

PRESS RELEASE



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WOMEN'S WALK ACROSS AMERICA

On March 29th, a group of women left the Oregon State Capitol to begin a relay-style cross country walk to Washington D.C. to spotlight ongoing attacks on women's rights.

The walk is being spearheaded by Emily Waugh, who was joined by her mother, Amy Peck, in the early stages of the walk. Waugh, an Oregon mother of two, was feeling overwhelmed and angry by the news. "We as women are under attack in this country. Our rights are being ripped out from under our feet, and our abusers are being protected by our government," Waugh said. Though she had been volunteering in her community, showing up to protests, and contacting her representatives, she was overcome with a desperate need to do something more.

Dismayed by the realization that International Women's Day seemed to be passing almost entirely unnoticed this year, Waugh reached her breaking point. "Where is the giant march? Where are the throngs of angry women? I know they exist, I have to believe by the hundreds of thousands."

It was then that she had the idea for a cross-country walk on D.C. "Honestly, at first I wanted to pull a Forrest Gump, and just walk out my front door and not stop until I got to D.C.," she said. She quickly dismissed that idea as logistically impossible, as most people, including Waugh, would not be able to leave home for the extended period of time necessary for such a journey, no matter how important the cause. Still, she couldn't let it go, and when she realized that a relay-style event would solve that challenge, the Women's Walk Across America was born.

The walk left from the Oregon State Capitol in Salem on March 29th, near the end of Women's History Month and has continued for over 698 miles as of May 22nd, gaining the participation of more than 54 walkers. "We're saying we won't be kept in this small box of your acknowledgment. As Women's History Month was ending, we wanted the world to know that we're only just getting started," Waugh said. People are encouraged to join at any point and for any length of time. It will take a little over seven months to cross from the Oregon Capitol to the steps of the United States Capitol. "One of the big goals is to draw attention to the critical midterm elections," says Waugh.

Once in D.C., they hope to hold a rally. "We want to stand in front of the politicians as an undeniable force, and remind them that they ignore us at their own detriment." The walk is expected to gain attention and walkers as they go. "We anticipate the crowd size growing as we pass through major cities and naturally dwindling through quieter stretches." There are no restrictions or limitations to participate beyond some safety precautions in the early stages to protect those already on the route. The Walk is currently nearing Salt Lake City, Utah.

"I feel so strongly - deep down in the primal core of me - that we need a visible demonstration that cannot be ignored," Waugh stated about the walk. She hopes to inspire women into action, and to tell the government that women will not be silenced. To learn more or get involved, visit womenswalkacrossamerica.com.

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