

THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

MARYLAND

RATIFIED THE 19TH AMENDMENT ON MARCH 29, 1941

1920  2020
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE
CENTENNIAL
COMMISSION



1920-2020

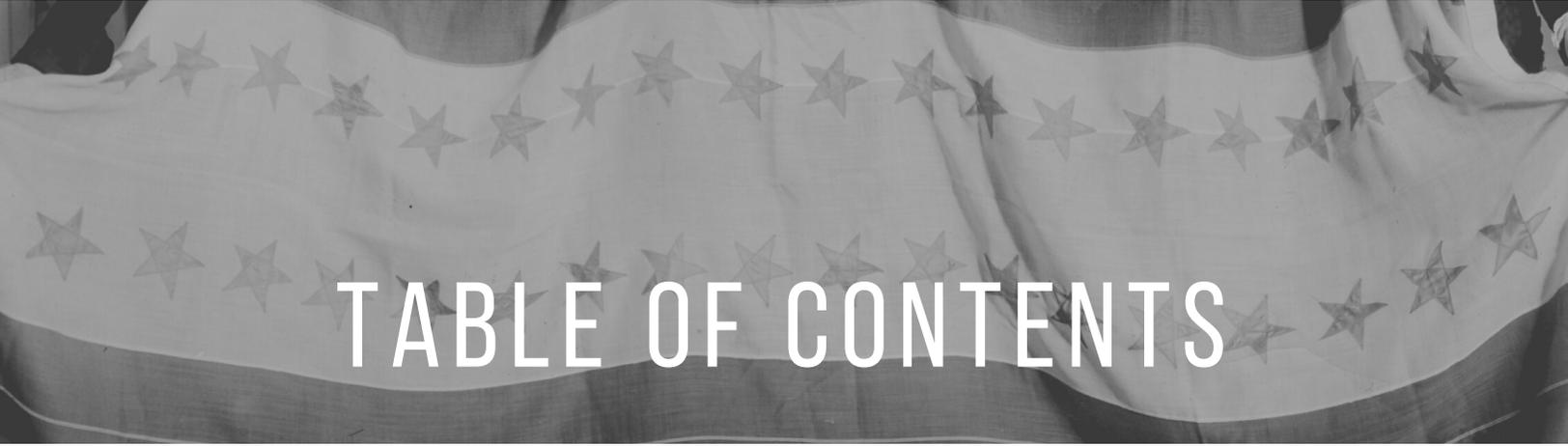


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"THE RIGHT OF
CITIZENS OF THE
UNITED STATES TO
VOTE SHALL NOT BE
DENIED OR ABRIDGED
BY THE UNITED
STATES OR BY ANY
STATE ON ACCOUNT
OF SEX."

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.

MARYLAND QUICK FACTS

- Maryland ratified the 19th Amendment on March 29, 1941.
- Maryland can trace its suffrage activism back to America's early colonial past: in 1648, lawyer Margaret Brent petitioned the Maryland General Assembly for a vote in the governing body on the grounds that she, as a landowner, should have a say in the governance of the colony. Her petition was rejected.
- In 1906, NAWSA held its annual convention at Baltimore's Lyric Theatre. Susan B. Anthony delivered her final speech there only months before she died.
- Suffragists such as Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Edith Houghton Hooker, Margaret Brent, Augusta Chissell, Lucy Branham, Julia Emory, Bertha Jackson, and Mary Gertrude Fendall were active in Maryland.
- Suffrage organizations in Maryland included the Maryland Equal Rights Society, the Progressive Women's Suffrage Club, the Maryland State Suffrage Association, and the Just Government League of Maryland.



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

MARYLAND AND THE 19TH AMENDMENT

RATIFICATION DATE: MARCH 29, 1941 (CERTIFIED MARCH 25, 1958)

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."

The First Suffragist?

Maryland can trace its activism for woman suffrage all the way back to its very earliest days as a British colony. In 1648, Margaret Brent, a lawyer and executor of Governor Leonard Calvert's estate, petitioned the Maryland General Assembly for a vote in the governing body. She argued that as a landowner, she was due the same rights that male Marylanders enjoyed. The Assembly rejected her demand. As in many southern states, there was no significant organizing for woman suffrage in Maryland before the Civil War. (Although Maryland is now considered part of the Mid-Atlantic region, it was a slaveholding state until 1864.) Lavinia Dundore organized the Maryland Equal Rights Society in Baltimore in 1867 to work for suffrage. The Society held a well-attended convention in 1872 with several national suffrage activists delivering speeches or sending letters of support, but by 1874 it had disbanded.

New Organizations in the 20th Century

In the twentieth century, there were at least three major woman suffrage organizations that were active in Maryland. The Maryland State Suffrage Association, the Just Government League of Maryland, and the Equal Suffrage League all organized events and held meetings throughout the state to fight for the right to vote. Members of the state organizations also joined the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) and sent delegates to conventions around the country. In 1906, NAWSA held its annual convention in Baltimore at the Lyric

Theatre. Susan B. Anthony delivered her final speech there months before she died.

Maryland suffragists made sure to be visible throughout the state, especially at important community events. They set up booths at county fairs, drove cars decorated with banners and flowers in local parades, even entered a suffrage boat in a town regatta near Annapolis. Maryland welcomed "General" Rosalie Jones and her suffrage pilgrims during their hike through the state on the way from New York to Washington, D.C. for the 1913 Woman Suffrage Procession. Maryland suffragists sent a delegation to the procession also, riding a special train from Baltimore to Washington called the "Suffrage Special." Two years later, they organized their own suffrage hikers on several trips throughout the state, led by "General" Edna Latimer. Latimer also campaigned around the state with Lola Trax on a pilgrimage in a horse-drawn covered wagon called a Prairie Schooner adorned with "Votes For Women" flags.

Edith Houghton Hooker, president of the Just Government League, published a weekly newspaper called Maryland Suffrage News which chronicled all the happenings in the state and around the country for woman suffrage. The Just Government League also opened a coffee room and restaurant in Washington, D.C. near the headquarters of Alice Paul's Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage. They proclaimed that the delicious meals served there "demonstrated conclusively that suffragists can cook."

Although the early Equal Rights Society was integrated, by the twentieth century, white suffragists in Maryland usually excluded African American women from participation. As in many parts of the country, Black women in Maryland formed organizations that worked for civil and social uplift for the community, including women's right to vote. Augusta Chissell formed the Progressive Women's Suffrage Club in Baltimore in 1915 to work for the enfranchisement of all women in the state. After the 19th Amendment was ratified in 1920, she wrote a column for the Baltimore Afro-American newspaper called "A Primer for

LEARN THE HISTORY

Women Voters” to help guide and educate women in their new civic role.

Despite all their work, Maryland suffragists were unsuccessful in winning the vote statewide. Several measures over the years to enfranchise women were voted down in the Maryland legislature. A few Maryland towns offered extremely limited suffrage to women. In Annapolis, women voted in bond elections beginning in 1900 but could not vote for any elected officials. The town of Still Pond in Kent County allowed women taxpayers to vote in municipal elections in 1908. Although the town charter adopted in Loch Lynn Heights in Garrett County should have granted women to vote in local elections, it doesn't appear that women were ever permitted to participate.

Maryland Women Cause Trouble

Maryland women also joined the national movement for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution enfranchising women. Many Marylanders participated in demonstrations such as the National Woman's Party's pickets of the White House and several went to jail. Lucy Branham of Baltimore was an especially active protester. She was arrested several times and served sentences in the Occoquan Workhouse and the District jail. She participated in the "Prison Special," a 1919 nationwide tour by rail of women who had been imprisoned for their demonstrations. They wore replicas of their prison dresses to highlight the oppression of women's disfranchisement.

After decades of arguments for and against women's suffrage, Congress finally passed the 19th Amendment in June 1919. After Congress approved the 19th Amendment, at least 36 states needed to vote in favor of the amendment for it to become law. This process is called ratification. On February 20, 1920, Maryland voted against the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. By August of 1920, 36 states ratified the amendment, ensuring that in every state, the right to vote could not be denied based on sex.

Maryland Fights Back

Shortly after the 19th Amendment was passed in 1920, Judge Oscar Leser sued the state of Maryland to remove the names of two Baltimore women from the list of registered voters. His position was that the Maryland constitution granted voting rights only to men, and that Maryland had not ratified the 19th Amendment.

In January 1922, the United States Supreme Court heard arguments in the case. Leser's arguments to the Court were threefold: 1) that the character

of the proposed amendment excluded it from being added to the Constitution; 2) that since many of the states that ratified the 19th Amendment had state constitutions prohibiting women from voting, they were unable to decide otherwise as a matter of established law; and 3) that the state legislatures in Tennessee and West Virginia had not followed proper procedure in ratifying the 19th Amendment.

In a unanimous certiorari decision issued on February 27, 1922, *Leser v. Garnett*, 258 U.S. 130 (1922), the Supreme Court ruled against Leser, confirming the constitutionality of the 19th Amendment. In their decision, they responded to each of his arguments as follows: 1) Since the similar 15th Amendment, which determined that voting rights could not be denied on account of race, had been accepted as valid law for over fifty years, the 19th Amendment could not be considered invalid; 2) When states ratified the 19th Amendment, they were acting in the federal sphere, which "transcends any limitations sought to be imposed by the people of a state"; and 3) Since both Connecticut and Vermont had also ratified the 19th Amendment before the case was heard (making 36 states, even if Tennessee and West Virginia were invalid), the validity of the Tennessee and West Virginia processes was moot. The court also said that, since the Secretaries of State of Tennessee and West Virginia had accepted the ratifications, that they were necessarily valid.

On March 29, 1941 Maryland voted to ratify the 19th Amendment. The vote was not certified until February 25, 1958.

Source:

<https://www.nps.gov/articles/maryland-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 Maryland 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 MARYLAND

- **In July 2013, the Governor authorized the Commission on the Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Passage of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution.**
- **The Maryland Commission has unveiled new historic markers at sites significant to suffrage history around the state.**
- **In honor of the suffrage centennial, Governor Larry Hogan proclaimed 2020 as the Year of the Woman in Maryland.**

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 Maryland 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:

- Mary Edwardine Burke Emory Foundation: mebefoundation.org
- Maryland 19th Amendment Commission: msa.maryland.gov/mdvotesforwomen
- Maryland Historical Society: mdhs.org
- Maryland Municipal League: mdmunicipal.org/
- Maryland State Archives: msa.maryland.gov
- Maryland Women's Heritage Center: mdwomensheritagecenter.org

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 Maryland page at womensvote100.org/maryland

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

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