

Honoring Dr. Deborah Ann Turner

Deborah Ann Turner 01:14

You know, it's like many of us my interest in voting and women in voting comes back to the days of being with my mother. My mother was very much active in the community. And I used to trail her down the street, you know, dropping literature and knocking on doors. And so that's really where my first interest and understanding of voting came from. And she was a very powerful woman in our small community. And so she kind of let her children down the path.

I have to be real today. Our freedom has been eroded. The Supreme Court overturned our right to abortion, and signaled a wider threat to all of our other civil liberties. I know right now, all of us are feeling the pain, the anger, and the fear that this decision handed us today, we must use our anger as fuel for action. The League has supported freedom of choice since 1982, and denounce reproductive coercion in any form. Speaking, as a health care provider, who was dedicated has dedicated her career to women's health and reproductive health. It makes me furious, and it frightens me that a woman's right to choose to have a safe and legal abortion has been stripped away. I am angry that pregnant women and those who can't become pregnant have been reduced to the status of political footballs. These women are individuals with individual stories, making what is always a very serious decision to them. I know I have sat in the room with them. I've heard their stories. I've held their hands, and I've shared their tears and the relief at being treated in a non judgmental manner. Women Power Democracy is also about being there for these women. And we will join our allies in the fight for reproductive freedom.

As an organization, which was born out of suffrage movement, the League has been proud to campaign for the equal rights amendment for many, many years. The suffragists knew that our work was not finished at the passage of the 19th amendment. This was just the beginning. They knew that full equality of the sexes deserved a place in our Constitution. They knew it was hard work, but it was not done. We've been fighting this fight for over 100 years. Come on, folks, let's get it done. The ERA would make the Constitution prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex and race. We need the ERA because our nation must close the book once and for all on the idea that equality of rights is a debatable issue -- really folks get a grip -- because the Constitution is not only a set of legal protections, it is a proclamation of a nation's values. I am proud to lead an organization fueled by the grassroots. And I am proud to be your president during this time of great progressive change in our history.

Together, we will build the League of the future to empower voters and defend democracy for the next 100 years. And by the way, when I say we, I mean all of us because I am one of you.