

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. On July 24, 1998, at 3:40 p.m., Officer Jacob J. Chestnut and Detective John M. Gibson of the United States Capitol Police were killed in the line of duty defending the Capitol against an intruder armed with a gun.

Later today the Chair will recognize the anniversary of this tragedy by observing a moment of silence in their memory.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS
WITH RESPECT TO COMMEMORATION
OF WOMEN SUFFRAGISTS

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 59) expressing the sense of Congress with respect to the establishment of an appropriate day for the commemoration of the women suffragists who fought for and won the right of women to vote in the United States, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.J. RES. 59

Whereas one of the first public appeals for women's suffrage came in 1848 when Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton called a women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York, on July 19, 1848;

Whereas Sojourner Truth gave her famous speech titled "Ain't I a Woman?" at the 1851 Women's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio;

Whereas in 1869, suffragists formed two national organizations to work for the right to vote: the National Woman Suffrage Association and the American Woman Suffrage Association;

Whereas these two organizations united in 1890 to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association;

Whereas in 1872, Susan B. Anthony and a group of women voted in the presidential election in Rochester, New York;

Whereas she was arrested and fined for voting illegally;

Whereas at her trial, which attracted nationwide attention, she made a speech that ended with the slogan "Resistance to Tyranny Is Obedience to God";

Whereas on January 25, 1887, the United States Senate voted on women's suffrage for the first time;

Whereas during the early 1900s, a new generation of leaders joined the women's suffrage movement, including Carrie Chapman Catt, Maud Wood Park, Lucy Burns, Alice Paul, and Harriot E. Blatch;

Whereas women's suffrage leaders devoted most of their efforts to marches, picketing, and other active forms of protest;

Whereas Alice Paul and others chained themselves to the White House fence;

Whereas the suffragists were often arrested and sent to jail, where many of them went on hunger strikes;

Whereas almost 5,000 people paraded for women's suffrage up Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC; and

Whereas on August 26, 1920, the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution granted women in the United States the right to vote: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That it is the sense of Congress that women suffragists should be revered and celebrated for working to ensure the right of women to vote in the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA).

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Committee on Government Reform, I rise in support of House Joint Resolution 59. This legislation, introduced by the distinguished gentlewoman from Las Vegas, Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY) recognizes women's suffrage as a great milestone in our Nation's history.

The resolution specifically intends to commemorate the struggle waged by suffragists such as Sojourner Truth, Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony as a culmination in women's earning the right to vote. Many people reviled social reformers like these women leaders in the mid-19th Century. Today, however, they rightfully celebrate the fight to end this injustice.

I appreciate the gentlewoman from Nevada's work in further recognizing the legacy of the American civil rights movement.

From the women's rights meeting called by Mott and Stanton in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848 until the ratification of the 19th amendment in 1920, the determination of these women was as strong and has endured as any in our history. To earn the right to vote, these women chained themselves to the White House gates. They went on hunger strikes. They participated in marches and often were arrested and jailed for their disobedient action.

Despite the difficult obstacles and resistance they faced, suffragists remained committed to giving women the equal voice in American politics. Their victory was finally secured when Secretary of State Colby certified the ratification of the 19th amendment to the United States Constitution on August 26, 1920. The joint resolution under consideration marks the 19th amendment's upcoming 85th anniversary on August 26.

The 19th amendment reads: "The rights of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex." This single, timeless sentence ensured that our democracy would never again restrict women from voting for their leaders.

Mr. Speaker, the story of the women suffragists included many excruciating chapters, but its tumultuous activities and its conclusion is a credit to democracy and the ability to adapt and improve.

For all these reasons, I strongly urge my colleagues to support the adoption of this measure.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with my colleague in consideration of H.J. Res 59, expressing the sense of Congress with respect to the establishment of an appropriate day for the commemoration of the women suffragists who fought for and won the right of women to vote in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the women's rights movement began in the mid-1800s when women such as Sarah Grimke, Angelina Grimke, Lucy Stone, Abby Kelly, Lucretia Mott, and Sojourner Truth found it necessary to speak out for women's rights because they were not allowed to participate equally with men in anti-slavery and temperance reform movements.

The right to vote was not their original focus. A convention held in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848 changed that. It was at that historic event that the women's suffrage movement formally began.

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The movement culminated with the passage of the 19th amendment to the Constitution in 1920.

Suffragists employed a variety of arguments to press their case. Some argued from the basis of natural law, arguing equality for all. Some argued on the grounds that women were compelled to pay taxes on the property they owned and, therefore, should not be subject to the injustice of taxation without representation.

Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Lucretia Mott were among the most well-known suffragettes who pushed for a constitutional amendment. These women emerged as the leaders of the movement and helped to secure the right to vote for all women in America.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleagues, and specifically the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY), for bringing this bill to the Floor today. We should never forget how our country has emerged to being a representative democracy, knowing full well that we have not totally achieved everything that we want to achieve, but we are continuing to try and form a more perfect Union.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support for this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers at this time, and I urge adoption of House Joint Resolution 59.