

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 378 Session of  
2019

INTRODUCED BY KRUEGER, JUNE 7, 2019

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,  
JUNE 7, 2019

## A RESOLUTION

1 Commemorating the centennial of the ratification of the 19th  
2 Amendment on June 4, 2019, and recognizing the Justice Bell  
3 as a symbol of the suffrage cause.

4 WHEREAS, Passed by the Congress of the United States on June  
5 4, 1919, and ratified by the Commonwealth on June 24, 1919, the  
6 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States provides  
7 that the right to vote "shall not be denied or abridged by the  
8 United States or by any State on account of sex"; and

9 WHEREAS, On August 18, 1920, the 19th Amendment was ratified  
10 as approved by 36 state legislatures; and

11 WHEREAS, Millions of women voted in national elections for  
12 the first time in 1920; and

13 WHEREAS, The social and political movement to secure equal  
14 voting rights for women originated at the historic Seneca Falls,  
15 New York Convention of 1848; and

16 WHEREAS, A resolution drafted there states that "it is the  
17 duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their  
18 sacred right to the elective franchise"; and

1 WHEREAS, While some state legislatures enacted suffrage laws,  
2 the Congress of the United States blocked or defeated proposed  
3 constitutional amendments; and

4 WHEREAS, Diverse activism and opposition continued into the  
5 20th century; and

6 WHEREAS, In 1915, the General Assembly agreed to a referendum  
7 for a suffrage amendment to the Constitution of Pennsylvania;  
8 and

9 WHEREAS, As part of the lobbying campaign to urge male voters  
10 to expand the State electorate and then "announce the completion  
11 of democracy," Katherine Wentworth Ruschenberger of Tredyffrin  
12 Township, Chester County, commissioned a near replica of the  
13 Liberty Bell; and

14 WHEREAS, Known as the Justice Bell or the Women's Liberty  
15 Bell, the bell is inscribed:

16 ESTABLISH JUSTICE

17 PROCLAIM LIBERTY THROUGHOUT ALL THE LAND UNTO ALL THE

18 INHABITANTS THEREOF

19 MENEELY BELL CO

20 TROY, NY

21 MCMXV;

22 and

23 WHEREAS, A flatbed truck carried the Justice Bell, with its  
24 bronze clapper silenced by chains, to all 67 Pennsylvania  
25 counties; and

26 WHEREAS, When the 1915 Statewide referendum failed by a vote  
27 of 385,348 to 441,034, the Justice Bell tour continued in other  
28 states; and

29 WHEREAS, The Justice Bell was present at the Victory  
30 Convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association

1 in Chicago in 1920; and

2 WHEREAS, The Justice Bell's clapper was unchained in  
3 September 1920 at Independence Hall in Philadelphia; and

4 WHEREAS, The Justice Bell is permanently displayed at the  
5 Washington Memorial Chapel in Valley Forge; therefore be it

6 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives commemorate the  
7 centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment on June 4,  
8 2019, and recognize the Justice Bell as a symbol of the suffrage  
9 cause.