

Support for the Celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage

WHEREAS, the year 2020 marks the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution, guaranteeing and protecting women's right to vote; and

WHEREAS, this centennial offers an opportunity to commemorate a milestone of democracy; that the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the federal or state governments on account of gender; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey has had a long, storied history in the suffrage movement with New Jersey women playing a crucial role in pursuing the rights of women to vote; and

WHEREAS, in 1776 women property owners were enfranchised under the New Jersey State Constitution, which was unique in the nation at the time. However, in 1807, the New Jersey Legislature eliminated the property requirement for voting rights and limited the ballot to white males; and

WHEREAS, in 1867 New Jersey residents Lucy Stone and Harry Blackwell organized the New Jersey Woman Suffrage Association (NJWSA), devoted to gaining women's suffrage; and

WHEREAS, in 1909 New Jersey's first open air suffrage rallies were held in Orange and Newark, led by Dr. Emma O. Gantz and Martha Klatshchken with NJWSA collecting 5,000 signatures for a petition in support of the federal amendment guaranteeing and protecting women's constitutional right to vote; and

WHEREAS, although the 1912 state referendum on woman's suffrage was soundly defeated in the New Jersey Legislature a corner was turned for the New Jersey suffrage movement; and

WHEREAS, in 1913 an automobile rally led by "General" Rosalie Jones traveled through New Jersey on the way to Washington, D.C., in a Suffrage Parade of over 8,000 marchers with many New Jersey women including event organizer Alice Paul; and

WHEREAS, in 1915 a second suffrage constitutional referendum was pursued in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts with active campaigns by many suffrage organizations, including the "Passing of the Torch of Liberty" via tug boats on the Hudson River from New York to New Jersey, but was defeated in all four states October 1915; and

WHEREAS, in 1917 New Jersey suffragists Allison Turnbull Hopkins, Julia Hulburt, Beatrice Reynolds Kinkead, and Minnie D. Abbott picketed in front of the White House as part of the Silent Sentinels and subsequently were arrested and imprisoned; and

WHEREAS, on June 4, 1919 Congress passed the 19th Amendment guaranteeing all American women the right to vote; and

WHEREAS, on February 9, 1920, New Jersey became the 29th state to ratify the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote; and

WHEREAS, shortly after the ratification of the 19th Amendment Margaret Laird and Jennie Van Ness were the first two women elected to the New Jersey Assembly in 1921 and in 1925 Rebecca Estelle Bourgeois Winston of Estell Manor was New Jersey's first woman mayor;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, in honor of the 100th Anniversary of the Ratification of the 19th Amendment (*insert name of municipality*) will light the municipal building in purple, one of the colors of the New Jersey Suffrage movement, for the week of February 10; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the (*insert the name of municipality*) supports the efforts of New Jersey's Suffrage Centennial NJ Women Vote and strongly encourages local celebrations of this historic milestone; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, a copy of this resolution will be forwarded to the Governor, Secretary of State and New Jersey League of Municipalities.