Key Documents in the American Drive for Gender Equality

US History

Mark Olesh

Focus/Summary

The purpose of this lesson is to study the American women’s movement through the use of primary documents. Specifically, students will analyze four key documents in the history of this movement and learn how these documents improved the condition of women in the United States.

Objective of the Lesson

Students will demonstrate an understanding of how to analyze primary documents in their study of the American women’s movement.

Prior Knowledge

Students should enter this lesson with a brief understanding of:

- the history of the American women’s movement, specifically the women’s suffrage movement and the Seneca Falls convention in New York through the feminism of the 1970s.

Procedure

Opening/Hook

Students will brainstorm and list what they already know about the women’s movement, the drive for the right to vote, and other key events from the 20th century. This brainstorming will include names of key individuals in the movement. These will be written on the chalkboard.

Development of Lesson

1. Students will be given the Primary Source Analysis Guide included in this lesson.
2. The class will be broken into groups of 3-4 students per group.
3. Copies of the primary documents included in this lesson will be distributed to the groups. These include:
   a. The Declaration of the Rights of Woman (1848)
   b. the 19th Amendment (1919)
   c. Civil Rights Act of 1964 – Title VII (1964)
   d. NOW Bill of Rights (1967)
   e. Educational Amendments to the Civil Rights Act – Title IX (1972)
4. Students will discuss each of these documents within their group using the Primary Source Analysis Guide for support in their discussion.
5. After allowing 15 minutes for adequate discussion, students will leave the group and complete a Primary Source Analysis Guide for each of the six documents.

Concluding the Lesson

Six students will present a summary of the Guide to the class for wrap up.

Lesson Assessment

The Guides will be collected and graded for individual evaluation.
Primary Source Analysis Guide

1. Identify the Document

   Author(s) or source_______________________________________________________

   Title__________________________________________________________________________

   Date__________________________________________________________________________

   Type of document ______________________________________________________________

2. Analyze the Document

   Main ideas of the document

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

   Preceding conditions that motivated the author

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

   Intended audience and purpose

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

   Biases of the author _____________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________
3. Historical Context
   Important people, events, and ideas at time of document

   Local: people, events, and ideas of the time

   National: people, events, and ideas of the time

   World: people, events, and ideas of the time

   Conclusions about local, national, and world at the time
Declaration of the Rights of Woman (1848)

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of the earth a position different from that which they have hitherto occupied, but one to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes that impel them to such a course.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they were accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their duty to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of the women under this government, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to demand the equal station to which they are entitled.

The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.

He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice.

He has withheld from her rights which are given to the most ignorant and degraded men--both natives and foreigners.

Having deprived her of this first right of a citizen, the elective franchise, thereby leaving her without representation in the halls of legislation, he has oppressed her on all sides.

He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead.

He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns.

He has made her, morally, an irresponsible being, as she can commit many crimes with impunity, provided they be done in the presence of her husband. In the covenant of marriage, she is compelled to promise obedience to her husband, he becoming to all intents and purposes, her master--the law giving him power to deprive her of her liberty, and to administer chastisement.

He has so framed the laws of divorce, as to what shall be the proper causes, and in case of separation, to whom the guardianship of the children shall be given, as to be wholly regardless of the happiness of women--the law, in all cases, going upon a false supposition of the supremacy of man, and giving all power into his hands.
After depriving her of all rights as a married woman, if single, and the owner of property, he has taxed her to support a government which recognizes her only when her property can be made profitable to it.

He has monopolized nearly all the profitable employments, and from those she is permitted to follow, she receives but a scanty remuneration. He closes against her all the avenues to wealth and distinction which he considers most honorable to himself. As a teacher of theology, medicine, or law, she is not known.

He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education, all colleges being closed against her.

He allows her in Church, as well as State, but a subordinate position, claiming Apostolic authority for her exclusion from the ministry, and, with some exceptions, from any public participation in the affairs of the Church.

He has created a false public sentiment by giving to the world a different code of morals for men and women, by which moral delinquencies which exclude women from society, are not only tolerated, but deemed of little account in man.

He has usurped the prerogative of Jehovah himself, claiming it as his right to assign for her a sphere of action, when that belongs to her conscience and to her God.

He has endeavored, in every way that he could, to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.

Now, in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half the people of this country, their social and religious degradation--in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel themselves aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States.

In entering upon the great work before us, we anticipate no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation, and ridicule; but we shall use every instrumentality within our power to effect our object. We shall employ agents, circulate tracts, petition the State and National legislatures, and endeavor to enlist the pulpit and the press in our behalf. We hope this Convention will be followed by a series of Conventions embracing every part of the country.

The 19th Amendment to the US Constitution

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.
Civil Rights Act of 1964 Title VII (Enforcement Provisions)

As set forth by the US Congress:

Sec. 2000e-5. Enforcement provisions

(a) Power of Commission to prevent unlawful employment practices

The Commission is empowered, as hereinafter provided, to prevent any person from engaging in any unlawful employment practice as set forth in section 2000e-2 or 2000e-3 of this title.

(b) Charges by persons aggrieved or member of Commission of unlawful employment practices by employers, etc.; filing; allegations; notice to respondent; contents of notice; investigation by Commission; contents of charges; prohibition on disclosure of charges; determination of reasonable cause; conference, conciliation, and persuasion for elimination of unlawful practices; prohibition on disclosure of informal endeavors to end unlawful practices; use of evidence in subsequent proceedings; penalties for disclosure of information; time for determination of reasonable cause

Whenever a charge is filed by or on behalf of a person claiming to be aggrieved, or by a member of the Commission, alleging that an employer, employment agency, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee controlling apprenticeship or other training or retraining, including on-the-job training programs, has engaged in an unlawful employment practice, the Commission shall serve a notice of the charge (including the date, place and circumstances of the alleged unlawful employment practice) on such employer, employment agency, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee (hereinafter referred to as the "respondent") within ten days, and shall make an investigation thereof. Charges shall be in writing under oath or affirmation and shall contain such information and be in such form as the Commission requires. Charges shall not be made public by the
Commission. If the Commission determines after such investigation that there is not reasonable cause to believe that the charge is true, it shall dismiss the charge and promptly notify the person claiming to be aggrieved and the respondent of its action. In determining whether reasonable cause exists, the Commission shall accord substantial weight to final findings and orders made by State or local authorities in proceedings commenced under State or local law pursuant to the requirements of subsections (c) and (d) of this section. If the Commission determines after such investigation that there is reasonable cause to believe that the charge is true, the Commission shall endeavor to eliminate any such alleged unlawful employment practice by informal methods of conference, conciliation, and persuasion. Nothing said or done during and as a part of such informal endeavors may be made public by the Commission, its officers or employees, or used as evidence in a subsequent proceeding without the written consent of the persons concerned. Any person who makes public information in violation of this subsection shall be fined not more than $1,000 or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both. The Commission shall make its determination on reasonable cause as promptly as possible and, so far as practicable, not later than one hundred and twenty days from the filing of the charge or, where applicable under subsection (c) or (d) of this section, from the date upon which the Commission is authorized to take action with respect to the charge.
Statement adopted by the National Organization for Women at its national conference in 1967 as the organization's "Bill of Rights in 1968." The bill consisted of a list of eight demands: that Congress immediately pass the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution; that equal employment opportunity be guaranteed to all men and women; that employers be legally required to provide maternity leave and to allow women to return to their jobs within a reasonable time after childbirth; that the tax laws be revised to provide home-care and child-care tax credits; that publicly-funded day-care centers be established; that all discrimination in education be prohibited by law; that poor women be given the same access to job training and public housing opportunities as men, without prejudice based on their status as mothers, and that the current welfare system be reformed; and that all laws limiting access to contraception and abortion be removed from current penal codes.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN BILL OF RIGHTS IN 1968 (ADOPTED AT THE 1967 NATIONAL CONFERENCE)

I. Equal Rights Constitutional Amendment

II. Enforce Law Banning Sex Discrimination in Employment

III. Maternity Leave Rights in Employment and in Social Security Benefits

IV. Tax Deduction for Home and Child Care Expenses for Working Parents

V. Child Day Care Centers

VI. Equal and Unsegregated Education

VII. Equal Job Training Opportunities and Allowances for Women in Poverty

VIII. The Right of Women to Control their Reproductive Lives

We Demand:

I. That the United States Congress immediately pass the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution to provide that "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex" and that such then be immediately ratified by the several States.
II. That equal employment opportunity be guaranteed to all women, as well as men by insisting that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission enforce the prohibitions against sex discrimination in employment under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 with the same vigor as it enforces the prohibitions against racial discrimination.

III. That women be protected by law to insure their rights to return to their jobs within a reasonable time after childbirth without loss of seniority or other accrued benefits and be paid maternity leave as a form of social security and/or employee benefit.

IV. Immediate revision of tax laws to permit the deduction of home and child care expenses for working parents.

V. That child care facilities be established by law on the same basis as parks, libraries and public schools adequate to the needs of children, from the pre-school years through adolescence, as a community resource to be used by all citizens from all income levels.

VI. That the right of women to be educated to their full potential equally with men be secured by Federal and State legislation, eliminating all discrimination and segregation by sex, written and unwritten, at all levels of education including college, graduate and professional schools, loans and fellowships and Federal and State training programs, such as the job Corps.

VII. The right of women in poverty to secure job training, housing and family allowances on equal terms with men, but without prejudice to a parent's right to remain at home to care for his or her children; revision of welfare legislation and poverty programs which deny women dignity, privacy and self respect.

VIII. The right of women to control their own reproductive lives by removing from penal codes the laws limiting access to contraceptive information and devices and laws governing abortion.
Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972

(Title 20 U.S.C. Sections 1681-1688)

Section 1681. Sex

(a) Prohibition against discrimination: exceptions. No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance, except that:

(1) Classes of educational institutions subject to prohibition

in regard to admissions to educational institutions, this section shall apply only to institutions of vocational education, professional education, and graduate higher education, and to public institutions of undergraduate higher education;

(2) Educational institutions commencing planned change in admissions

in regard to admissions to educational institutions, this section shall not apply (A) for one year from June 23, 1972, nor for six years after June 23, 1972, in the case of an educational institution which has begun the process of changing from being an institution which admits only students of one sex to being an institution which admits students of both sexes, but only if it is carrying out a plan for such a change which is approved by the Secretary of Education or (B) for seven years from the date an educational institution begins the process of changing from being an institution which admists only students of one sex to being an institution which admits students of both sexes, but only if it is carrying out a plan for such a change which is approved by the Secretary of Education, whichever is the later;

(3) Educational institutions of religious organizations with contrary religious tenets

this section shall not apply to any educational institution which is controlled by a religious organization if the application of this subsection would not be consistent with the religious tenets of such organization;

(4) Educational institutions training individuals for military services or merchant marine

this section shall not apply to an educational institution whose primary purpose is the training of individuals for the military services of the United States, or the merchant marine;

(5) Public educational institutions with traditional and continuing admissions policy
in regard to admissions this section shall not apply to any public institution of undergraduate higher education which is an institution that traditionally and continually from its establishment has had a policy of admitting only students of one sex;

(6) **Social fraternities or sororities; voluntary youth service organizations**

this section shall not apply to membership practices --

(A) of a social fraternity or social sorority which is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of Title 26, the active membership of which consists primarily of students in attendance at an institution of higher education, or

(B) of the Young Men's Christian Association, Young Women's Christian Association; Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, and voluntary youth service organizations which are so exempt, the membership of which has traditionally been limited to persons of one sex and principally to persons of less than nineteen years of age;

(7) **Boy or Girl conferences**

this section shall not apply to--

(A) any program or activity of the American Legion undertaken in connection with the organization or operation of any Boys State conference, Boys Nation conference, Girls State conference, or Girls Nation conference; or

(B) any program or activity of any secondary school or educational institution specifically for--

(i) the promotion of any Boys State conference, Boys Nation conference, Girls State conference, or Girls Nation conference; or

(ii) the selection of students to attend any such conference;

(8) **Father-son or mother-daughter activities at educational institutions**

this section shall not preclude father-son or mother-daughter activities at an educational institution, but if such activities are provided for students of one sex, opportunities for reasonably comparable activities shall be provided for students of the other sex; and

(9) **Institutions of higher education scholarship awards in "beauty" pageants**

this section shall not apply with respect to any scholarship or other financial assistance awarded by an institution of higher education to any individual because such individual has received such award in any pageant in which the attainment of such award is based upon a combination of factors related to the personal appearance, poise, and talent of such individual and in which participation is limited to individuals of one sex only, so long as such pageant is in compliance with other nondiscrimination provisions of Federal law.
(b) Preferential or disparate treatment because of imbalance in participation or receipt of Federal benefits; statistical evidence of imbalance.

Nothing contained in subsection (a) of this section shall be interpreted to require any educational institution to grant preferential or disparate treatment to the members of one sex on account of an imbalance which may exist with respect to the total number or percentage of persons of that sex participating in or receiving the benefits of any federally supported program or activity, in comparison with the total number or percentage of persons of that sex in any community, State, section, or other area: Provided, that this subsection shall not be construed to prevent the consideration in any hearing or proceeding under this chapter of statistical evidence tending to show that such an imbalance exists with respect to the participation in, or receipt of the benefits of, any such program or activity by the members of one sex.

(c) Educational institution defined.

For the purposes of this chapter an educational institution means any public or private preschool, elementary, or secondary school, or any institution of vocational, professional, or higher education, except that in the case of an educational institution composed of more than one school, college, or department which are administratively separate units, such term means each such school, college or department.

Section 1682. Federal administrative enforcement; report to Congressional committees

Each Federal department and agency which is empowered to extend Federal financial assistance to any education program or activity, by way of grant, loan, or contract other than a contract of insurance or guaranty, is authorized and directed to effectuate the provisions of section 1681 of this title with respect to such program or activity by issuing rules, regulations, or orders of general applicability which shall be consistent with achievement of the objectives of the statute authorizing the financial assistance in connection with which the action is taken. No such rule, regulation, or order shall become effective unless and until approved by the President. Compliance with any requirement adopted pursuant to this section may be effected (l) by the termination of or refusal to grant or to continue assistance under such program or activity to any recipient as to whom there has been an express finding on the record, after opportunity for hearing, of a failure to comply with such requirement, but such termination or refusal shall be limited to the particular political entity, or part thereof, or other recipient as to whom such a finding has been made, and shall be limited in its effect to the particular program, or part thereof, in which such noncompliance has been so found, or (2) by any other means authorized by law: Provided, however; that no such action shall be taken until the department or agency concerned has advised the appropriate person or persons of the failure to comply with the requirement and has determined that compliance cannot be secured by voluntary means. In the case of any action terminating, or refusing to grant or continue, assistance because of failure to comply with a requirement imposed pursuant to this section, the head of the Federal department or agency shall file with the committees of the House and Senate having legislative jurisdiction over the program or activity involved a full written report of the circumstances and the grounds for such action. No such action shall become effective until thirty days have elapsed after the filing of such report.
Section 1683. Judicial Review

Any department or agency action taken pursuant to section 1682 of this title shall be subject to such judicial review as may otherwise be provided by law for similar action taken by such department or agency on other grounds. In the case of action, not otherwise subject to judicial review, terminating or refusing to grant or to continue financial assistance upon a finding of failure to comply with any requirement imposed pursuant to section 1682 of this title, any person aggrieved (including any State or political subdivision thereof and any agency of either) may obtain judicial review of such action in accordance with chapter 7 of title 5, United States Code, and such action shall not be deemed committed to unreviewable agency discretion within the meaning of section 701 of that title.

Section 1684. Blindness or visual impairment; prohibition against discrimination

No person in the United States shall, on the ground of blindness or severely impaired vision, be denied admission in any course of study by a recipient of Federal financial assistance for any education program or activity; but nothing herein shall be construed to require any such institution to provide any special services to such person because of his blindness or visual impairment.

Section 1685. Authority under other laws unaffected

Nothing in this chapter shall add to or detract from any existing authority with respect to any program or activity under which Federal financial assistance is extended by way of a contract of insurance or guaranty.

Section 1686. Interpretation with respect to living facilities

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this chapter, nothing contained herein shall be construed to prohibit any educational institution receiving funds under this Act, from maintaining separate living facilities for the different sexes.

Section 1687. Interpretation of "program or activity"

For the purposes of this title, the term "program or activity" and "program" mean all of the operations of --

1.(A) a department, agency, special purpose district, or other instrumentality of a State or of a local government; or

2.(B) the entity of such State or local government that distributed such assistance and each such department or agency (and each other State or local government entity) to which the assistance is extended, in the case of assistance to a State or local government;

2.(A) a college, university, or other postsecondary institution, or a public system of higher education; or
(B) a local educational agency (as defined in section 2854(a)(10) of this title, system of vocational education, or other school system;

(3)(A) an entire corporation, partnership, or other private organization, or an entire sole proprietorship --

(i) if assistance is extended to such corporation, partnership, private organization, or sole proprietorship as a whole; or

(ii) which is principally engaged in the business of providing education, health care, housing, social services, or parks and recreation; or

(B) the entire plant or other comparable, geographically separate facility to which Federal financial assistance is extended, in the case of any other corporation, partnership, private organization, or sole proprietorship; or

(4) any other entity which is established by two or more of the entities described in paragraph (1), (2) or (3);

any part of which is extended Federal financial assistance, except that such term does not include any operation of an entity which is controlled by a religious organization if the application of section 1681 if this title to such operation would not be consistent with the religious tenets of such organization.

Section 1688. Neutrality with respect to abortion

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to require or prohibit any person, or public or private entity, to provide or pay for any benefit or service, including the use of facilities, related to an abortion. Nothing in this section shall be construed to permit a penalty to be imposed on any person or individual because such person or individual is seeking or has received any benefit or service related to a legal abortion.
Glass Ceiling Commission Report

GLASS CEILING COMMISSION ISSUES REPORT: DISCRIMINATION STILL DEPRIVES WOMEN AND MINORITIES OF OPPORTUNITIES

Women and minorities make up two-thirds of the population and 57 percent of the workforce yet account for only 3 percent of senior management positions at Fortune 1000 industrial corporations, according to a report released by the bipartisan Federal Glass Ceiling Commission. The findings suggest that although some progress has been made in recent years, proactive efforts are still needed to address the invisible but impenetrable barrier that continues to deprive women and minorities of access to the highest levels of the business world regardless of their accomplishments or merit. Secretary of Labor Robert Reich, who chaired the Commission, summed it up by stating, "In short, the fact-finding report tells us that the corporate hierarchy does not yet look anything like America."

The report entitled "Good For Business: Making Full Use of the Nation's Capital" is the result of three years of study that included a consortium of consultants, commission hearings, studies, interviews, focus groups, panel discussions, and review of public and private research. The commission concluded that:

"in the private sector, equally qualified and similarly situated citizens are being denied equal access to advancement into senior-level management on the basis of gender, race or ethnicity. At the highest levels of corporations the promise of reward for preparation and pursuit of excellence is not equally available to members of all groups. Furthermore, it is against the best interests of business to exclude those Americans who constitute two-thirds of the total population, two-thirds of the consumer markets, and more than half of the workforce...the current state of affairs is not good for business...shattering the glass ceiling both serves our national values and makes our business stronger."

Some corporate leaders interviewed by the Commission said that as their trading partners become more globalized and diverse, there is a growing need for their workforces to reflect the diversity of the marketplace in order to succeed in this increasingly competitive environment.

The report identified three levels of barriers that need to be eliminated to allow women and minorities to gain equal access to executive suites. They are societal barriers, which may be outside the direct control of business, internal structural barriers that are within the direct control of business, and governmental barriers.

The two societal barriers noted include the supply barrier and the difference barrier. The "supply barrier" refers to the lack of qualified women and minorities because of inequities in the nation's educational system. The report notes that although corporations cannot lead a movement to reform the nation's schools, they can be strong advocates for excellent schools by participating in initiatives such as school-to-work and internships as well as providing scholarships. The "difference barrier" refers to the stereotypes, prejudices, and biases that individuals harbor about cultural, gender, or racial differences. The report states that "of all the barriers to corporate advancement identified, it is prejudice that tops the list."

The "internal business barriers" concern the difference between what corporate leadership says it wants to happen and what is actually happening. The underlying cause of this discrepancy stems from the perception of many white males that they are "losing the corporate game, losing control, and losing opportunity." The report noted, "Many middle- and upper-level white male managers view the inclusion of minorities and women in management as a direct threat to their own chances for advancement." Internal structural barriers, such as recruitment policies and the corporate climate, further contribute to the persistence of the glass ceiling. The report states that many executives hire only people who are most like themselves culturally and ethnically and are not willing as they see it "to risk" hiring minorities unless their clients demand increases in minority hiring.
"Government barriers" that affect the glass ceiling include the lack of vigorous and consistent monitoring and law enforcement; weaknesses in the collection and disaggregation of employment-related data; and inadequate reporting and dissemination of information relevant to glass ceiling issues. Research presented to the Commission clearly demonstrates the weakness of relying on voluntary measures to address employment discrimination. The report noted, "When the threat of enforcement is not real, the contract compliance program [Office of Contract Compliance Programs which monitors the Executive Order on Affirmative Action] ceases to have any demonstrable positive effect on minority and female employment."

The report also notes the disproportionate concentration of all minority groups in jobs outside the corporate world: "Before one can even look at the Glass Ceiling, one must get through the front door and into the building. The fact is large numbers of minorities and women of all races and ethnicities are nowhere near the front door of Corporate America."

In addition to finding that women and minorities are disproportionately represented in working class jobs where mobility is virtually nonexistent, the report also found that even in instances when they do shatter the ceiling, the compensation minorities and women receive is lower. For example, African American men with professional degrees earn only 79 percent of the amount earned by white males who hold the same degrees and are in the same job categories.

The history of the Glass Ceiling Commission dates back to 1986 when the Wall Street Journal reported a pattern of highly accomplished women being passed over for upper-level promotions due to an invisible barrier. The term was immediately picked up by other journalists and policy makers and was extended to include racial minorities who experienced a similar barrier. The Department of Labor, under the leadership of Secretary Elizabeth Dole and her successor Secretary Lynn Martin, issued a Report on the Glass Ceiling Initiative in 1991. In supporting the findings of the 1991 report, Senator Robert Dole introduced the Glass Ceiling Act of 1991, to establish the Glass Ceiling Commission to study "how business filled management and decision-making positions, the developmental and skill-enhancing practices used to foster qualifications for advancement, and the pay and reward structures used in the workplace." The Act eventually was enacted into law as Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1991. At the time Senator Dole noted, "For this Senator, the issue boils down to ensuring equal access and equal opportunity."

Interestingly, the latest report comes at a time when some Congressional Republicans have vowed to eliminate affirmative action. Supporters of affirmative action contend that this study clearly shows affirmative action is still needed. Others, however, include Senator Dole who despite his introduction of the legislation to establish the Glass Ceiling Commission, seemingly disagrees about the continued need for affirmative action policies. The Senate Majority Leader has ordered a congressional report on all government affirmative action programs, asked for congressional hearings on the subject, and stated on the Senate floor that it is his intention "to introduce legislation later this year that will force the Federal Government to live up to the color-blind ideal by prohibiting it from granting preferential treatment to any person, simply because of his or her membership in a certain favored group." The Federal Glass Ceiling Commission's specific recommendations for government action are due in November.