

happy 75th anniversary—and there will be at least 75 more years—and that I join them in this celebration for the tremendous contribution they have made to the people of this great country.

I would like now to yield to the Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

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TRIBUTE TO THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS ON ITS 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I would just like to follow my distinguished colleague from Illinois in talking just for a minute about the League of Women Voters. I think all of us agree that the League of Women Voters has made a great contribution to this country. Today, Valentine's Day, marks the 75 anniversary of the league's founding.

The league's first and most widely recognized success was its role in the 19th amendment's ratification. In the wake of this historic victory, however, the League realized that an even more formidable challenge remained ahead—the task of actually bringing the millions of newly enfranchised American women into the realm of politics.

Over the course of 75 years, the league launched ambitious programs to increase voter participation and to enhance public understanding of major policy issues. At the same time, the league continued its campaign to improve the legal status of women. In my home State of Texas, the league worked to secure secret balloting and won the battle to allow women to serve on juries in Texas.

As time has progressed, the success of league endeavors has become increasingly apparent; in government and politics today, the presence and influence of women are stronger than ever. And though the league was founded out of the struggles for women's suffrage, its vision and legislative agenda have broadened over the years to encompass much more than voting rights and women's issues. State and local leagues have pursued public policy matters ranging from the environment to international cooperation.

Most importantly, Mr. President, the league has never wavered from its commitment to nonpartisanship nor its grassroots origins. In its town hall meetings and candidate forums in thousands of local communities across the country, the league has endeavored to ensure that voters are presented with balanced information that reflects the diverse viewpoints of its membership.

It is with much admiration and gratitude, Mr. President, that I recognize this uniquely American organization and the pioneering women who founded it and strengthened it through the years. We have all benefitted tremen-

dously from their first 75 years of service to our country. I look forward to another 75 years of great league achievements.

I think it is very important that all of us realize the great contributions that the League of Women Voters has made to our country and to the awareness of our opportunity and responsibility to vote. I think the League of Women Voters should be commended today on the 75th anniversary of their founding, and I am very proud to be part of the group that is recognizing that important date.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I rise today to mark the 75th anniversary of the League of Women Voters.

For many of us, America in the early 1900's is recalled mostly through the grainy, black and white images of newsreel footage. We are too young to remember American life back then, but the old films are portholes on the past. We laugh at the clothes, marvel at the cars, and wonder about the celebrities of the times whose names have long since been forgotten. We've seen newsreels of the suffragists, too, marching and protesting for the right to vote. Yet it is easy to forget that these are more than distant, cellulose images—that these are real people, with deep-felt passions about the precious right to vote.

But the League of Women Voters has not forgotten. The league, in fact, grew out of the suffrage movement and the fight to ratify the 19th amendment to the Constitution. In my home State of Minnesota, the Legislature ratified the 19th amendment on September 8, 1919. The following month, on October 29, 1919, the Minnesota League of Women Voters was formed. For the three-quarters of a century since its founding, the Minnesota league—like its national partners—has balanced a dual mission of voter education and advocacy.

Even in its earliest years, the Minnesota League of Women Voters took a leading role in nonpartisan voter education services. A 1922 booklet of Minnesota election laws—"State Election Laws Clearly Stated for the First Time!"—was an early league project, and such outreach continues today with annual Voter Guides and Election Information Hotlines. The League's election-year televised debates have become a critical source of candidate information for hundreds of thousands of Minnesota voters.

I enjoy the unique perspective of having seen the League of Women Voters at work from both sides of the political fence—as a journalist asking questions on the panel of a League debate, and as a candidate answering questions during my 1994 U.S. Senate campaign. I remain impressed by the league's ability to reach out to Minnesotans on all levels, as evidenced by its 2,500 local mem-

bers in more than 100 Minnesota communities.

The League of Women Voters has earned my respect and gratitude for its 75 years of urging Americans to get involved, to vote, to take a stand on issues. A great deal has changed in this country since the newsreel days, but the league's dedication to encouraging citizen participation in their government has not. I join my Senate colleagues in saluting the League of Women Voters and its membership on their anniversary of service.

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THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Mrs. KASSEBAUM. Mr. President, I rise today in celebration of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the League of Women Voters. Across the country, the League of Women Voters has presented women the opportunity to study national, State, and local issues without the spin of outside interest groups of one kind or another. A nonpartisan organization, the league has played a historic role in not only the women's suffrage movement, but in a variety of issues including child labor law, education, and environmental concerns.

As a woman from the State of Kansas, I believe it is important to recognize the league's efforts to reach out to women from rural areas. Providing a forum for honest discussions, with a concentration on the facts rather than prejudiced thought, the league has proven an inspiration and an awakening for many. The league encourages women to think analytically and independently, creating opportunities to lead discussions, present the pros and cons of an issue, and learn practical use of parliamentary principles. As a result, the league has instilled in many women the belief that their contributions and opinions can and do make a difference. More importantly, however, is the realization that world issues, no matter how complex, can be understood and discussed by ordinary people.

Our current political climate includes and welcomes the participation of women at all levels of national debate and government. This is a sharp contrast from the early days of the League of Women Voters. Today, I imagine that many young women find it difficult to comprehend that women's suffrage was even an issue at the time. And, although I believe this means we have made progress, I also feel it is important to remember our history. We owe a debt of gratitude to the League of Women Voters for encouraging women everywhere to help bring this about. Freeing women of all educational backgrounds to believe they could study significant issues is a gift the league has given to women all over America.

THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, February 14, 1995, marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of the League of Women