



HR0757

LRB101 17443 ECR 66852 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The influences that shaped the League of Women Voters began in the early 1880s as changes were slowly proceeding to transform the status and the role of women in society; women were working individually and together to contribute their positions on the political issues of the time as they sought ways to influence public policy through questions and debate; and

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WHEREAS, In the early 1800s, women supported the abolition of slavery, reforms in marriage and divorce laws, birth control, universal education, women's rights to separate personal property, the retention of earnings from their trade, and joint guardianship; however, the women's enfranchise movement did not become strong until after the Civil War; and

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WHEREAS, In February of 1920 at the Congress Hotel in Chicago, the National American Woman Suffrage Association, led by Carrie Chapman Catt, and the National Council of Women Voters, led by Emma Smith Devoe, met to discuss how the women's movement should move forward as the 19th Amendment was slowly being ratified by the states after being passed by Congress; and

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WHEREAS, Carrie Chapman Catt addressed the 500 delegates at

1 this opening session of the new League of Women Voters; she
2 urged the members to adhere to a nonpartisan course, saying
3 "You need to get into the party not as a 'women's auxiliary'
4 but to fight for more than a 'me too' by convincing the men
5 that you have the ability to open the tightly locked door that
6 has shut you out and lead a successful drive for what you want,
7 you have to convert them,"; and

8 WHEREAS, By the end of 1920 all but two states were part of
9 the League; by 1924, the membership had swelled to 100,000; and

10 WHEREAS, The League's philosophy of nonpartianship,
11 consensus on issues, study before action, and concerted
12 advocacy were central to the League, as well as its work to
13 educate members on reform issues and how to work within
14 existing political organizations; and

15 WHEREAS, After the 1929 crash, membership fell, and, by
16 1935, only 41,000 members remained; the League remained a
17 formidable force and became well known for through research and
18 accurate information in the 1930s; and

19 WHEREAS, Led by prominent citizens including Jane Addams
20 and Ida B. Wells-Barnett as well as women's suffrage
21 organizations such as the Illinois Equal Suffrage Association,
22 the Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs, and the Chicago

1 Political Equality League, women in Illinois secured the right
2 to vote; therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
4 HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
5 we commemorate the hopes and dreams of the hundreds of
6 thousands of Illinois women of all political parties who
7 organized themselves, from the 1870s into the first half of the
8 20th century, to win the right to vote in America; and be it
9 further

10 RESOLVED, That we honor the approaching 100th anniversary
11 of the formation of the League of Women Voters in Illinois.