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Women's March Chicago Announces Initial Speaker List and Performers for 2018 March to the Polls

Chicago, Jan. 11, 2018 – Women's March Chicago announced an initial list of speakers for the 2018 March to the Polls to include women and their allies dedicated to the shared goal of empowering voters to support women's rights and social justice. The list of speakers includes Suzette Wright, a former Ford worker whose experience of sexual harassment was recently featured in the New York Times, and Tom Steyer, an activist committed to spending \$30 million to boost voter turnout in this year's midterm elections. The current list of speakers can be found below and at womensmarchchicago.org.



"We are thrilled to have such an extraordinary and powerful group of women and their allies unite to raise their voices on the many issues that continue to affect women every day," said Carrie Kiley, Women's March Chicago organizer. "Together, we are committed to inspiring the people of Chicago to march to the polls in 2018."

"This event is all about demanding progress for women and getting involved in this year's election—the most important mission for all of us in 2018," said Steyer. "Women's March Chicago has been at the forefront of this movement, and it's a real honor and pleasure to join with such a powerful group of women dedicated to change."

The "March to the Polls" will convene on January 20, 2018 at Columbus Parkway and Congress Drive near Grant Park. It marks the same location where more than 250,000 filled the streets at last year. This year, the March is being held in concert with more than 300 others planned around the world on January 20 and 21, 2018. A map of actions planned around the #WeekendofWomen with event details can be found at www.marchonthepolls.org.

"Many are now learning the story about the sexual harassment Suzette Wright and others faced while working at Ford in the 1990s," said Kiley. "Twenty-five years later, too many women continue to face the same inexcusable treatment in the workplace. I look forward to marching in solidarity with Suzette in Chicago and demanding the culture change all Chicago women deserve."

"Our speakers reflect the focus of this year's march – turning energy into votes," said Liz Radford, Women's March Chicago organizer. "These are women and allies working within and challenging the political system to be inclusive, supportive of all women and people of color, and to more directly reflect the demands of the people. There is a lot of work to do and our speakers are on the frontlines."

Chicago actor, writer, and producer Fawzia Mirza returns as the march emcee for the second straight year. The march will also include live performances from certain members of the cast of Hamilton, the Bryant Jones Choir, and Second City. Music will begin at 9 a.m. followed by the speaking program at 11 a.m. The march will step-off at 12:30 p.m.

Women's March Chicago, womensmarchchicago.org, is now a 501c4 organization with an associated 501c3 project promoting intersectional feminism and challenging the political system on issues affecting women. It supports equal rights, equal pay, reproductive justice, affordable healthcare, affordable

childcare, racial justice, criminal justice reform, voting rights, freedom from violence, LGBTQ+ rights, immigrant rights, fair wages, access for persons with disabilities, environmental protections and other critical areas of focus.

Speakers:

Tahera Ahmad, Associate Chaplain and Director of Interfaith Engagement, Northwestern University

Bridget Gainer, Cook County Commissioner

Lisa Madigan, Illinois Attorney General

Quiana McKenzie, Regional Campaign Finance Advisor, Emily's List

Channyn Lynne Parker, Project Manager, Chicago House's TransLife Project

Rep. Jan Schakowsky, U.S. House of Representatives

Chakena Sims, Board of Directors, Chicago Votes

Tom Steyer, Founder and President, Need to Impeach

K. Sujata, President and CEO, Chicago Foundation of Women

Celina Villanueva, New Americans Democracy Project, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

Suzette Wright, former Chicago Ford Assembly Plant employee

Live Performances:

Bryant Jones Choir, featuring Deborah Lane

The Cast of Hamilton, featuring Ari Asfar

Bridget Marie, ZaZaZa Disco

Cast Members from Second City's She the People

So Chi Voices

Faces for Radio

Members of the media can register for the march by emailing media@womensmarchchicago.org.

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