

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, in 1867, an act passed that struck the word 'male' from the Washington Territorial voting laws and opened up voting to 'all white American citizens above the age of twenty-one; and

WHEREAS, the Washington Territory law, excluded African American Women, along with women who could not read and speak English; denying them the right to vote; and

WHEREAS, in 1870, sisters Mary Olney Brown and Charlotte Olney French led women in Thurston County to attempt to vote as citizens under the 14th Amendment making them the first women to cast ballots in Washington Territory; and

WHEREAS, in 1871 Susan B. Anthony became the first woman to address the Washington Territorial Legislature and co-founded the Washington Territory Women's Suffrage Association; and

WHEREAS, on November 23, 1883, women living in Washington Territory, including African American women, gained the right to vote; and

WHEREAS, in 1887 women's voting rights in the Washington Territory were revoked by the Washington Territory Supreme Court, returned again in 1888 by the Washington Territorial Legislature and denied once more by the Court in that same year; and

WHEREAS, in the early 20th century, Washington women Emma Smith DeVoe and May Arkwright Hutton resurrected the local suffrage movement using campaigning posters, penny postcards and cookbooks in their campaigns; and

WHEREAS, on November 8, 1910 Washington became the first state in the 20th century and the fifth state in the Union to enfranchise women; and

WHEREAS, Washington women worked tirelessly to extend the woman's right to vote nationwide; and

WHEREAS, in June 1919 Congress passed the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution and sent it to the states for ratification, requiring thirty-six states to ratify the amendment and enact it into law; and

WHEREAS, on March 22, 1920 the national constitutional amendment for women's suffrage unanimously passed both houses of the Washington State legislature; and

WHEREAS, on August 18th, 1920, Tennessee was the 36th state to ratify the 19th Amendment; and

WHEREAS, on August 26, 1920 the United States Secretary of State certified and signed the 19th amendment into law, enfranchising half of the United States population; and

WHEREAS, recent and ongoing research has uncovered detailed and complex histories of the contributions of African American, Asian American, Latinx American and Native American women in the suffrage movement; and

WHEREAS, Despite the ratification of woman's suffrage in 1920, some states prevented African Americans and Native Americans from voting, which the Civil Rights Movement fought to correct; and

WHEREAS, the first and second generation of African American suffragists had strong ties to the abolitionist movement and believed in universal suffrage—voting rights without regard to race, gender, education, or economic status; and

WHEREAS, March 22, 2020, marks the 100th anniversary of the amendment for women's suffrage unanimously passed both houses of the Washington State legislature; and

WHEREAS, August 26, 2020, marks the centennial of the 19th Amendment becoming a part of the Constitution of the United States, providing for women's suffrage; and

WHEREAS, the fight for women's suffrage, lasted 72 years, with women from all walks of life, political views, and demographic backgrounds asking for the right to voice their opinions at the polls; and

WHEREAS, today women are not only voting, but are running for office in unprecedented numbers; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Olympia City Council celebrates August 26, 2020 as

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF RATIFYING THE 19TH AMENDMENT

And recognizes the efforts and triumph of the many women who worked for Suffrage across the Nation, in the Washington Territory and Washington State.

SIGNED IN THE CITY OF OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON THIS 25th DAY OF AUGUST 2020.

OLYMPIA CITY COUNCIL

***Cheryl Selby
Mayor***