

THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

MAINE

RATIFIED THE 19TH AMENDMENT ON NOV. 5, 1919

1920  2020
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE
CENTENNIAL
COMMISSION



1920-2020



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"THE RIGHT OF
CITIZENS OF THE
UNITED STATES TO
VOTE SHALL NOT BE
DENIED OR ABRIDGED
BY THE UNITED
STATES OR BY ANY
STATE ON ACCOUNT
OF SEX."

The 19th Amendment

ABOUT

The Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission (WSCC) was formed by Congress to commemorate the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote and the 19th Amendment.

Throughout 2020, the United States is celebrating the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, which secured women's constitutional right to vote. Today, more than 68 million American women vote in elections because of the courageous suffragists who never gave up the fight for equality. This centennial is an unparalleled opportunity to elevate women's history and to commemorate a milestone of American democracy.

Use this toolkit as your guide to commemorating the centennial in your state and community.



ALICE PAUL IN FRONT OF THE NATIONAL WOMAN'S PARTY HEADQUARTERS, WASHINGTON, D.C., 1920.

LEARN THE HISTORY

THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT

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 the right 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 voted to approve the 19th Amendment on June 4, 1919. The 19th Amendment then went to the states, where it had to be ratified by three-fourths of the then 48 states to be added to the Constitution. Tennessee became the 36th and final state needed to ratify the 19th Amendment on August 18, 1920. On August 26, 1920, the U.S. Secretary of State issued a proclamation declaring the 19th Amendment ratified and officially part of the U.S. Constitution. Today, August 26th is celebrated annually as Women's Equality Day.

MAINE QUICK FACTS

- Maine ratified the 19th Amendment on November 4, 1919.
- Prior to this, the Maine legislature passed a constitutional amendment allowing women's suffrage in 1917, but it was resoundingly defeated in a statewide referendum the same year.
- Suffrage organizations in Maine included the Maine Woman Suffrage Association, the Men's Equal Suffrage League of Maine, and the Maine branches of the National American Woman's Suffrage Association and the National Woman's Party.
- Suffragists like Ann Frances Greeley, Sarah Jarvis, Florence Brooks Whitehouse, Robert Treat Whitehouse, Gail Laughlin, and Deborah Knox Livingston were active in Maine.



SUFFRAGIST AND
LAWYER INEZ
MILHOLLAND AT A
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE
PARADE IN NEW YORK
CITY, MAY 3, 1913.

LEARN THE HISTORY

ORIGINAL SOURCE: NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

MAINE AND THE 19TH AMENDMENT**RATIFICATION DATE: NOVEMBER 5, 1919**

Women first organized and collectively fought for suffrage at the national level in July of 1848. Suffragists such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott convened a meeting of over 300 people in Seneca Falls, New York. In the following decades, women marched, protested, lobbied, and even went to jail. By the 1870s, women pressured Congress to vote on an amendment that would recognize their suffrage rights. This amendment was sometimes known as the Susan B. Anthony Amendment and became the 19th Amendment.

The amendment reads:

"The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex."

Like many states in New England, Maine was a place of early suffrage activity. Sisters Ann Frances Greeley and Sarah Jarvis campaigned for women's right to vote in the 1850s. Both Susan B. Anthony and Lucy Stone toured Maine campaigning for suffrage. In 1857, a group of Bangor women sent a petition to the Maine legislature for a state constitutional amendment enfranchising women. The legislature ignored the petition.

Although the Maine suffrage movement was primarily organized by wealthy women, there were also textile workers who became involved in the fight for the vote. In 1865, women factory workers marched in the Lewiston Independence Day parade with a banner that read "Right of Suffrage to Every American Citizen." It would take another decade, however, before Maine women organized statewide for suffrage.

Thousands of women and men gathered in Augusta in 1873 to form the Maine Woman Suffrage Association (MWSA), with guest speakers Lucy Stone and Julia Ward Howe. That same year, the legislature responded to petitions requesting a state suffrage amendment, but the motion was voted down. Over the next decades, women organizing for temperance and labor rights continued to also advocate for the right to vote.

The MWSA continued to relentlessly campaign for a state constitutional amendment. Slowly they were able to increase public support for woman suffrage across the state. Their progress led to both the creation of the Maine Association Opposed to Suffrage for Women in 1913 and the Men's Equal Suffrage League of Maine in 1914. It looked like victory was on the horizon when the Maine legislature finally passed the state constitutional amendment overwhelmingly in 1917. The success was short-lived; when the amendment was put to the electorate later that year, Maine's male voters rejected it.

Repeated defeats at the state level led many suffragists, including those from Maine, to turn their efforts towards the passage of the federal amendment. They worked for both the National American Woman Suffrage Association, led by Carrie Chapman Catt, and Alice Paul's National Woman's Party. Florence Brooks Whitehouse of Portland, whose husband Robert formed the Men's Equal Suffrage League of Maine, became the chairman of the Maine branch of the National Woman's Party. Gail Laughlin, the first woman to practice law in the state, became Vice President of the NWP. In 1929, she became the first woman elected to the Maine State Senate.

After decades of arguments for and against women's suffrage, Congress finally approved the 19th Amendment in June 1919. After Congress passed the 19th Amendment, at least 36 states needed to vote in favor of it for it to become law. This process is called ratification.

Governor Miliken called a special session of the Maine legislature to consider ratification of the amendment. On November 5, 1919, Maine voted to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment. By August of 1920, 36 states (including Maine) ratified the amendment, ensuring that the right to vote could not be denied across the country based on sex.

Source: <https://www.nps.gov/articles/maine-and-the-19th-amendment.htm>

COMMEMORATE ACROSS YOUR STATE

-  **Issue Proclamations or Executive Orders:** Encourage your Governor and Mayors across the state to issue a commemorative proclamation or executive order to recognize your state's or community's role in the women's suffrage movement, designate August 26, 2020 as Women's Equality Day, or designate 2020 as "The Year of Maine Women." Find samples and templates at womensvote100.org/resolutionsandorders.
-  **Pass Resolutions:** Encourage your state legislature, city councils, and town councils to pass commemorative resolutions to recognize your state's or community's role in the women's suffrage movement, designate August 26, 2020 as Women's Equality Day, or reaffirm your state's or community's commitment to the 19th Amendment and to uplifting women's voices. Find samples and templates at womensvote100.org/resolutionsandorders.
-  **Join the Forward Into Light Campaign:** On August 26, 2020, buildings and landmarks across the country will light up in purple and gold to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment and women's right to vote. This nationwide celebration of the centennial is named for the historical suffrage slogan, "Forward through the Darkness, Forward into Light." Work with leaders, organizations, and communities in your state to celebrate women's right to vote in the official suffrage colors of purple and gold, from the State Capitol to skyscrapers to bridges to city halls.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MAINE

- In 2019, the **Maine Suffrage Centennial Collaborative** was established to organize activities and programs to commemorate the centennial in Maine, encourage private organizations, government entities, and the public to do the same, partner with state and national efforts, and disseminate information about centennial activities.
- In March 2019, the **Maine State Museum** opened an exhibit titled **Women's Long Road: 100 Years to the Vote**, which runs through January 25, 2020.
- In 2019, the **Margaret Chase Smith Library** displayed an exhibit on **Margaret Chase Smith's involvement in the fight for the 19th Amendment**.
- The **Seal Cove Auto Museum** is displaying an exhibit called **Engines of Change: A Suffrage Centennial**, an exhibit focusing on the role the automobile played in women's independence and suffrage, from May 2020 to May 2021.

GET INSPIRED

COMING UP IN 2020



**FORWARD
INTO LIGHT**



**PROJECT 19
SKYDIVERS**



**VOTES FOR
WOMEN TRAIL**



**CENTENNIAL
RIDE**

Forward Into Light: As part of the WSCC's Forward Into Light campaign, states across the country will light their buildings and landmarks in purple and gold on August 26, 2020, the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment. Some states started commemorating the centennial with lightings in 2019, including Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and Virginia. Are you in for August 26, 2020? Contact the WSCC for more information.

Project 19: Led by the Women's Skydiving Network (WSN), Project 19 is a planned jump of 100 women skydivers in July 2020 outside of Chicago in celebration of the centennial of women's right to vote. The WSN also has a sponsored all-women Professional Demonstration Team, which is scheduling jumps (at no charge!) during 19th Amendment celebrations around the country throughout 2020. For more information, contact Team Captain Melanie Curtis at mel@melaniecurtis.com.

Votes for Women Trail: The National Votes for Women Trail is a project led by the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites to place historic markers at locations relevant to the history of the women's suffrage movement in all 50 states. The WSCC is partnering with the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites to complete the Trail in 2020. Visit womensvote100.org/votes-for-women-trail to follow the Trail and find historic sites in your state.

Centennial Ride: In honor of the centennial of the 19th Amendment, hundreds of women and men will participate in a cross-country motorcycle tour in 2020. Riders will leave from ten different starting cities around the country, and more than 1,000 riders will converge on Washington, D.C. between August 20-23, 2020. Learn more at www.centennialride.com.

PLAN AN EVENT



"WE KNOCK AT THE BAR OF JUSTICE, ASKING AN EQUAL CHANCE."

-Mary Church Terrell, suffragist & founder of the National Association of Colored Women, 1898

- **What:** Hold a press conference, reception, or public program commemorating the centennial of the 19th Amendment and women's right to vote. Keep reading for examples and ideas!
- **Where:** Host an event at your State Capitol or City Hall, or at a historic site, museum, school, university, or community center. Find a list of historic sites and places in Maine along the National Votes for Women Trail at womensvote100.org/get-involved.
- **When:** Events celebrating the centennial can be held anytime throughout 2020, but particularly important dates include Black History Month (February), Women's History Month (March), and June-August 2020, building up to the official centennial date on August 26, 2020.
- **Who:** Invite members of your community to your event, as well as state or local leaders such as your Governor, First Lady/First Partner, Members of Congress, State Legislators, Mayor, or local Council Members. Invite a guest speaker, such as a women's suffrage historian, and invite historic performers to portray famous women of history. Find a list of historians and performers at womensvote100.org/get-involved.
- **Additional Details:** The suffragists wore white dresses to display their unity, and the yellow rose became a symbol of the movement's ultimate victory. At your commemorative event, decorate the room with yellow roses, suggest your guests dress in white attire, and offer replica Votes for Women pins, which can be provided by the WSCC.

Relevant Organizations in Your State:

- Maine Historical Society: mainehistory.org
- Maine Municipal Association: memun.org
- Maine Preservation: mainepreservation.org
- Maine State Museum: mainestatemuseum.org
- Maine Suffrage Centennial Collaborative: mainesuffragecentennial.org
- Maine Women's Hall of Fame: uma.edu/about/community/mwhof/
- Portland Women's History Trail: media.usm.maine.edu/~pwht/

PLAN AN EVENT



"MEN, THEIR RIGHTS, AND NOTHING MORE; WOMEN, THEIR RIGHTS, AND NOTHING LESS."
Susan B. Anthony & Elizabeth Cady Stanton, c.1868

MORE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION IDEAS

Street Renaming: Through your Mayor's office, change the name of a street in your city in honor of a local suffragist.

Suffrage Exhibits: Work with your local historical society to create an exhibit about your community's suffrage story.

Purple and Gold Fireworks: At your State Fair, County Fair, or community gathering, feature a display of purple and gold fireworks.

Musical Performances: Hold a concert featuring female composers or original music from the suffrage movement, which can be found online through the Library of Congress's searchable archives.

Film Screenings: Host screenings of films focused on the suffrage movement or women's empowerment, such as *Iron Jawed Angels*, *Suffragette*, or *A League of Their Own*.

Suffrage Floats: Include a suffrage-themed float in state and local parades.

Community Murals: Hire a local artist to create a suffrage-themed mural in your community that tells the story of the suffrage movement in your state.

Suffrage Centennial Races: Take the lead from the National Park Service's Race to Ratification and hold a suffrage-themed 5K or 10k in summer 2020.

Wikipedia Edit-a-Thon: Work with Wikipedia to plan an "Edit-a-Thon" focused on your state and local suffrage history.

Suffrage Essay or Art Contests: Hold an essay or art contest for students on topics related to your state and local suffrage history.

Suffrage Book Club: Form a book club with a locally owned bookstore to read and discuss books about the women's suffrage movement.

Plantings of Yellow Roses: Plant yellow roses in your home, school, or community gardens and share photos on social media using the hashtags #WomensVote100, #SuffrageSisters, and #SuffraGents.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

STAY ENGAGED

- Follow @WomensVote100 on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
- Check out the “Suffrage Sisters” YouTube channel
- Subscribe to our e-newsletter at womensvote100.org
- Keep an eye on our Maine page at womensvote100.org/maine

FIND RESOURCES

- womensvote100.org/learn
- womensvote100.org/news
- womensvote100.org/states

Use these hashtags on social media to engage with your community during this historic moment:

#WomensVote100
#SuffrageSisters
#SuffraGents

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Instagram



Facebook



THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CENTENNIAL COMMISSION



QUESTIONS?

CONTACT KIMBERLY WALLNER,
DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS & PARTNERSHIPS
202-707-0106
KIMBERLY@WOMENSVOTE100.ORG