Women's History

The fight for equal rights

Dear Friend,

The women's rights movement started over 150 years ago here in New York State. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony led the way in the fight for women's suffrage, helping women secure the right to vote in 1920 with the passage of the 19th Amendment. Since then, women have fought tirelessly to break down barriers and expand women's rights and their role in society.

However, the fight for equality is not yet over. "Female firsts" and glass ceilings still exist and this must be corrected. Women's equality is not up for debate. That's why I'm calling on the Senate to join the Assembly in making the Women's Equality Act measures law.

Let's take time to not only reflect on the accomplishments of women but to also recommit ourselves to achieving true equality for women. To learn more about the Women's Equality Act, visit the Assembly's website or contact my office.

Sincerely,

Peter J. Abbate, Jr.
Member of Assembly

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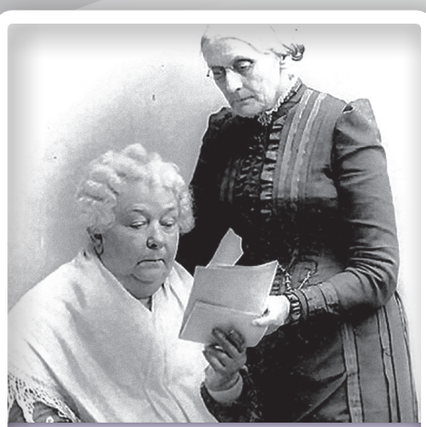
Highlights of **WOMEN** Throughout History

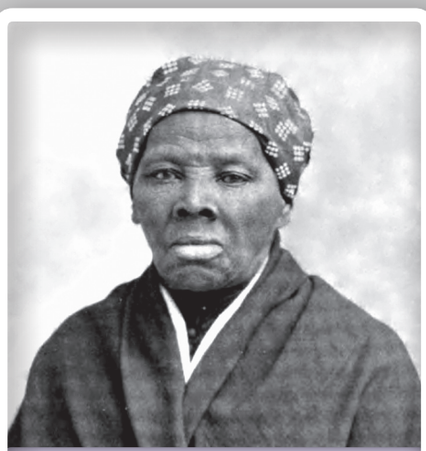
1848 First Women's Rights Convention is held in Seneca Falls, N.Y.

1849 Elizabeth Blackwell becomes the first licensed woman physician.

1865 Mary Edwards Walker becomes the first and only woman to receive the Medal of Honor.



1866 Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony form the American Equal Rights Association, which people of all races and both genders join to support universal suffrage.



1896 Mary Church Terrell, Ida B. Wells-Barnett and former slave Harriet Tubman form the National Association of Colored Women.

1912 Theodore Roosevelt's Progressive Party becomes the first national political party to adopt a women's suffrage plank.

1917 New York State grants women the right to vote.

1920 The 19th Amendment is ratified, granting women the right to vote.

1921 Margaret Sanger founds the American Birth Control League (ABCL), which evolves into the Planned Parenthood Federation of America in 1942.

1923 First Equal Rights Amendment is introduced. (Amendment has never been ratified.)

1931 Jane Addams becomes the first American woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

1932 Amelia Earhart becomes the first woman to make a transcontinental nonstop flight.

1933 Frances Perkins is appointed Secretary of Labor, becoming the first female member of a presidential cabinet.

1945 Former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt is appointed as a delegate to the United Nations and helps draft the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.

1968 Shirley Chisholm, a former New York State Assemblymember, becomes the first African-American woman elected to Congress.

1973 In Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court establishes a woman's right to choose.

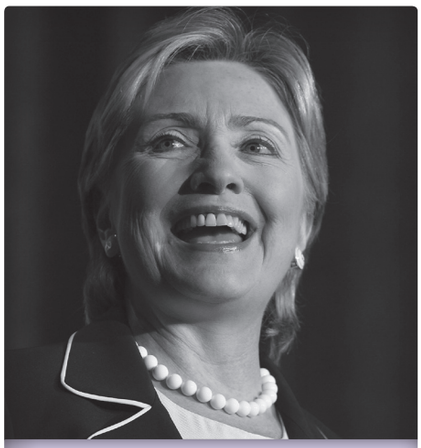
1981 Sandra Day O'Connor becomes the first woman on the U.S. Supreme Court.

1983 Sally Ride is the first American woman in space.

1984 Geraldine Ferraro is the first woman nominated for vice president by a major party.

1993 Janet Reno becomes the first female U.S. Attorney General.

1997 Madeleine Albright is sworn in as the first female U.S. Secretary of State.



2000 Hillary Rodham Clinton, the first American First Lady to run for public office, is elected the first female U.S. Senator to represent New York.

2007 Nancy Pelosi becomes the first woman Speaker of the House of Representatives.

2009 Michelle Obama becomes the first African-American First Lady of the U.S.

2009 Sonia Sotomayor becomes the first Hispanic and third female justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

2012 Grace Meng becomes the first Asian-American elected to Congress from New York.

2014 Janet Yellen is the first woman to be named chair of the Federal Reserve.

Did you know?

Quick facts regarding the need for women's equality in the United States

- Women are about 51% of the U.S. population[1]
- Women hold just 19% of seats in the U.S. Congress[2]
- Only 24% of New York State legislators are women
- Women hold a mere 4.6% of Fortune 500 CEO roles[3]
- Full-time women workers earn about 77% as much as men[4]
- The U.S. is the only industrialized nation that doesn't mandate paid maternity leave[5]
- 1 in 3 women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime[6]
- The U.S. finishes 20th out of 142 countries in terms of gender equality for women[7]

[1]quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/00000.html
[2]cawp.rutgers.edu/fast_facts/levels_of_office/Congress-Current.php
[3]catalyst.org/knowledge/women-ceos-fortune-1000
[4]whitehouse.gov/issues/equal-pay
[5]politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2015/jan/21/barack-obama/barack-obama-says-united-states-only-developed-cou/
[6]ncadv.org/learn/statistics
[7]reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2014/rankings/

"We can all be proud to say the women's rights movement began in Seneca Falls right here in New York State. But, as the facts indicate, the fight is far from over. Let's keep leading the way for true women's equality – the time for full women's equality is NOW!"

– Peter J. Abbate, Jr.
Member of Assembly