

1 [Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Ratification of the 19th Amendment]

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3 **Resolution commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the ratification of the 19th**
4 **Amendment, extending the right to vote to women in the United States.**

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6 WHEREAS, The Society of Friends – the Quakers – believed all men and women were
7 created equal as early as the 1600s, with the four main tenets of Simplicity, Truth, Equality,
8 and Community encouraging many Quakers to become social activists; that efforts by
9 Quakers in the antislavery movement demonstrated women's effectiveness in the pursuit of
10 civic activities; that these efforts were further supported through the observations made by
11 Lucretia Mott during her time spent with the Seneca Nation in the summer of 1848, that
12 women in the Iroquois Confederacy had equal political voice; and that the totality of this work
13 led Mott and four other women, most of whom were Quaker, to organize the first Women's
14 Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848; and

15 WHEREAS, At a suffrage convention in Sacramento on May 30, 1896, Mrs. Naomi
16 Anderson, an African American suffragist known for her eloquent oratory, spoke of "the
17 sufferings of the women in the days of slavery, when their children were sold away from them.
18 Those days were over, but these daughters of America to-day want the ballot because it is
19 power, and will give them social equality"; yet despite the multitude of effort in this state by
20 many women and men, including Mrs. Anderson, Miss Susan B. Anthony, Dr. Anna Howard
21 Shaw, and Mrs. Ellen Sargent of San Francisco, who founded the Nevada County Woman's
22 Suffrage Association in 1869 and whose husband, United States Senator Aaron Augustus
23 Sargent of California, first introduced the Susan B. Anthony Amendment to the United States
24 Constitution in 1878, California suffrage was defeated on November 3, 1896; and

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1 WHEREAS, On August 27, 1908, in Oakland, California, Glen Park resident Johanna
2 Pinther, her step-daughter-in-law and Noe Valley resident Jeanette Pinther, and Lillian Harris
3 Coffin of Mill Valley, Marin County, co-led what is now believed to be the *first* suffrage march
4 in the United States, with police protection provided by the City of Oakland and permission
5 granted to the women of the California Equal Suffrage Association to carry a silk suffrage
6 banner during the march; the public procession of up to 300 women for the purposes of
7 proving themselves as men’s equal in the public sphere was led *by women for women*, from
8 the Bacon Block between 11th and 12th Streets in Oakland and along Broadway to the site of
9 the 1908 California State Republican Convention at Ye Liberty Playhouse on Broadway
10 between 14th and 15th Streets, to demand women’s suffrage be added to the State Republican
11 platform; and

12 WHEREAS, Textiles and fashion were introduced as a branding tool by British
13 suffragist Emmeline Pankhurst earlier in 1908 and soon adopted by the California Equal
14 Suffrage Association to overcome the stereotypical imagery of suffragists as masculine and
15 "strong-minded" women; that use of the banner in the march, which was “exquisitely”
16 handsewn and hand-embroidered by Johanna Pinther herself, delivered messaging for the
17 cause, publicly identified the California Equal Suffrage Association, and served as an artistic
18 display that would become a key element of American suffrage marches adding pomp,
19 circumstance, and organizational identity to the event that, in turn, helped create spectacle
20 and raise awareness for the cause; and

21 WHEREAS, By the 1910s, marches and expanding participation of women in civic
22 endeavors were cited with increasing frequency as a symbol of woman’s suffrage throughout
23 the United States, with the next suffrage marches occurring in Iowa in October 1908, New
24 York in 1910, Indiana, Maryland, Minnesota, and Ohio in 1912, Missouri in 1913, and
25 culminating in the first national march for suffrage in Washington, DC on March 3, 1913,

1 organized by Alice Paul and the National American Woman Suffrage Association that included
2 5,000 suffragists, 20 parade floats, nine bands, and four mounted brigades; and

3 WHEREAS, The more publicly visible tactic of the march was adopted by other causes
4 to bring greater attention and awareness to an oppressed group's assertion for rights,
5 including the causes for civil rights in the 1950s to contest the definition of public spaces as
6 Whites Only spheres, and with the use of LGBTQ Pride parades in the 1970s to contest the
7 definition of public spaces as Straights only spheres; and

8 WHEREAS, After a protracted, hard-fought battle, women in California finally won the
9 right to vote with approval of Senate Constitutional Amendment 8 on Ballot Proposition 4 in
10 the statewide Special Election held on October 10, 1911, only the sixth state in the United
11 States to do so (preceded by Wyoming in 1869, Colorado in 1893, Utah and Idaho in 1896,
12 and Washington in 1910); and

13 WHEREAS, Johanna Pinther of Bosworth Street in Glen Park was one of the first 20
14 women to register to vote in San Francisco on October 17, 1911, shortly after the very first
15 registrant, Mrs. Emma M. Harrington of 21st Street, and Mrs. Laura McDonald of Lloyd Street,
16 Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Greenleaf of Bush Street, Mrs. Dora Rosner of Green Street, Miss Sadie
17 Leffler of Gough Street, Mrs. Luisa Pfahls of Paris Street, Mrs. Adelaide Oswald of Union
18 Street, Mrs. Anna May Smullen of Taylor Street, Mrs. Anna Marie Bornmueller of 28th Avenue,
19 Mrs. Flora Child of Capp Street, and others; and

20 WHEREAS, In the first election in San Francisco in which women would cast their vote,
21 a single-issue ballot held on March 28, 1912 that would approve a bond for construction of the
22 magnificent Beaux Arts Civic Center complex, women were first to the polls in nearly 100
23 precincts across the city, including Alice J. Cotter of Paris Street, Mary Agnes Fisher of
24 Chattanooga Street, Mrs. Florence Lazarus of Lyon Street, Mrs. John B. Acton of Steiner
25 Street, Mrs. Frank Fredericks of Geary Street, and Mrs. Laura Lyon White of Sacramento

1 Street, an early conservationist who led the effort to save California’s redwoods, founder of
2 the California Club, and co-founder of the California Federation of Women’s Clubs who served
3 as its founding president, but who withdrew her name for re-election when club delegates
4 failed to support the inclusion of women of color in their organization; and

5 WHEREAS, In the first presidential election in San Francisco in which women would
6 cast their vote held on Tuesday, May 15, 1912, the first women to the polls included Miss
7 Phyllis Lazansky of Jackson Street, Mrs. Alice Harnden of 24th Street, Miss Ida M. Lloyd of
8 Capp Street, Mrs. Aylett R. Cotton of Clay Street, Mrs. Nellie Watts Clough of Clay Street, and
9 Ty Leung of Sacramento Street, a Chinese American who was the first Chinese woman to
10 cast a vote in the United States, and perhaps, the world; and

11 WHEREAS, On June 4, 1919, the 19th Amendment, the Susan B. Anthony Amendment
12 first introduced by Senator Aaron Augustus Sargent 41 years before, was passed in United
13 States Congress by two votes over its two-thirds required majority, 56-25; the amendment
14 was then sent to the states for ratification, requiring approval from three-fourths of states in
15 order to ratify the amendment; on August 18, 1920, Tennessee became the 36th state to
16 approve the ratification after state legislators voted 49-48, with 23-year-old Representative
17 Harry T. Burn casting the deciding vote after his mother convinced him to change his mind
18 and approve it, fully ratifying the 19th Amendment; and

19 WHEREAS, On August 26, 1920, Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby issued the
20 official proclamation that the 19th Amendment had become a part of the Constitution of the
21 United States, removing sex as a basis to deny the right to vote and extending suffrage to
22 American women; following the ratification of the 19th Amendment, more than 8 million women
23 across the United States voted in elections for the first time on November 2, 1920; and

24 WHEREAS, The fight for suffrage and the ratification of the 19th Amendment was not
25 all-inclusive, with Native Americans not recognized as citizens of the United States until 1924,

1 first-generation Asian Americans not recognized until 1954, and many Latinx and African
2 American women denied the vote in many districts through literacy tests and other tactics; that
3 African American women fought not just for their suffrage but for voting rights for all African
4 American women and men that was finally achieved with the Voting Rights Act of 1965, but
5 weakened by a U.S. Supreme Court decision in 2013; and that voter suppression efforts
6 continue today, particularly targeting Black, Indigenous, and people of color indicating the fight
7 for the vote continues; and

8 WHEREAS, In 1971, the United States Congress passed a resolution designating
9 August 26 as Women’s Equality Day, stating that “the President is authorized and requested
10 to issue a proclamation annually in commemoration of that day in 1920, on which the women
11 of America were first given the right to vote;” now, therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, That the City & County of San Francisco commemorates the 100th
13 Anniversary of the official ratification of the 19th Amendment, recognizing the many women in
14 San Francisco and throughout the nation who worked to secure voting rights; and, be it

15 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges all eligible San
16 Franciscans to exercise their right to vote on November 3, 2020, and in every election, in
17 honor of the millions of Americans who struggled to earn the right and those who continue to
18 face barriers.

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