



September 30, 2026

Dear Ms. Sobieski:

I am pleased to offer my enthusiastic support for the proposed Women's Suffrage Museum and Events & Cultural Center in downtown Knoxville. As president and CEO of the East Tennessee Historical Society, I believe this project would be an important addition to Knoxville's cultural landscape and would strengthen our community's ability to interpret and share the history of East Tennessee with residents and visitors alike.

Knoxville and East Tennessee occupy an important place in the history of the women's suffrage movement, and the creation of a museum dedicated to that story presents an opportunity to explore the people, ideas, debates, and events that shaped one of the most consequential movements in American history. Such a museum would not only preserve and interpret this legacy but also provide a setting in which visitors can consider the continuing significance of citizenship, civic participation, and the expansion of democratic rights.

The proposed museum would also complement the work of the East Tennessee Historical Society and the Museum of East Tennessee History. Rather than duplicating existing institutions, it would add another important dimension to the historical and cultural offerings of downtown Knoxville. I can envision meaningful opportunities for cooperation between our organizations, including the sharing or loan of appropriate exhibition materials, collaborative programming, scholarly consultation, educational initiatives, and the cross-promotion of exhibitions and events.

At the East Tennessee Historical Society, we believe strongly that good public history should be rigorous, accessible, engaging, and willing to explore the complexity of the past. My conversations regarding the Women's Suffrage Museum have given me confidence that its organizers share that philosophy. A successful museum should not simply commemorate history; it should encourage visitors to think about it, ask questions of it, and understand how the experiences of earlier generations continue to shape the communities in which we live today.

The addition of the Women's Suffrage Museum and Events & Cultural Center would further enhance downtown Knoxville as a destination for history, culture, education, and heritage tourism. Together with the Museum of East Tennessee History and Knoxville's other museums, historic sites, and cultural organizations, it would help create an even richer network of experiences for visitors while providing an important new resource for our own community.

I am therefore pleased to support this project and look forward to the opportunities for partnership and collaboration that its development may create. I believe the Women's Suffrage Museum and Events & Cultural Center can become an important cultural institution for Knoxville, East Tennessee, and the wider region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Warren Dockter', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. A. Warren Dockter
President & CEO
East Tennessee Historical Society