they didn’t come from the networks that could raise money, they didn’t have the financial connections the way men did, some of them were that women needed to be mentored or felt that they needed to be mentored. It’s that feeling that I think you referred to, Belle, and Madeline referred to about being — of wondering of you should speak in the meeting. Women wanted to be asked to — you know, wanted to be asked to run for office and that didn’t always happen.

And so that was some of the scholarship in those intervening years. Just two years ago a graduate student of mine at Harvard wrote her master’s thesis on women in politics and she interviewed about 30 female state legislators. And legislators are an important group because that’s always the farm team in politics, male or female. You know, that’s where so many people get their start. And what she found was they raised money fine, they weren’t worrying about being asked, they were self-confident, but we were back to motherhood, w were back to the fact that state legislative jobs are part-time jobs in many states, the state capitals are far away from where people lived, where their district was, they couldn’t get home at night to put the kids to bed at least, let alone make them dinner, and that there were financial — there were real financial burdens there because the women couldn’t afford — often these women were contributing to the household and they just couldn’t afford to give up their full-time jobs and go be state legislators.

So it was sort of interesting to me to read these comments, because we come all the back to motherhood and the basic problem of trying to do what is a very demanding job under situations

where — you know, when you meet all night in the state legislature to get through that three month session, right. There's no daycare around. You can't bring the baby to the floor to nurse the baby if you've got a young baby. I mean it's just all sorts of logistical hurdles. And, of course, one of the solutions there is to make some of these jobs more full-time jobs, more regular kind of jobs, which a lot of states just don't do.

So it's been an interesting transition in women running for politics. The thing that made me happiest in 2018 was to see the huge number of women who ran. The biggest number ever, by the way, most of the Democrats. And to see the spunk they had. They were not waiting to be asked, okay. They had sort of almost that same confidence — although I'm not quite sure anybody has the confidence of these 27 year old men, many of whom have been in my classes, in your classes, who think they could be president tomorrow. But, they're getting there. These women had absolute confidence, they're absolutely sure of themselves, and I was very pleased to see that in 2018. And I'll talk more about 2018 in a minute.

DR. BUSETTE: Great. Well, thanks very much. And interesting reflections about the nature of state legislative work and how the assumptions behind that, the original assumptions about, you know, who would be doing that, don't really favor the schedules that women typically have. So very, very interesting.

Makada, your thoughts on have we made progress.

MS. HENRY-NICKIE: You know, it's just an honor to sit here with the esteemed panel and to hear Secretary Albright's comments and Susan Ware's. I just sit here and feel like the baby, obviously, to be born in a generation that is just reaping the benefits of all of the struggles.

I think we have made progress, right. I measure some of the progress, even as an immigrant to this country, by some of the political inroads and victories that Black women, who I deeply admire, have made thus far. So Shirley Chisholm, Secretary Albright talked about finding her voice. You know, when Shirley Chisholm found her voice in 1969, oh my gosh, how scary. She used it to fight and advance legislation on behalf of women, employment and education for minorities. And so, you know,

we've got Carol Moseley Braun, Ayanna Pressley, Stacey Abrams, and of course, my hero, Senator Kamala Harris, new VP nominee.

I think it's important though to sort of step back and ask what else is left to be done and how can we help these women, 122 of them who are Black and multiracial who are running for offices in November to find their voice, so that we can hear their legislative priorities. Because those priorities to me reflect the concerns of American families, 13.6 single parent families who are mostly headed by women caring for children. We need to find out how do we support their dignity, support their fight for economic equality and earn equality wages on par with men, regardless of their backgrounds and their family circumstances, for example.

I think I am, again, just blessed to sit here and be able to reflect on the record and measure that progress and be part of that generation that can continue to benefit. But there is so much work to be done and I'm excited that we have an opportunity here, hopefully in this election season, to realize some of those goals and those potentials.

DR. BUSETTE: Great. Thanks, Makada.

Elaine, I want to start the next round of questions with you. You know, it's an election year, obviously. In 2016 we had the first women to head a major party presidential ticket. In 2020 we have the first woman of color as part of a major party ticket. We've also had that huge class of 2018 coming in, as both you and Makada have alluded to. So what more is left for women to do in the political sphere? Have we arrived? Or is there more to do?

MS. KAMARCK: Well, I'll tell you, I think this is going to be a real history making year. And let me tell you why. So us political scientists have a term called realignment. And a realigning election is a big deal historically. 1932 was the big realigning election that brought Franklin Roosevelt into power. Really a realigning election just turns everything upside down, changes everything.

We then had a big realignment that took place between 1976 and 2000. And that was the movement of southern states from the Democratic Party into the Republican Party. In 1976 Jimmy Carter won all the southern states. Jimmy Carter, a southerner. In 2000, Al Gore, a southerner lost all

the southern states, including his home state of Tennessee. So that's the most recent realignment that we've experienced in American politics.

Well, starting 2017 we are seeing signs of maybe the first ever gender realignment. And I want to credit my colleague and my former partner in crime in politics, Morley Winograd, who has been writing about this for our FixGov blog. And this gender realignment is fascinating. So of course we remember in 2017 the march on Washington and the huge women's march that happened right after the inauguration. We then saw, however, more significantly, in the races that took place in 2017, the Alabama senate race, which turned that seat to a Democratic seat for the first time ever, and then the off year elections, particularly the Virginia governor's face, we saw lopsided votes for women going to the Democratic Party. We had not seen this in 2016. 2016, the women's votes for Hillary were basically offset by the men's votes for Trump. We didn't have that big of a shift.

We then go into 2018, where we had a 23 point gender gap. This is the biggest gender gap in 20 years. And of course we saw it in all the women elected, but it wasn't just women elected. Women were voting for Democrats, they were moving into the Democratic Party. That's what a realignment is.

In 2019, we saw a lot of special elections. And, again, we saw this lopsided behavior of women voting Democratic not men. And then looking ahead, looking at some of the key senate races this year, if you look at North Carolina, the Democratic — there's a gender gap — a fairly substantial gender gap in the North Carolina race in favor of the Democrat. In Arizona there's a substantial gender gap in favor of the Democrat, even though the Republican is a woman and the Democrat is a man. And, of course, Trump's approval ratings are only 38 percent among women and they are 57 percent among men.

So we're seeing something is happening here. I don't know if it will be as big as it looks right now in 2020. I also don't know if, like previous realignments, it will be a permanent realignment. But this is maybe the biggest movement we've seen demographically in many, many years, ever since African Americans moved from being Republicans to being solidly Democratic. We've got this — the same thing

is going on with women now and it's quite amazing.

DR. BUSETTE: Fascinating. That is really fascinating. I'm sure we're going to bat that around a little bit more as we go through the discussion.

So, Makada, you know, you talk a little bit about women of color and their emergence as a really major political force. But I just want to ask you, as somebody who is active in studying a variety of different realms, economic, political, and social, what more does this country need to do to ensure that women of color in particular are experiencing the dignity that comes with increased equality in the economic, political, and social realms.

MS. HENRY-NICKIE: I would say that — I like Elaine's phrase, this generational realignment. I would say that the dignity of women, particularly women of color, is so intertwined with the political and sort of social constructs that we need to make sure this is an intersectional alignment that intersects with the issues of gender and race and class.

I think central to that, Camille, will be this idea of congressional representation. That's going to be sort of central to underscoring, shoring up the representation, the equality, and the dignity of women, and women of color in particular.

I just want to say that, you know, it's — when you think of dignity it's work, it's ability to sort of care for your family. That's what gives you that drive. You know, it gives you that sense of pride as a women, as a parent, as anybody from any background. So I think it's important to sort of figure out how to get these women elected, and even the men as well, right, whose agendas really represent and prioritize I think the concerns of working class and low-income families. Too many of them are working precarious low-wage jobs, little or no access to quality childcare, even during the pandemic, to either search for work or to keep working, too many are food and housing insecure, and many others, millions of others are struggling under the weight of student loan debt. And that's a lot to climb out from under, right. To sort of figure out where your dignity sort of stands and sort of sets up in this discourse.

But it's important to have these agendas float on top of these elections, local races, you know, certainly at the top of the ticket so that these agendas seep through and then they prioritize the real

issues that I think matter to families that are in my community, for example. I live in a predominantly African American low-income community. And dignity matters. These policies matter for shoring up their economic and their housing securities as well.

DR. BUSETTE: So, alignment as potentially a new political alignment as Elaine talked about, and the importance of really focusing that alignment on policies that ensure dignity and ensure the ability to take care of your family and fulfill your aspirations.

So, Belle, you know, we are in the middle of a pandemic. That pandemic has, for better or for worse, has raised some issues that women have been talking about for a long time, like paid leave and childcare. And so we've made — you know, we've obviously made some progress economically, but those are still very much in play.

What more do you think needs to be done to ensure that women can fully participate in the economy?

MS. SAWHILL: Well, I very much agree with a lot of what's already been said. And I thought Tina Tchen's PowerPoint was terrific as well. I think Elaine said it all when she talked a lot about motherhood as being an inhibitor of women in politics and it is also a big inhibitor of their getting ahead in the workforce. They basically are trying to do two jobs, not just one.

And so we need two kinds of adjustments. One, we need men to be doing more, be sharing more in the care of children, doing housework, and all the other things that women have traditionally done. In addition, we need I think new public policies that recognize the fact that most women are now in the workforce. And if you are in a two earner couple or you are a single parent and you are responsible for your family's income, especially if you don't have a lot of education and especially if you don't have a partner, you're in deep trouble, as Makada suggested.

I think of a single mom earning the minimum wage, which depending upon what state you live in, could give you an annual income of anywhere between $15-25,000 a year. But imagine having several children, being the sole support of your family, living in a major city where rents are very high, and having to pay for childcare, which is roughly as expensive as going to college. So we do need more

childcare and we do need more paid family leave.

I have been honored to be a co-director of a whole project on paid family leave that is a partnership between Brookings and AEI. And we put out two reports on that topic so far and have two new books coming out this fall on that topic.

On childcare, I think one solution has to be to align school hours a little better with working hours. And in addition, we need universal pre-K and then finally we should take the existing childcare tax credit that's used by many middle class families, but is not available to low-income families, but could be made available to them if we made it refundable and made it a little more generous.

So I could go on, but those would be some of my top line suggestions.

DR. BUSETTE: Great. Thank you, Belle.

Makada, I'm going to start with you for this part of the conversation. You know, we obviously at Brookings are very interested in policy solutions, like many of the ones that Belle just mentioned. And I wanted to ask you, you know, what policy solutions should the U.S. be pursuing to ensure that women can anticipate equality in the economy and in politics?

MS. HENRY-NICKIE: I think I'd underscore everything that Belle said, but I want to just add a little bit around this idea of childcare.

Yes, childcare is, I think, an inhibitor. It certainly slows you down in terms of your progression and ability to engage fully in the labor force. But I think we need to sort of broaden our idea about what care looks like for a lot of women in this country. It's not just the care that they provide for children, but many minority and immigrant families, for example, live in multigenerational settings, and that means a lot of them are not only caring for children, they're caring for elderly parents, disabled family members, and that burden of course unfortunately falls to them.

So how do we figure out a way to provide universal family care that sort of moves us away from this maternal patriarchal vision as to who women are and what the roles are that they should play and have played traditionally. And I really want to highlight what's important around sort of domestic workers, right. Ninety-two percent of domestic workers, who are all sort of below the poverty line, are

women and women of color particularly.

So if we sort of think of ways to leverage this kind of sectional realignment that Elaine sort of talked about. It's not just about my identity as a woman, it's my identity as a women who cares for children, the identity of a woman who lives in a poor quality neighborhood and therefore needs access to a promise neighborhood, for example. I think it's critical, for example, to lift up again these women who are bringing their working class backgrounds. This is an extremely diverse cohort and they're using their experiences in the kinds of priorities and proposals that they're sort of putting forward.

Let's talk about Senator Harris for a second. Her MORE Act, the Marijuana Opportunity, Reinvestment and Expungement Act, was one of the most comprehensive solutions when it came to social justice reform in terms of cannabis and redressing the harms of the war on drugs. Because of her background she understood that you've got to provide comprehensive road maps and leave no uncertainty, but how you, for example, effectuate record — promote record expungement. Criminal record expungement will go a long way to reduce the unemployment rate of formerly incarcerated black women — again, intersectionality — last estimated in 2017 to be nearly 46 percent. Nearly 1 in 2 formerly incarcerated women cannot participate in the labor market because of a criminal record. And on top of that you layer on the fact that they're returning to homes and continuing to share in the sort of family care burden.

So I think it's really critical, again, to sort of figure out how do we realign these outdated modes as to who women are and how these women are going to be and who they are presently, different from who they were, to think about ways to advance I think much more bold and innovative proposals that really get to the heart of their lived experiences.

DR. BUSETTE: Great. Thank you.

Belle, what other policies do you want to add to the conversation? I know you've been working a lot on this. And so I'm sure the two or three minutes you took before were probably — you know, did not address everything that you have proposed or are thinking about proposing.

MS. SAWHILL: Well, one of the things that I have worried about is the lost opportunity to

do something about unplanned childbearing. You know, if you ask women, and especially poor and minority women, whether or not they wanted or intended to have a child when they did, an overwhelming number of them say no, the timing was all wrong. And it's not that they don't want children, but the children are coming at awkward times and not always with the right person.

So I'll give you on my favorite statistic on this — 60 percent of all births in the United States to unmarried women under the age of 30 are unintended, according to the mother herself. And she tells that to the survey taker after the child was born and therefore after she's probably done a certain amount of bonding with the child. So it's not that she doesn't care about the child, it's not that she doesn't want to be a mother, it's that it really came at the wrong time.

And so in the Affordable Care Act in 2012, there was a provision that would have made the most effective forms of birth control available to everyone in clinics, including clinics for people who can't afford to go to the private doctor or whatever, and at no cost. The most effective forms of birth control, by the way, the up front cost is about $1,000. And what 20 year old can afford $1,000? And that 20 year old may still be in college, may not be settled in career, may not be with the guy that she eventually wants to parent with. So unfortunately the current administration turned all of that around and we're stuck back in a situation where we don't have guaranteed access to affordable birth control for all women.

And I wrote a whole book about that, so excuse me for going on about it, but I really do think it's part of women's empowerment.

DR. BUSETTE: Great. Thank you very much, Belle, for that contribution.

MS. HENRY-NICKIE: May I jump in one second, Camille —

DR. BUSETTE: Yeah.

MS. HENRY-NICKIE: — and say I second and third Belle's statement around — and, you know, her recommendations for affordable birth control. I do think that we have to again sort of think about that effect across different populations. Deferring birth for African American women to later in life increases both maternal and neonatal mortality rates. So on the one front, yes, but on the other hand, we

need to package those kinds of policies with solutions and funding to both study Black maternal mortality rates and also to advance solutions to reduce those rate. And at the same time, to also think about ways to reduce or empower the institutions and agencies to combat medical discrimination, which disproportionately impacts women of color.

DR. BUSETTE: Great. Thank you, Makada.

Elaine, let's talk a little bit about politics. So what changes need to be made to ensure that women continue to be full partners in politics?

MS. KAMARCK: Well, you know, I think it's the same sort of thing that we're talking about, frankly, in economics and in the professions. There is the beginning of a conversation about how we restructure the movement up in various professions. Politics is a profession for most people. They start at a local level, they run their first race. Most men are running their first race in their 30s and then moving on up. And we see that in a variety of professions.

My daughter some years ago wrote a piece for the Boston Globe about the medical profession. And one of the things that happens to doctors is that because of the route they're on, right, the most intense work period, their residency, tends to coincide with their childbearing age. It's terrible. I mean, you know, they have this boot camp for doctors where you have to be on call, you have to be there 15 hours a day. Well, you know, that's not really good if you're pregnant. And so would be women doctors face a world that was made for men. And would be women politicians face a world that was made for men as well.

And so I think as we rethink professional — this is different than I think what Makada was talking about — as we rethink the professional lines, right, whether it's getting tenure at a university, becoming a doctor, whatever it is, we need to think about how they can be made different to accommodate women who do need a little time. Yes, we should have childcare, et cetera, but come on, let's be real here, we're all mothers on this call, I mean you can have great childcare, but you still need a little bit of time to have that baby and nurse that baby and take care of that baby. And we want a little bit of time. So if your professional world is saying to you, no, you have to do it now and you have to do it this

way, it just doesn't work for women. And I think that's why we see women drop out of professions, drop out of the workforce. Women who have great standing in their community, when approached to run for office say oh, no, I really can't do that. And I think that this is the — we need the same rethinking here as we do in many other professions.

DR. BUSETTE: Thank you very much.

So we are now going to move to questions from our audience. The first one that I'm going to take is from Didi Easey (phonetic), and she's asking us how much progress have women made in physical sciences and engineering fields? And I know, Makada, this is something near and dear to your heart, so I'm going to let you answer that.

MS. HENRY-NICKIE: So I don't have the numbers ready with me, but I can just say it's hard to sort of give these sort of global responses to these questions that pit minority groups against each other because context matters, right.

As a Black woman economist myself, we've seen the economic community finally begin to respond — and thankfully to Janet Yellen and others — respond to the stark racial disparities in the economic profession that have caused a lot of economists — either face disrupted careers — you know, they were — there is so much hostility in the field that they ended up choosing something else, or others, you know, finding that they have to alter themselves — I think Secretary Albright sort of spoke about this — you know, alter who they are, alter their research, and we get the short end of that. And the corporate context (inaudible) disparities, you know, some are better.

But I think what we need to sort of do is sort of figure out, right, more than a half a century later, after the Civil Rights Act, many minorities, including Blacks, continue to face stark disparities in a variety of contexts. STEM, I think economics does worse than STEM degrees. So what I think we need to do is like really focus on keeping pace with strengthening and improving our democratic institutions so that we can forcefully respond, right, to any threat to the security of vulnerable groups, Black women in particular.

Right now, under the Trump administration, we've seen our Department of Justice just

become a private law firm that somehow has abdicated its responsibility to enforce the Civil Rights Act, Fair Housing, Equal Credit Opportunity Act. And so without our institutions I think we're going to get caught up in this vortex where we're — my — comparing fates, mine is worse than yours, but we really need to sort of keep our eye on the prize. And thanks to the administration we understand the value of that prize, and hopefully come the 2020 election we can sort of collectively appreciate that prize and make a change.

DR. BUSETTE: Great. Thank you very much.

So we have another question from Nancy Kirk (phonetic), and, Susan, I know you're still with us and I think this would be a great question for you to kind of illuminate for us.

So the question is what in your opinion was the effect of women's suffrage on women's colleges? And that whole concept there, right. And what do think is the effect of the kind of evolution of how women have progressed politically on women's colleges today?

MS. WARE: You're hearing me, I think you're not seeing me because I don't seem to be able to join. Oh, now here I am. Here I am.

DR. BUSETTE: Great. Perfect. Yes, we see you and hear you.

MS. WARE: And now I've forgotten the question. It's about —

DR. BUSETTE: This is about the effect of women's suffrage on the whole concept of women's colleges.

MS. WARE: In some ways, as a historian, I of course take it further back. And I think of, you know, one of those major changes that precedes the passage of the 19th Amendment is the expansion of higher education for women. It's absolutely central to the changes and the new women that then become suffragists. So it's very much embedded in that question.

Having said that, the colleges before and after have not always been hot beds of activism on feminism or anything else. Clearly, women's colleges do provide leadership opportunities. I too am a product of Wellesley College for Women but have not until recently really stepped up to play a leading role. My sense is we need all the help we can get, we're all in this together, and women's colleges have

a strong and important tradition of empowering women. And let's harness that energy.

DR. BUSETTE: Great. Thank you very much, Susan.

We have another question from Cheryl Estrada (phonetic). You know, Belle, you might be in the best position to answer this, but I'm sure my other colleagues will want to weigh in as well, including Susan.

Why does pay equity for women continue to be a hurdle in corporate America?

MS. SAWHILL: Well, when I was writing my doctoral dissertation, women only made less than 60 percent as much as men. Now, if we're talking about women and men who both work full-time, the ratio is about 83 percent, women earning about 83 percent of men. And a lot of any remaining gap has to do with the prior questions, which is what fields do women study and what occupations do they go into.

It's further complicated by the fact that there is some evidence, and many of us believe, that because women have not had — the kind of work they do has not had the same respect than that done by men, jobs that have traditionally been female jobs, even if they require as much or more education than a male job, actually pay less. So that goes to a sort of broader sense of women's work being discounted or diminished.

In order to make further progress, I think we need to do all of the things we've already talked about, childcare, paid leave, higher minimum wages, and so forth. And so I will save my words for others to add to that.

DR. BUSETTE: Okay, great. Thank you.

Other thoughts? Or I can move on to another question.

Go ahead.

MS. KAMARCK: No, launch another question, why don't you.

DR. BUSETTE: Okay, great. Excellent.

We have a question from Carrie Ederhuse (phonetic) who's asking — and Elaine you might be in the best position to answer this — do you predict that congress will lift the lapsed deadline for

the ratification of the ERA, Equal Rights Amendment?

MS. KAMARCK: You know, that's a great question. It depends on what happens in the senate, okay. If in fact there's a substantial Democratic victory and Democrats do get a large number of senators, then that might happen, that might be brought back. But there's a lot of things — I mean I think of this the same way I think about D.C. statehood, okay. There's just a lot of things which a full Democratic congress could conceivably do, but we don't really know yet if we're going to have a Democratic senate. And, of course, given the rules of the senate, unless they change, you need a big majority in the Democratic senate.

So I think that that might be on the agenda, but it really does depend on those senate races this year.

DR. BUSETTE: Great. Excellent.

So we have time for one more round of discussion and I'm going to provide my own question, which is obviously we have the election coming up in November. We will either have a new set of people in the White House or we'll have a continuation of the Trump administration, who we have currently. So for the 2021 White House, regardless of who's there, what should be the most important policy agenda that they should be pursuing that will help elevate women and continue to help them obtain equality, both in terms of their participation in the marketplace and their participation in politics?

And I am going to start with you, Belle.

MS. SAWHILL: I think the question is kind of easy to tell you the truth. If you're talking about January 2021, I think the priority has to be to end the pandemic. Now, that's going to help everyone, but it's going to be especially helpful to women because women are the ones who are stuck at home trying to do a job from home and trying to take care of kids whose daycare or schools are closed. And, as I said earlier, they are also disproportionately involved in doing a lot of the essential work that we all need to live.

So it is true that the mortality rates are highest amongst men rather than women, and of course especially high amongst minority groups, but I think we have to all come together as a society.

And to some extent, I don't like the fact that we have to constantly talk about every different segment. I mean I understand the reasons for it, I understand the need for racial and gender and class justice and more equality and less poverty and so forth, a fairer society. We need a fairer society. And I love what Makada kept talking about, dignity. Everybody needs dignity, but I think we also need to come together as a society to defeat this virus and this pandemic and we need leadership from the White House to do that.

DR. BUSETTE: Thank you, Belle.

Elaine?

MS. KAMARCK: I think Belle hit the nail on the head. I would just emphasize one thing. Women have enough trouble having full-time jobs, supporting their families, moving through the career paths for women with education, they have enough trouble as it is. We have just added, because of the pandemic, a new role — and that role is educator. So there's an awful lot of women out there who are going to be faced with having to monitor and augment schoolwork. And we already have seen some anecdotal evidence and a little bit of statistics about women dropping out of the workforce because of the Coronavirus.

So we have got to get this thing under control and we've got to make sure — this is another thing — we've got to make sure that when we do start getting vaccine therapeutics that these are fairly distributed throughout the society, that they don't go to rich people first with health insurance, that there is really equal access to — because you can — boy, you can see that one coming down the pike, right? You can see a situation where basically wealthy men are going to get the vaccines first and women won't.

So I think you've got to really pay attention to that.

DR. BUSETTE: Great. Thank you, Elaine.

Makada, you're going to have the last word on this question.

MS. HENRY-NICKIE: Oh, good. I would say the pandemic is immediate, it's urgent, it's palpable; we feel it.

What's really critical to our social cohesion is monitoring equity, accountability for equity across every single segment of our country. We need leadership from the income administration, from the White House. I would love to see an office of equity established at the White House that drives and sets the North Star for what we intend to accomplish as a society moving forward where no one, regardless of intersectional inequities or backgrounds, should ever be limited. And to keep, you know, foot on the gas. We have to be able to measure it, see its impact, see its evolution, and hold each other accountable, starting from the federal agencies, all the way down. I certainly think that equity and tangible concrete policies that drive us forward and hold us accountable should be the centerpiece of this incoming congress and the administration.

DR. BUSETTE: Well, thank you. With that inspirational ending, I want to thank my fellow panelists here. I also just want to say thank you to everybody for a fantastic speaker lineup. And thank you all for your questions. And we certainly look forward to welcoming you here again at Brookings Events.

Thank you.

MS. SAWHILL: Thank you, Camille.

MS. KAMARCK: Thank you, Camille. Nice job.

MS. HENRY-NICKIE: Thank you.

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