June 28, 2018

Senator Dean Heller
Senator Jon Tester
United States Senate
Washington, DC

Dear Senator Heller and Senator Tester:

The American Historical Association enthusiastically endorses the awarding of a Congressional Gold Medal to the 226 American women who served in France in the US Army Signal Corps during World War I. They should have been honored a century ago for their service to the United States; this belated recognition is the very least their country can offer them now.

These remarkable women volunteered for our nation’s military at a time when they were still denied the right to vote in national elections. They served key roles, in dangerous places. They remained on-station long after the war was over to help secure the postwar peace. Afterward, they quietly returned to their lives, with the proud knowledge of having made some 26 million vital communication connections among the Allied participants in the war—which directly affected the war’s successful outcome. Sadly, their efforts went unheralded. Their own government did not give even the most basic recognition to their contributions only because they were women.

Our government has the opportunity to correct this historic injustice and ensure that the story of their courage, and postwar struggle for basic equality, will be preserved for future generations of Americans. Your legislation is an example of what we can do, as Americans, to honor all individuals who have sacrificed for their nation.

Sincerely,

James Grossman
Executive Director