

FORSYTH COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MEETING DATE: January 16, 2020 AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 1

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE AND FOUNGING OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

COUNTY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION OR COMMENTS:

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION:

ATTACHMENTS: YES NO

SIGNATURE: _____ COUNTY MANAGER DATE: _____

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE AND FOUNDING OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

WHEREAS an organized movement to enfranchise women began in July 1848, at a convention in Seneca Falls, New York;

WHEREAS through the efforts of brave and courageous women referred to as suffragists and suffragettes who sacrificed family, their personal life and their financial resources for over seventy years to gain equal rights for women, especially the right to vote;

WHEREAS women and men, black and white, supported the woman's suffrage movement for women to gain the constitutional right of having a voice in making the laws that govern them;

WHEREAS the woman's suffrage movement led to the passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States in 1919, with ratification by the states by the summer of 1920;

WHEREAS the National Woman's Suffrage Association dissolved in 1920 to create the League of Women Voters of the US to register voters and educate all voters;

WHEREAS the League of Women Voters of North Carolina was launched on October 7, 1920, on the steps of the Guilford County Courthouse by Gertrude Weil, a politically active and tireless young woman from Goldsboro, North Carolina;

WHEREAS more than 120,000 women were registered to vote in North Carolina by 1920; and

WHEREAS women today constitute a majority of voters in our state and the nation and are running for office in higher numbers and more active in the election process than ever before in history;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote and the founding of the League of Women Voters in the United States and in North Carolina is recognized for the impact these historic accomplishments have on citizen engagement and the civic life of the community, the state, and the nation.

Adopted this 16th day of January 2020.



August 23, 2019

Dear Commissioner,

Thank you for your service to the people of your county, the state and yes, our nation. The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan organization that includes women and men, founded in February, 1920, has as its mission "Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy". We strongly advocated then and now for full participation in the voting process and educating voters on the issues.

This year marks the one hundredth anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution giving women the vote. As you are aware, it had to be ratified by two-thirds of the states and this was not accomplished until August 18, 1920, when Tennessee cast its vote of support. Tennessee was the last of 36 states to ratify and had it not been for a young East Tennessee lawyer member of the House of Representatives, who after receiving a letter from his widowed mother imploring him to vote for suffrage, changed his vote on the third reading of the bill, the 19th amendment would not have been ratified at that time. This is but one historic example of the importance of one vote; one elected official who dared to be courageous and do that which is just and right.

Leagues across the country, along with numerous other organizations, will be commemorating this 100th anniversary throughout 2020. The League of Women Voters of North Carolina invites you to be a part of this most important commemoration specifically through the passage of the attached resolution. We believe this action will raise awareness of the importance of voting and increase understanding that the vote did not come easily to many. Your action will also provide the opportunity to enhance civic education as well as reminding all of us of the privilege we enjoy from living in a Democracy.

Your vote on the resolution may occur at a time of your choosing. We suggest that it be done in early 2020. If possible, please let me know when the vote will take place or if you need additional information as soon as possible. We will urge League members and friends in your surrounding area to be there at the time of your board's vote. Thank you for your consideration of our request to pass this important resolution.

Yours truly,

Mary Klenz, 100th Anniversary Committee
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Committee: Jo Nicholas, President, LWVNC, Willie Taylor, Vicki Boyer, Dorsey Harris

