



2025 SENATE RESOLUTION 2

March 21, 2025 - Introduced by Senators HESSELBEIN, CARPENTER, DASSLER-ALFHEIM, DRAKE, HABUSH SINYKIN, L. JOHNSON, KEYESKI, LARSON, PFAFF, RATCLIFF, ROYS, SMITH, SPREITZER, WALL and WIRCH. Referred to Committee on Senate Organization.

1 **Relating to:** proclaiming March 2025 and March 2026 as Women’s History
2 Months.

3 Whereas, American women of every race, class, and ethnic background have
4 made historic contributions to our nation in countless recorded and unrecorded
5 ways; and

6 Whereas, the Wisconsin Legislature granted property rights to married
7 women in 1850; and

8 Whereas, in 1869, the first women graduated from the University of
9 Wisconsin. That same year, the Wisconsin Legislature passed a law allowing
10 women to run for school boards and other elective school offices, though they could
11 not vote in school board elections until 1884; and

12 Whereas, in the campaign for Women’s Suffrage, Wisconsin produced notable
13 suffragists such as Olympia Brown of Racine, Clara Bewick Colby of Madison,

1 Carrie Chapman Catt of Ripon, Jessie Jack Hooper of Oshkosh, Ada James of
2 Richland Center, and Belle Case La Follette of Baraboo; and

3 Whereas, Wisconsin is part of the original 36 states to ratify the 19th
4 Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which provides, “The right of citizens of the
5 United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any
6 State on account of sex,” and holds the distinction of being the first state to ratify,
7 on June 10, 1919, and formally certify its ratification papers in Washington, D.C.;
8 and

9 Whereas, in July 1921, after decades of campaigning by women for voting and
10 other rights, Wisconsin passed the nation’s first women’s equal rights law,
11 declaring “Women shall have the same rights and privileges under the law as men,”
12 including “holding office”—affirming women’s right to hold any public office; and

13 Whereas, a 1923 survey of Wisconsin cities and villages by the University of
14 Wisconsin’s Municipal Information Bureau identified more than 400 women in
15 public office, of whom approximately half sat on school and library boards and who
16 also included Wisconsin’s first female mayor, county supervisor, sheriff, nine
17 alderwomen, 12 village trustees, and dozens of clerks and treasurers; and

18 Whereas, in 1925, three women, Representatives Mildred Barber of Wausau,
19 Hellen Brooks of Coloma, and Helen Thompson of Park Falls, were the first female
20 assembly representatives to be elected to the Wisconsin Legislature; and

21 Whereas, Wisconsin amended its own constitution in 1934 to include women’s
22 suffrage; and

23 Whereas, in 1983, the Wisconsin Women’s Council became a permanent state

1 agency governed by a bipartisan board appointed by the governor and legislative
2 leaders; and

3 Whereas, in 2025, a total of 44 women took their seats in the state assembly
4 and senate, the most ever in Wisconsin history; and

5 Whereas, the role of American women continues to evolve, and their positive
6 contributions to our culture, society, and government continue to grow and inspire
7 future generations; and

8 Whereas, throughout the history of the United States, whether in their homes,
9 in their workplaces, in schools, in the community, in the courts, or during wartime,
10 women have fought for themselves, their families, and all people of the United
11 States; and

12 Whereas, since the American Revolution, women have been vital to the
13 mission of the armed forces, with about 30,000 women veterans from Wisconsin
14 representing every branch of service; and

15 Whereas, American women have played and continue to play a critical
16 economic, cultural, and social role in every sphere of life and constitute a significant
17 portion of the labor force working inside and outside the home, with women now
18 representing approximately half of the workforce of the United States and owning
19 more than 12.4 million businesses; and

20 Whereas, according to U.S. Census Bureau data, women are at the helm of
21 about 18 percent of all employer firms located in Wisconsin; and

22 Whereas, the women of Wisconsin have been and continue to be leaders in the
23 forefront of international affairs, social change efforts, education, journalism,

1 literature, art, film, technology, math, science, athletics, and other fields including
2 Golda Meir, who grew up in Milwaukee and was the Prime Minister of Israel from
3 1969 to 1974; Nobel Peace Prize winner and Liberian president Ellen Johnson
4 Sirleaf, who attended school in Madison and was the first female head of state of
5 any African country; Vel Phillips, a woman of many firsts, was the first Black
6 woman to graduate from the University of Wisconsin Law School, the first woman
7 alder elected to the Common Council of Milwaukee, the first woman judge in
8 Milwaukee County, the first African American to serve in Wisconsin's judiciary,
9 and the first woman elected as Wisconsin's secretary of state; Dickey Chapelle was
10 the first female American war correspondent to parachute with American troops
11 and the first killed covering combat; Electa "Wuhwehweheemeew" Quinney was
12 Wisconsin's first public schoolteacher; Laura Ingalls Wilder, author of the "Little
13 House" book series, hailed from Pepin; Lorraine Hansberry, playwright for *A*
14 *Raisin in the Sun* was the first Black woman to have a play produced on Broadway;
15 Georgia O'Keeffe of Sun Prairie was a major American artist of the 20th century
16 who developed a unique approach to abstract painting that reflected the landscapes
17 around her; and Bonnie Blair is a world record-holding speed skater, a six-time
18 Olympic medalist, and one of the most decorated women in Winter Olympic history;
19 and

20 Whereas, despite the advancements of women in the United States, much
21 remains to be done to ensure that women realize their full potential as equal
22 members of society in the United States; and

23 Whereas, National Women's History Month recognizes and spreads awareness

1 of the importance of women in the history of Wisconsin and the United States; now,
2 therefore, be it

3 ***Resolved by the senate, That*** March 2025 and March 2026 shall be
4 designated as Women's History Months.

5 (END)