SENATE CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. 39

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 27, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator LINDA R. GREENSTEIN
District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)
Senator SHIRLEY K. TURNER
District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)
Assemblywoman NANCY J. PINKIN
District 18 (Middlesex)
Assemblywoman VERLINA REYNOLDS-JACKSON
District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)
Assemblywoman SERENA DIMASO
District 13 (Monmouth)

Co-Sponsored by:
Senator Gopal, Assemblywomen Speight, Jimenez, Vainieri Huttle, Assemblymen Peterson, Giblin, Assemblywomen Mosquera, Quijano, Lampitt, Assemblyman Houghtaling and Assemblywoman Downey

SYNOPSIS
Commemorates 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment guaranteeing women the right to vote.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/24/2020)
A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION commemorating the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment guaranteeing women the right to vote.

WHEREAS, The year 2020 marks the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, guaranteeing and protecting women's constitutional right to vote; and

WHEREAS, This historic centennial offers an unparalleled opportunity to commemorate a milestone of democracy and to explore its relevance to the issues of equal rights today; and

WHEREAS, Achieving the passage of the 19th amendment required a lengthy and difficult struggle; victory took decades of agitation and protest; and

WHEREAS, Beginning in the mid-19th century, several generations of woman suffrage supporters lectured, wrote, marched, lobbied, and practiced civil disobedience to achieve what many Americans considered a radical change of the Constitution; and

WHEREAS, In the 1800s, women organized, petitioned, and picketed to win the right to vote, but it took them decades to accomplish their purpose; and

WHEREAS, Between 1878, when the amendment was first introduced in Congress, and August 18, 1920, when it was ratified, champions of voting rights for women worked tirelessly, but strategies for achieving their goal varied; and

WHEREAS, Some pursued a strategy of passing suffrage acts in each state—nine western states adopted woman suffrage legislation by 1912; and

WHEREAS, Others challenged male-only voting laws in the courts. Militant suffragists used tactics such as parades, silent vigils, and hunger strikes. Often supporters met fierce resistance, and opponents to a woman’s right to vote heckled, jailed, and sometimes physically abused the suffragists; and

WHEREAS, By 1916, almost all of the major suffrage organizations were united behind the goal of a constitutional amendment. When New York adopted woman suffrage in 1917 and President Wilson changed his position to support an amendment in 1918, the political balance began to shift; and

WHEREAS, On May 21, 1919, the House of Representatives passed the amendment, and two weeks later, the United States Senate followed; and

WHEREAS, When Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify the amendment on August 18, 1920, the amendment passed its final hurdle of obtaining the agreement of three-fourths of the states. Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby certified the ratification on August 26, 1920, changing the face of the American electorate forever; and
WHEREAS, One of the most influential of the militant suffragists was
Alice Paul, who was born on January 11, 1885 to Quaker parents in
Mount Laurel, New Jersey; and
WHEREAS, Alice Paul dedicated her life to the single cause of securing
equal rights for all women; and
WHEREAS, In 1916, Paul and her followers formed the National
Woman’s Party (NWP). The NWP organized “Silent Sentinels” to
stand outside the White House holding banners inscribed with
incendiary phrases directed toward President Wilson; and
WHEREAS, The “Silent Sentinel” protests led to the mass arrest of
suffragists who staged hunger strikes and endured physical abuse
and unsanitary conditions while in prison; and
WHEREAS, These actions of defiance by the suffragists, spearheaded
by Paul, and the public outcry about the prison abuse they suffered,
convinced President Wilson to reverse his position on a woman’s
right to vote and directly led to the passage of the 19th amendment;
and
WHEREAS, The 19th Amendment is celebrated as a major milestone
made possible by decades of suffragists’ relentless political
engagement, yet the struggle for voting rights did not end with the
ratification of the 19th Amendment; and
WHEREAS, The 100th anniversary of the amendment’s passage
reminds the citizens in the State of New Jersey that the right to
vote, which is basic to our understanding of democracy, is not
always guaranteed, and;
WHEREAS, In honor of the struggle of Alice Paul and all the
suffragists who fought for a woman’s right to vote and the passage
of the 19th Amendment, the Secretary of State is authorized to
establish goals and implement programs to inspire every woman
residing in the State to register and exercise their right to vote; now,
therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the State of New Jersey (the
General Assembly concurring):

1. The Governor and Legislature hereby commemorate the
100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment which guaranteed
women the right to vote, and authorizes the Secretary of State to
establish goals and implement programs to inspire every women
residing in the State to register and exercise their right to vote.

2. The Governor is respectfully requested to issue a
proclamation commemorating the 100th anniversary of the passage
of the 19th Amendment.

3. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the Assembly or the Secretary
of the Senate to the New Jersey Chapter of the National
Organization for Women.

STATEMENT

This concurrent resolution commemorates the 100th anniversary
of the 19th Amendment which guaranteed women the right to vote,
and authorizes the Secretary of State to establish goals and
implement programs to inspire every women residing in the State to
register and exercise their right to vote.