

Hundreds of thousands of women descend on D.C. to protest against President Donald Trump



WASHINGTON (AP) — Hundreds of thousands of women took to the streets in the nation's capital and cities around the world Saturday to send Donald Trump an emphatic message that they won't let his agenda go unchallenged over the next four years.

"We march today for the moral core of this nation, against which our new president is waging a war," actress America Ferrera told the Washington crowd. "Our dignity, our character, our rights have all been under attack, and a platform of hate and division assumed power yesterday. But the president is not America. ... We are America, and we are here to stay."

The turnout in the capital was so big that crowds packed the entire march route, preventing organizers from leading a formal trek toward the White House. Likewise, in Chicago, organizers canceled the march portion of their event for safety reasons after the overflow crowd reached an estimated 150,000.

The women brandished signs with slogans such as "Women won't back down" and "Less fear more love" and decried Trump's stand on such issues as abortion, health care, diversity, and climate change. Their message echoed at demonstrations around the globe, from New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and Los Angeles to Paris, Berlin, London, Prague, Sydney and beyond.



Saskia Coenen Snyder, a teacher at the University of South Carolina who came to a rally in Columbia, said: "I'm not sure we could have picked a more irresponsible or dangerous man to be president."

Officials said the crowd in Washington could be more than half a million people, more than double expectations. The event appeared to have attracted more people than Trump's inauguration on Friday, based on figures from transportation officials.

More than 600 "sister marches" were planned around the world, and plenty of men were part of the tableau, too. Organizers estimated 3 million people would march worldwide.

Retired teacher Linda Lastella, 69, who came to Washington from Metuchen, New Jersey, said she had never marched before but felt the need to speak out when "many nations are experiencing this same kind of pullback and hateful, hateful attitudes."

"It just seemed like we needed to make a very firm stand of where we were," she said.

As the demonstrators rallied alongside the National Mall, Trump opened his first full day as president by attending a prayer service at the Washington National Cathedral, a tradition for the day after inauguration, and later visited the CIA. As he traveled around town, his motorcade passed large groups of protesters that would have been hard to miss.

Hillary Clinton, who lost to Trump, took to Twitter to thank the participants for "standing, speaking and marching for our values."

