

Wisconsin Historical Society, First Lady Evers: Launch suffrage centennial video series

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Madison, WI. – To celebrate the centennial anniversary of the 19th Amendment being added to the Constitution on August 26th, the Wisconsin Historical Society, along with First Lady Kathy Evers, are posting a video series on social media that takes the viewer through the history of the suffrage movement celebrating the stories of Wisconsin women and their fight for voting rights. A new video will be posted each week leading up to August 26.

“The centennial anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment is a cause for both celebration and reflection. We celebrate 100 years of allowing women the right to vote, while acknowledging that barriers to voting still exist. As we honor the suffragist movement and plan a celebration to commemorate the centennial, it is important to understand our history and acknowledge that not all women benefitted equally,” said First Lady Kathy Evers.

The struggle for women’s suffrage in Wisconsin lasted for over 70 years. Throughout those decades, Wisconsin legislatures introduced dozens of bills that would have granted state and local voting rights to women but the bills needed to pass two consecutive sessions of the legislatures before being submitted to the people of Wisconsin as a referendum. Wisconsin voted on a referendum in 1912, but the measure failed.

After decades of activism, in 1919, the United States Congress finally passed a proposal to amend the Constitution and grant women the right to vote in all elections. As with all amendments it needed to be ratified by thirty-six states in order to be approved. From that day on, suffrage supporters in each state had to

petition their state legislatures to approve the amendment.

It wasn't until August 26th, 1920 that the Amendment was added to the Constitution and took effect across the country. It is also important to acknowledge that the women's suffrage movement did not guarantee voting rights for everyone. Most women of color continued to be denied the right to vote until later legislation expanded voting rights.

"When Wisconsin ratified the 19th Amendment, it was the first state to fully certify their approval in Washington D.C. for the rights of citizens of the United States to vote and not be denied by the nation or the states on account of gender," said Christian Overland, the Ruth and Hartley Barker director & CEO of the Wisconsin Historical Society. "As the state's premier storyteller of history, we are supporting this centennial celebration, to serve as a call to action for all citizens of Wisconsin to think about the importance of voting rights and how we use our vote today."

The Wisconsin Historical Society and First Lady Evers are encouraging everyone around the state to wear white and ring bells at noon on August 26 as a way to celebrate. People are asked to share how they are celebrating on social media and to use the hashtags #WomensVote100, #WIVotesforWomen and #BigHistoryIsHappening.

The Wisconsin Historical Society is also sharing information from their collections on this historic time in history at wisconsinhistory.org/votesforwomen.

To view the entire video series visit the [Wisconsin Historical Society Facebook](#) or [YouTube page](#) or visit <https://womenvotewi.wi.gov>.