



CITY OF CARSON

Legislation Text

File #: 2020-613, Version: 1

Report to Mayor and City Council

Tuesday, September 01, 2020

Consent

SUBJECT:

CONSIDER RESOLUTION NO. 20-143 CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PASSAGE AND RATIFICATION OF THE 19TH AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES PROVIDING FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE (CITY COUNCIL)

I. SUMMARY

The women's suffrage movement was a decades-long fight to win the right to vote for women in the United States. It took activists and reformers nearly 100 years to win that right and the campaign was not easy. But on August 18, 1920, the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was finally ratified, enfranchising American women and declaring for the first time that they, like men, deserve all the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

The City wishes to commemorate the 100th anniversary of this milestone victory carved into the history of the United States by resolving to honor the memory of the women, and men, who made this inherent human right possible.

II. RECOMMENDATION

TAKE the following actions:

APPROVE Resolution No. 20-143 "A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CARSON, CALIFORNIA, CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PASSAGE AND RATIFICATION OF THE 19TH AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES PROVIDING FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE"

III. ALTERNATIVES

TAKE another action the City Council deems appropriate.

IV. BACKGROUND

One hundred years ago advocates in support of the women's suffrage movement banded together through strength and determination and battled for this fundamental right of citizenship.

On August 18, 1920, the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution enfranchised millions of women across the United States following a seven-decade campaign.

The first women's rights convention took place in Seneca Falls, New York, on July 19-20, 1848. Of the 11 resolutions demanding equality - in the workplace, family and education, for example - only women's right to vote drew opposition before it was approved. Although abolitionists had called for women's voting rights before 1848, suffragists later viewed the convention as launching the U.S. women's suffrage movement.

In 1869 the movement split over disagreements about the 15th Amendment, which granted voting rights to African American men but not women.

The National Woman Suffrage Association lobbied for a federal amendment, while the American Woman Suffrage Association pursued a state-by-state strategy. Recognizing that a divided movement was hurting their success, the groups merged in 1890 as the National American Woman Suffrage Association, or NAWSA.

Suffrage was a mass movement with diverse voices. They included the National Association of Colored Women, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, farmers' organizations and the Women's Trade Union League. Most of these organizations became active in suffrage after the creation of NAWSA. Women's suffrage also depended heavily on male supporters, among them state legislators and members of Congress. Only men could vote in state referenda to extend the vote to women. Men answered the call and did so in Colorado, New York and Oklahoma.

Several political and social movements during the Progressive Era, 1890-1920, prioritized suffrage. Women realized they needed voting rights to reform child labor laws, promote public health, and prohibit alcohol and prostitution. These suffragists framed their roles, as wives and mothers, as political virtues to advance a more moral government.

African American women reformers saw suffrage as an important goal. They began forming their own clubs in the 1880s and founded the National Association of Colored Women in 1896. Unlike predominantly white suffrage organizations, the NACW called for other reforms to address the economic, educational and social welfare of African American

women and children, such as job training programs, fair wages and child care.

Millions of women enjoyed the right to vote before the 19th Amendment was ratified. Women had full voting rights in 15 states and the Alaska territory, and limited suffrage, including voting in presidential elections, in another 12 states before 1920. Their influence helped build momentum for the 19th Amendment.

Some 10 million women voted in 1920, a turnout rate of 36%, compared to 68% for men. Women voter turnout rates have gradually increased and exceeded male turnout rates since 1980, when 61.9% of women voted compared to 61.5% of men. In 2016, 63.3% of women voted compared to 59.3% of men.

V. FISCAL IMPACT

NONE

VI. EXHIBITS

1. Resolution No. 20-143

1.

Prepared by: City Manager's Office, Assistant City Manager