

THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

MONTANA

RATIFIED THE 19TH AMENDMENT ON AUG. 2, 1919

1920  2020
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE
CENTENNIAL
COMMISSION



1920-2020



TABLE OF CONTENTS

About | p2

Learn the History | p3

**Commemorate Across
Your State | p5**

Get Inspired | p6

Plan an Event | p7

Join the Conversation | p9

Contact | p10

"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.

MONTANA QUICK FACTS

- Montana ratified the 19th Amendment on August 2, 1919.
- The Montana legislature successfully passed an amendment to the state constitution allowing Montana women full suffrage in 1914.
- Montana suffragist Jeanette Rankin was the first woman to hold federal office in the United States. Elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1916, she introduced legislation that later became the 19th Amendment.
- Suffragists like Jeanette Rankin, Ota E. Cummings, Mary E. O'Neill, and Hazel Hunkins were active in Montana.
- Suffrage organizations in Montana included the Montana Equal Suffrage Association, the Political Equity League, the Missoula Teachers Suffrage Committee, and the Montana State Men's League for Equal Suffrage.



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

MONTANA AND THE 19TH AMENDMENT

RATIFICATION DATE: AUGUST 2, 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."

Although progress on the federal amendment stalled, women also campaigned for changes to state suffrage requirements to win the vote.

Montana was one of the states where women won full suffrage rights prior to the national constitutional amendment. Jeannette Rankin led the successful campaign to amend Montana's state constitution enfranchising women in 1914. Two years later, Montana voters elected Rankin to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives. Rankin was the first woman anywhere in the country elected to national office and the first woman member of Congress. After she was sworn in on April 2, 1917, one of her first acts as a new congresswoman was to introduce the Susan B. Anthony Woman Suffrage amendment for consideration by the House. The amendment was first introduced in Congress in 1878. Although it had been debated several times through the years, it had only come to the floor for a vote once in 1887 and was defeated. During the two years of her House term, Rankin consistently advocated for the amendment's passage. She wrote newspaper columns and granted interviews to reporters to keep up publicity for woman suffrage. Rankin negotiated for the creation of a Woman Suffrage Committee in the House. The Committee began hearings in January 1918 and

the amendment passed the House that same month but was defeated in the Senate.

The next year, the House voted again to pass the amendment on May 21, 1919. This time, the Senate also passed the amendment on June 4, 1919. After Congress approved it, at least 36 states needed to vote in favor of the amendment for it to become part of the U.S. Constitution. This process is called ratification.

On July 30, 1919, the Montana legislature voted to ratify the 19th Amendment. The governor certified the ratification on August 2, 1919. By August of 1920, 36 states (including Montana) had ratified the amendment, ensuring that across the country the right to vote could not be denied based on sex.

Montana Places of Women's Suffrage: Butte Historic District

In July 1914, suffragists in Butte, Montana organized a demonstration at the corner of Broadway and Main Streets. Speakers included Rosalie Jones, Ida Craft, and Jeannette Rankin. Butte was also the headquarters of the Montana Equal Suffrage State Central Committee. Butte is listed on the National Register as a Historic District.

Source:

<https://www.nps.gov/articles/montana-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 Montana 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 MONTANA

- In 2019, the U.S. Congress passed a bill officially naming Missoula's post office in honor of iconic Montana suffragist and the first woman elected to Congress, Jeanette Rankin.
- Montana began its celebrations of the suffrage centennial in 2014, which marked 100 years since women in the state won their right to vote.

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 Montana 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:

- Humanities Montana: humanitiesmontana.org
- Montana Historical Society: mhs.mt.gov
- Montana League of Cities and Towns: mtleague.org
- Montana State Archives and Libraries: statearchives.us/montana.htm
- Montana State Historic Preservation Office: mhs.mt.gov/Shpo
- Montana State Library: home.msl.mt.gov
- Montana Women's History Matters: montanawomenshistory.org
- University of Montana's Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library: lib.umt.edu

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 Montana page at womensvote100.org/montana

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?

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