Minnie Fisher Cunningham (1882-1964)

by Elena Quintana, Public History 3308

Texan Minnie Fisher Cunningham was born on March 19, 1882. She was a women's rights activist working especially hard for equal pay and women's suffrage. Cunningham worked to alleviate poverty through the New Deal programs of the 1930 and helped found the National League of Women's Voters and the Texas Observer. Cunningham ran for the office of U.S. senator and later governor of Texas. She served in many state and federal capacities until her death in 1964.

A letter from Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Honorable Harry H. Dale, U.S. Representative from New York, May 2, 1916

Dear Sir:

You are urgently requested to do all in your power to have the Amendment to the Federal Constitution, known as the "Susan B. Anthony Suffrage Amendment," reported out of the Judiciary Committee, so that it may be voted on in the House of Representatives at an early date.

We respectfully call your attention to the fact that our National Government is supported by the taxes collected from woman citizens as well as men citizens, though that is going directly against that cry for political liberty which our fore fathers threw into the very teeth of their oppressors– "Taxation without representation is TYRANNY"! And we feel that legislation which affects all of the women of this nation has the same right to consideration by Congress that other important legislation should receive.

We wish you to know that the Texas Woman Suffrage Association, which is composed of many thousands of men and women, has endorsed the Federal Amendment for Women Suffrage in its Constitution, so that you may not labor under the delusion that we place States' Rights above Human Rights. But as this is not a question in which the States' Rights bogy is involved, since we are merely asking for the removal of a sex discrimination and not for any radical revision of the voting qualifications in any State, perhaps the above information is superfluous.

Very truly yours,
Minnie Fisher Cunningham