



1997 ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION 94

January 13, 1998 – Introduced by COMMITTEE ON RULES. Referred to Calendar.

1 **Relating to:** Wisconsin women’s accomplishments and significant Wisconsin
2 events.

3 Whereas, the sesquicentennial year is an appropriate time to reflect upon the
4 residents of this state whose accomplishments are impressive; and

5 Whereas, among the more significant of those persons are those who were the
6 first to accomplish notable things; and

7 Whereas, Wisconsin has been blessed with more than its share of women who
8 were pathfinders; and

9 Whereas, Shirley Abrahamson (1933–) became the first woman to serve on the
10 Wisconsin State Supreme Court, in 1976, and the first woman to be Chief Justice,
11 on August 1, 1996; and

12 Whereas, Olympia Brown (1835–1926), a minister and publisher, was the first
13 ordained woman minister in the United States and a key figure in the women’s rights
14 movement; and

1 Whereas, Carrie Chapman Catt (1859–1947) was a suffragist and President of
2 the National American Woman Suffrage Association, which she reorganized as the
3 League of Women Voters, with 2,000,000 members, after passage of the 19th
4 Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteed women the vote; and

5 Whereas, Kathryn Clarenbach (1920–1994) was the founder of the National
6 Organization for Women and the National Women’s Political Caucus; and

7 Whereas, Edna Ferber (1885–1968), an author, received the 1925 Pulitzer Prize
8 for the novel *So Big*; and

9 Whereas, Lynn Fontanne (1887–1983) appeared in theater, motion pictures
10 and television, and she and her husband were jointly awarded the Presidential
11 Medal of Freedom in 1964; and

12 Whereas, Zona Gale (1874–1938), an author, received the 1921 Pulitzer Prize
13 for the novel *Miss Lulu Bett*; and

14 Whereas, Jane Hamilton (1952–) received the PEN/Hemingway Foundation
15 Award for the novel *The Book of Ruth* and also wrote *A Map of the World*; and

16 Whereas, Mildred Fish Harnack (1902–1943) was a war hero who, while an
17 instructor at the University of Berlin, organized a resistance group and transmitted
18 intelligence to the Allies and was executed by the Nazis; and

19 Whereas, Cordelia Harvey (1824–1895), a humanitarian, was instrumental in
20 establishing military hospitals in the North during the Civil War; and

21 Whereas, Belle Case La Follette (1859–1931), a lawyer and editor, was the first
22 woman to graduate from the University of Wisconsin Law School and was a leader
23 in supporting the rights of women and African-Americans; and

24 Whereas, Frances Huntley-Cooper was the first Black mayor of a Wisconsin
25 city (Fitchburg); and

1 Whereas, Katherine Lyall was the first woman President of the University of
2 Wisconsin System; and

3 Whereas, Helen Farnsworth Mears (1872-1916) was a sculptor and created the
4 Frances Willard statue in Statuary Hall of the U.S. Capitol and “The Genius of
5 Wisconsin” in the Wisconsin Capitol; and

6 Whereas, Kathryn Morrison (1942-) was the first woman elected to the state
7 senate, in 1975; and

8 Whereas, Lorine Niedecker (1903-1970) was the author of several books of
9 poetry and is featured in most anthologies of 20th Century American poetry; and

10 Whereas, Georgia O’Keeffe (1887-1986) was an artist and innovative painter
11 of flowers and landscapes and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in
12 1977; and

13 Whereas, Vel Phillips was elected Secretary of State in 1978 and was the first
14 Black constitutional officer in Wisconsin; and

15 Whereas, Margaretha Meyer Schurz (1833-1876) was an educator and opened
16 the first United States kindergarten in Watertown in 1856; and

17 Whereas, Donna Shalala was the first woman Chancellor of the University of
18 Wisconsin-Madison and was named by President Clinton as the U.S. Secretary of
19 Health and Human Services; and

20 Whereas, Dena Smith was elected State Treasurer in 1960 and was the first
21 woman elected to statewide office in Wisconsin; and

22 Whereas, Rosa A. Smith was the first Black woman to serve as a
23 superintendent of schools; and

24 Whereas, Barbara Thompson (1924-) became the first woman to hold the
25 elective office of State Superintendent of Public Instruction, in 1973; and

1 Whereas, Laura Ingalls Wilder (1867–1957) was an author of children’s books
2 and wrote a series of books, including *Little House on the Prairie*, which was based
3 on her life growing up in the Midwest; and

4 Whereas, Frances Willard (1839–1898) was a social reformer who organized
5 the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union; and

6 Whereas, Laura Ross Wolcott (1834–1915) was a physician and suffragist and
7 the first woman physician in Wisconsin, and she was active in organizing, and served
8 as the first President of, the Wisconsin Woman’s Suffrage Association; and

9 Whereas, the accomplishments of Wisconsin women are indicated by many
10 notable events; and

11 Whereas, in 1875 the free high school law passed; women became eligible for
12 election to school boards; and the State Industrial School for Girls was established
13 at Milwaukee; and

14 Whereas, in 1920 the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (women’s
15 suffrage) was ratified, and Wisconsin was the first state to deliver its ratification to
16 Washington; and

17 Whereas, in 1921 equal rights for women and prohibition laws were enacted;
18 and

19 Whereas, in 1960 Mrs. Dena Smith was elected State Treasurer, the first
20 woman to be elected to statewide office in Wisconsin; and

21 Whereas, in 1973 Barbara Thompson became the first woman to hold the
22 elective office of State Superintendent of Public Instruction; and

23 Whereas, in 1975 Kathryn Morrison became the first woman to be elected to the
24 state senate; now, therefore, be it

1 ***Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That*** the members of the
2 Wisconsin legislature, meeting in this state's sesquicentennial year, recognize and
3 salute the notable achievements of Wisconsin women; and, be it further

4 ***Resolved, That*** the assembly chief clerk shall provide a copy of this joint
5 resolution to the Wisconsin Sesquicentennial Commission.

6

(END)