

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CENTENNIAL COMMISSION

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# FIFTH REPORT TO CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENT

SUSAN COMBS, CHAIRWOMAN  
COLLEEN SHOGAN, VICE CHAIRWOMAN



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NOVEMBER 5, 2019

# INTRODUCTION



***Throughout 2020, the U.S. will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment and women's right to vote.***

Suffragists began their organized fight for women's equality in 1848 when they demanded the right to vote during the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York. For the next 72 years, women leaders lobbied, marched, picketed, and protested for access to the ballot. The U.S. House of Representatives finally approved the Susan B. Anthony Amendment, which guaranteed women the right to vote, on May 21, 1919. The U.S. Senate followed two weeks later, and the 19th Amendment went to the states, where it had to be ratified by three-fourths of the-then-48 states to be added to the Constitution. By a vote of 50-47, Tennessee became the last state needed to ratify the 19th Amendment on August 18, 1920. Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby issued a proclamation declaring the 19th Amendment ratified and part of the U.S. Constitution on August 26, 1920, forever protecting American women's right to vote.

Today, more than 68 million women vote in elections because of the courageous suffragists who never gave up the fight for equality, and the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission (WSCC) is proud to be leading the nationwide commemorations of this historic centennial and to elevate the history of the suffrage movement through celebratory projects, programs, and campaigns.

In this report, we highlight the Commission's progress, plans, and partnerships as we reflect on the successes of 2019 and approach the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment in 2020.



**MARY CHURCH TERRELL,  
SUFFRAGIST & FOUNDER  
OF THE NATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION OF  
COLORED WOMEN**

# LEADERSHIP STRIDES

On August 12, 2019, the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission announced the election of Susan Combs as Chairwoman and Colleen Shogan as Vice Chairwoman. Combs succeeds Kay Coles James, President of The Heritage Foundation as Chairwoman, and Colleen Shogan follows former Senator Barbara Mikulski as Vice Chairwoman. James and Mikulski nominated their replacements and will remain members of the Commission. The vote in support of Combs and Shogan was unanimous.

"The amazing accomplishments of this outstanding Commission are proof that people with diverse points of view can work together for the common good," said James. "It has been one of the highest honors of my professional career to work alongside Senator Barbara Mikulski. We are tremendously proud of the work that all of us have done to get the Commission off to a great start with the milestones we have celebrated and we continue to be committed and believe in the mission of the Commission," James added.

Sen. Mikulski (Ret.) echoed the sentiments, saying, "After kicking off our commemorative efforts on Capitol Hill and at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery, the Library of Congress, and the National Archives, Kay and I are excited to hand over leadership of the Commission to two exceptional women, Susan Combs of Interior and Colleen Shogan of the Library of Congress. Both women are ideally positioned for the next phase of the Commission's work, which will focus on commemorations across this great nation mirroring the race to ratification 100 years ago. I have been honored to serve as Vice Chairwoman of this bi-partisan Commission and look forward to continue serving alongside my fellow Commissioners as we commemorate women's suffrage in America."

Susan Combs and Colleen Shogan bring a wealth of knowledge from their respective fields to the Commission leadership ranks. Combs serves as the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget for the U. S. Department of the Interior. Shogan serves as Assistant Deputy Librarian for Collections and Services at the Library of Congress.

"Kay Coles James has been a tremendous leader, and I am thankful to my fellow commissioners for choosing me to succeed her," Combs said. "The accomplishments of the suffragists we honor with our work, and the legacy of the 19th Amendment, must echo in the halls and households of America this year and every year. We take our responsibility very seriously to ensure a suitable commemoration for this historic moment.

Shogan added, "I am deeply honored and humbled to succeed Senator Barbara Mikulski as the Vice Chair of this Commission. I look forward to sharing the inspirational, diverse stories of the women's suffrage movement with the American public as we enter the centennial year of the 19th Amendment's enactment."

Under the leadership of Chairwoman Susan Combs and Vice Chairwoman Colleen Shogan, the WSCC will continue to spearhead the nationwide efforts to commemorate the ratification of the 19th Amendment.



**INEZ MILHOLLAND,  
SUFFRAGIST & LAWYER**

# SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

**The Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission met on August 12, 2019 and unanimously voted to approve 42 new projects, campaigns, partnerships, and initiatives to fulfill the duties of our chartered mission.**

The 42 newly approved projects will be executed through the Commission's four subcommittees, which include the Capital City Subcommittee, the Multi-Media, Education, and Engagement Subcommittee, the Partnerships Subcommittee, and the 50 States Subcommittee.

From innovative and educational suffrage history podcasts for children and adults to a national library book donation initiative to the building of permanent monuments and statues in cities across the U.S., the WSCC will ensure that the centennial year of the ratification of the 19th Amendment is celebrated throughout 2020 and that the contributions of the suffragists continue to inspire all Americans for the next 100 years.

And as we work to amplify the history of the 19th Amendment across the country, the Multi-Media, Education, and Engagement Subcommittee is excited to announce that as of November 1, 2019, we have partnered with a major national communications firm to tell the stories of the suffragists across the U.S. In addition, the 50 States Subcommittee is producing individualized Centennial Celebration Toolkits for each state and territory so that every community in the U.S. has a robust guide to commemorating the 19th Amendment in 2020. The toolkits will be available on our website and distributed to organizations, institutions, Governors, Mayors, and Members of Congress in November 2019.



**YOUNG SUFFRAGISTS IN RHODE ISLAND**

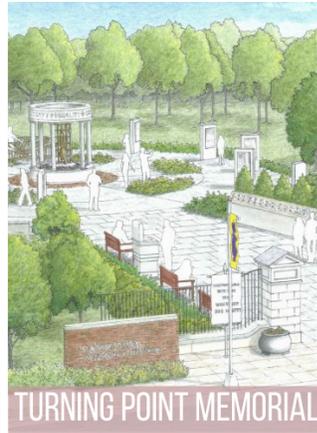
# FEATURED PARTNERSHIPS



VOTES FOR WOMEN TRAIL



PROJECT 19



TURNING POINT MEMORIAL



LUCY BURNS MUSEUM

**The Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission is partnering with dozens of organizations, institutions, and leaders throughout the United States to commemorate the centennial of women's right to vote in 2020. Here we feature four WSCC partner initiatives that will bring the story of the suffragists to millions of Americans.**

**Votes for Women Trail:** The National Votes for Women Trail, a project led by the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites in partnership with the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission, will place historic markers at sites relevant to the history of women's suffrage movement in all 50 states across the U.S. The WSCC is committed to ensuring that the suffrage story is taught, told, and remembered, and by partnering with the Votes for Women Trail, the WSCC will bring the history of the women who waged and won the fight for the vote to communities throughout the country.

**Project 19:** The WSCC is proud to partner with Project 19, led by the Women's Skydiving Network (WSN), to bring new energy and unparalleled momentum to the centennial celebrations in 2020. Project 19 is a planned, record-setting jump of 100 women skydivers in July 2020 outside of Chicago in celebration of the centennial of women's right to vote. The skydivers will be dressed in purple, gold, and white, the historic colors of the American women's suffrage movement, carry replica suffrage banners, and recite the words of the 19th Amendment during their historic jump. In addition, the all-women team at the WSN plans to perform their jump at 19th Amendment celebrations around the country in 2020.

**Turning Point Suffragist Memorial:** The WSCC is partnering with the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial to honor, memorialize, and educate future generations about the suffragists who fought for and won the right to vote for American women. The Commission is loaning statues of suffragists Alice Paul, Mary Church Terrell, and Carrie Chapman Catt to the national memorial, which will be completed and opened on August 26, 2020.

**The Lucy Burns Museum:** When the suffragists were arrested for picketing the White House in 1917, they served their prison sentences in the historic Occoquan Workhouse, located in Lorton, VA. Today, the Workhouse is home to the newly renovated Lucy Burns Museum, which tells the story of the 72 suffragists who were imprisoned at the Workhouse for fighting for their right to vote. The WSCC has partnered with the Lucy Burns Museum to support the telling of this critical piece of suffrage history, and is loaning statues of suffragists Lucy Burns and Dora Lewis to the site. This historic women's history site also served as the meeting location for the Commission's fourth meeting on October 3, 2019.

# STATE HIGHLIGHTS

*Though the official centennial of women's right to vote will take place on August 26, 2020, individual states began commemorating their own 19th Amendment anniversaries in 2019. After Congress passed the 19th Amendment in June 1919, thirty-six states needed to approve the amendment for women's right to vote to become fully ratified. Wisconsin, Illinois, and Michigan began the process when their state legislatures voted to ratify on June 10, 1919. This year, these three states kicked off state centennial celebrations on their 100th anniversary of ratifying the amendment. Since the Commission's last report, Arkansas, Montana, Nebraska, Minnesota, New Hampshire, and Utah commemorated their own anniversaries, and California and Maine will celebrate in November 2019.*

- **Arkansas:** On July 28, Governor Asa Hutchinson and First Lady Susan Hutchinson held a Tea at the Governor's Mansion to commemorate the state's ratification of the 19th Amendment and to launch the Yellow Rose Project Commemorating 100 Years of Women's Suffrage. During the event, the First Lady hosted a ceremonial planting of a yellow rose bush in the garden of the Governor's Mansion, marking the launch of a statewide initiative to plant yellow rose bushes in communities across Arkansas in celebration of the suffrage centennial. The WSCC provided yellow rose lapel pins, a symbol of the suffrage movement, that Governor Hutchinson and guests wore during the event.
- **Montana:** On September 21, the Montana Historical Society held an event with the Her Flag project. Her Flag is a nationwide initiative, created by artist Marilyn Artus, to commemorate the centennial of the 19th Amendment in every state. Artus collaborates with an artist in each state, traveling in order of ratification anniversaries, to add state-specific stripes to an 18 x 26 foot commemorative flag.
- **Nebraska:** Governor Pete Ricketts issued a proclamation designating August 2, 2019 as the "100th Anniversary of Nebraska Ratifying the 19th Amendment." The Nebraska History Museum commemorated the state's ratification anniversary throughout the month of August, unveiling their exhibit Votes For Women: Nebraska's Suffrage Story on August 16, and hosting a Votes for Women Family Fun Day on August 24.
- **Minnesota:** A "Minnesota Women's Suffrage Day" was held at the Minnesota State Capitol and the Minnesota Woman Suffrage Memorial on June 8, hosted by the American Association of University Women of Minnesota, League of Women Voters Edina, League of Women Voters Minnesota, the Minnesota Historical Society, and Twin Cities Headshots.
- **New Hampshire:** With the WSCC's support, New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu issued a proclamation declaring September 10, 2019 as "New Hampshire Women's Suffrage Day."
- **Utah:** On September 20, Utah suffrage centennial group Better Days 2020 held a "RADification Celebration," recognizing Utah's ratification anniversary. On October 16, members of the Utah Legislature held a ceremony at the State Capitol recognizing the women and men who led the effort to ratify the 19th Amendment in Utah.
- **Coming Up:** California will be commemorating their centennial of ratifying the 19th Amendment with a big celebration on November 9, hosted by California First Partner and WSCC Commissioner Jennifer Siebel Newsom at the California Museum. Maine will also be recognizing its ratification anniversary in November, with the Maine Suffrage Centennial Collaborative hosting events throughout the month.



MR. PRESIDENT  
WHAT  
WILL YOU DO  
FOR  
W SUFF

NATIONAL  
WOMAN'S  
PARTY  
SUFFRAGE  
PICKETS

# FEDERAL PARTNER UPDATES



## FROM CONGRESS: COMMEMORATIVE SUFFRAGE LEGISLATION

The Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission proudly supports the bi-partisan commemorative 19th Amendment legislation currently filed in the 116th Congress. The Commission has worked with the sponsoring Members of each piece of commemorative legislation by providing official letters of support, testifying in Congressional hearings, reaching out to Member offices to encourage cosponsorship, and more. With the help of the Commission, just this week the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commemorative Coin Act (S.1235/H.R.2423) passed through Congress. The bill is expected to be signed into law by mid-November 2019. All Americans can stay up-to-date on the bills and resolutions that will honor the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote with the WSCC's Suffrage Legislation Tracker, available at [womensvote100.org/news](http://womensvote100.org/news).

Commemorative suffrage centennial legislation currently filed in the U.S. House and Senate includes: the **"Every Word We Utter" Monument Act** (S.1705/H.R.473); the **Women's Suffrage Centennial Commemorative Coin Act** (S.1235/H.R.2423); the **Women's History and 19th Amendment Centennial Quarter Dollar Coin Program Act** (S. 2427/ H.R.1923); the **Honoring Harriet Tubman Act** (H.R. 3602); and the **Restoration of the Original Inscription on the Portrait Monument Act** (H.Con.Res.44).

## FROM THE U.S. TREASURY: SUFFRAGE MEDAL AND COIN

The Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission has worked closely with the U.S. Mint throughout 2019 on the production of a commemorative suffrage centennial medal to honor the 100 year anniversary of American women's right to vote. And now, with the passage of the Centennial Commemorative Coin Act in November 2019, the U.S. Mint will also be producing a tandem commemorative coin. The designs of the medal and coin will be unveiled in January 2020, and the ceremonial medal and coin strike will take place in early summer 2020. Americans will be able to purchase the official commemorative medal and coin from the U.S. Treasury in summer 2020.

## FROM THE WHITE HOUSE: CENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS

The Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission is supporting efforts by the White House, the President, and the First Family to commemorate and celebrate this historic centennial in 2020. Look to our next report for more details on a ceremonial rose bush planting in the Rose Garden in late Spring 2020!

JEANNETTE RANKIN,  
SUFFRAGIST & FIRST  
WOMAN ELECTED TO  
CONGRESS

# CONCLUSION

As we look back on the state ratification celebrations of 2019 and forward to 2020 and the centennial of the passage of the 19th Amendment, the Commission is honored to lead the nationwide commemorations of the women who waged and won the fight for the vote. We have been given a great task by Congress—to ensure that the country recognizes and celebrates this milestone of American democracy—and through our robust projects, initiatives, campaigns, and partnerships, the Commission has become the launching point for an unparalleled national commemoration of this turning point in women’s history. It is our privilege to tell this story, honor this legacy, and preserve this history for generations to come. Onward!

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## WSSC COMMISSIONERS

Chairwoman, Susan Combs | Assistant Secretary, Department of the Interior  
Vice Chairwoman, Colleen Shogan | Assistant Deputy Librarian, Library of Congress

Jovita Carranza | U.S. Treasurer  
Marjorie Dannenfelser | President, Susan B. Anthony List  
Heather Higgins | CEO, Independent Women’s Voice  
Karen Hill | President and CEO, Harriet Tubman Home  
Kay Coles James | President, The Heritage Foundation  
Julissa Marenco | Assistant Secretary, Smithsonian Institution  
Senator Barbara Mikulski (Ret.)  
Nicola Miner | Instructor and Philanthropist  
Cleta Mitchell | Partner, Foley & Lardner, LLP  
Penny Nance | President, Concerned Women For America  
Jennifer Siebel Newsom | Filmmaker and First Partner of California  
Debra Steidel Wall | Deputy Archivist, U.S. National Archives

Anna Laymon | Interim Executive Director

