



PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

AUG 23 2023

**MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS**

SUBJECT: 2023 Department of Defense Women's Equality Day Observance

The Department celebrates August 26, 2023 as Women's Equality Day. On this day, we commemorate the 1920 adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution granting women the right to vote.

The legacy of the Nineteenth Amendment is a vision of equality for women in all aspects of public life, to include the right to be heard through their votes. The Nineteenth Amendment not only gave women the right to vote, but it also helped usher in an era for women's civil rights. As a Nation, we have progressed in the equal treatment of women in the workforce, particularly in the Federal workforce. But for too many women, the wage-gender equality gap and gender-based discrimination continue to impact economic access and advancement.

The Department remains steadfast in promoting equal opportunity for women across the Total Force. As the largest employer in the United States, we value the diverse perspectives, knowledge, experiences, and skills that women contribute to our mission readiness and operational capacities. Today, women comprise 19 percent of active duty forces and 20 percent of commissioned officers. Women have risen in DoD civilian employee leadership roles with 30 percent of senior executives being female. As we look to grow and retain the highly skilled, innovative, and agile workforce of the future, women will continue to be a critical source of talent and leadership.

Let us honor those who aided in the struggle for women's equality by fostering an inclusive culture that allows all DoD members to contribute to mission success. For more information on Women's Equality Day, I encourage you to visit:
<https://www.defenseculture.mil/Human-Relations-Toolkit/Special-Observances/#womens-equality-day>.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.