



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

## *House of Representatives*

STATEMENT OF HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON  
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2016

Ms. Norton. Mr. Speaker,

I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing a treasured historical landmark in our midst, The National League of American Pen Women, Inc. (NLAPW). The League's headquarters is located in the heart of the nation's capital between Dupont Circle and Scott Circle, just blocks away from the White House. With affiliates all across the United States, the League is a key nonprofit neighbor, whose headquarters building is a magnificent architectural gem.

The League is dedicated to the recognition and advancement of women in the arts and letters in the District of Columbia and nationwide. Its mission is to represent and foster women's outstanding cultural and educational contributions to the nation. The League's membership, comprising some 82 branches throughout the country, encompasses a cross section of American women—all ages, races, religions, and cultures. For generations, the League has highlighted the great contributions and careers of creative American Women. Since its founding in 1897, luminaries such as Nobel Laureate Pearl Buck, Margaret Mitchell and Eudora Welty were illustrious members, among many others. Eleanor Roosevelt was a very active Pen Woman, as was Vinnie Ream, who sculpted the Lincoln statue that stands in the Capitol's Rotunda, as well as the statue of Admiral Farragut at Farragut Square.

It should also be noted that the League's beautiful, mansion-class headquarters at 1300 17th Street NW is steeped in history. Its interior has been lovingly maintained. To walk through it, as so many did during the recent Dupont Circle House Tour sponsored by the Dupont Circle Citizens Association, is to experience the elegance and inspiration of a bygone era. It is also to realize that the Pen Arts Building was once the home of Robert Todd Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln's oldest son. That is an especially noteworthy historical perspective in this 150th anniversary year of the death of Abraham Lincoln.

Regrettably, the League has become financially stressed, a situation hindering the preservation efforts of many nonprofits today. Losing the League, which has been in the District for 64 years, would be a terrible blow to the city, to the Dupont Circle neighborhood, to preservation, and to history itself. I also ask the House to recognize the League's unfortunate current financial plight, and the efforts of TENAC, the D.C. Tenants' Advocacy Coalition, to help preserve this beautiful landmark. Under the leadership of its chairman, Jim McGrath, TENAC has long been the District's unrivaled champion of tenants' rights, helping the homeless, and historic preservation.

Helping the League remain in the District and maintain its magnificent headquarters building here is a very worthy cause, enthusiastically supported by a broad variety of others in the city, including D.C. Councilmember Jack Evans, the Dupont Circle Citizens Association, and the historic Tabard Inn, among many others. I ask the House to recognize these efforts, and join in supporting this cause. At a time when women seem to be under attack in this country and all over the globe, assisting the National League of American Pen Women would be a worthy step in trying to redress that balance.

For all of these reasons, I ask the House to join me in expressing support for the League and its successful mission, and to recognize the importance of saving it. I know the League would be profoundly grateful for that support.