EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

PROCLAMATION

One hundred years ago, our nation boldly undertook the single largest expansion of democracy in our history. After decades of struggles and setbacks, American women secured the right to vote on this day in 1920 with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. Though far from complete – women of color would continue to fight for many more years to fully gain access to this constitutional right – the final signature on the Nineteenth Amendment marked a major victory in our march toward a more perfect union.

As is true for so many struggles for justice in American history, Californians wrote more than a few chapters in the story of the movement for women's suffrage. California women achieved the right to vote in 1911, years before the nation followed suit. In every part of our state, women campaigned fiercely to have their voices heard and their right to determine their destiny respected. Women came together from all walks of life to unite for this essential cause and lift each other up.

Thanks to these extraordinary people, women today do not just cast ballots; they appear on ballots. The suffragists of over a century ago knew that women having political power would lead to greater outcomes for our entire society. Our nation is a better and fairer place because women refused to give up until they had earned a seat at the table.

As we take stock of this century of progress, we also acknowledge the barriers to full equality that persist even today. Full enfranchisement for all women, especially women of color, was not won until many years after the Nineteenth Amendment was ratified, and access to the ballot remains under threat in too many parts of our nation today. We must summon the spirit of all American suffragists as we work to make elections safe and accessible to all eligible voters this November and beyond.

On this remarkable anniversary, let us celebrate the first 100 years of American women's right to the franchise and commit ourselves to bringing the same passion and urgency, as well as greater inclusivity, to political participation today. I encourage all eligible Californians to make a plan to vote this November, starting with verifying their voter status at http://VoterStatus.sos.ca.gov.

NOW THEREFORE I, GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor of the State of California, do hereby proclaim August 26, 2020, as "Women's Equality Day."

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 25th day of August 2020.

GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor of California

ATTEST:

ALEX PADILLA
Secretary of State