

Roys campaign: Kelda Roys celebrates anniversary of Wisconsin's ratification of 19th Amendment

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MADISON, WI — The following is a statement from Democratic gubernatorial candidate Kelda Roys on the anniversary of Wisconsin's ratification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution:

"Today marks the anniversary of a momentous achievement in Wisconsin's history — our state's ratification of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote. 72 years after Wisconsin became a state, Wisconsin became the first state in the nation to ratify the 19th amendment. We were a leader, and that is worth celebrating.

"But what is more remarkable is that, just 7 years earlier, the suffragettes were delivered a massive defeat — when a statewide amendment on women's suffrage failed by two to one.

"Let us pause for a moment and give thanks to the activists — who endured a crushing loss, but persisted. They were undeterred, and just a few years later, their tenacity was rewarded.

"It's a call to action from history — a lesson that failure is not final — no, failure is fuel. In less time than we've suffered under our current governor, Wisconsin women went from being deprived of the vote by a 2 to 1 margin to leading the nation's

charge for political equality. And in this moment where so much hangs in the balance, we can do it again.

“We must do it again – for we are also reminded that our work is never truly done. When the 19th Amendment was adopted, women (and men) of color were still barred from voting for decades by poll tests and taxes, and other tools of oppression via Jim Crow. It took 45 years for those wrongs to be righted with the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. And in 2018, 170 years since Wisconsin became a state, we must continue our work for justice and equality. Together, we will repeal voter ID, stop mass incarceration, enact equal pay, advance equality for the LGBTQ+ community, and ensure reproductive justice for all. We will ensure that every Wisconsinite has access to health care and great public education, and clean air and water. And we will finally, in 2018, elect a woman as our governor.

“Today, we commemorate and celebrate a time when Wisconsin was a leader in advancing the cause of justice, and we commit ourselves to making Wisconsin a leader once again.

“I am so grateful to the women who gave us the 19th amendment – their tremendous courage, perseverance, and sacrifice has given to me the privilege to run for governor. I will continue to honor them the best way I know how: keeping alive our fight for equality and justice for all.”