

## Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 43

### RESOLUTION CHAPTER 76

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 43—Relative to equal status for women.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 7, 1995.]

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 43, McDonald. Women's equal status: contributions.

This measure would, as the Legislature and the State of California celebrate the 75th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution, recognize the contributions of women to the movements to end slavery, give women the right to vote, and provide equality of opportunity in the United States.

WHEREAS, For the first 200 years of America's existence, women generally had little voice regarding their political representation, with the exception of a few scattered instances in the prerevolutionary war times where women were allowed to vote in the colonies; and

WHEREAS, The issue of equal status for women began as early as 1634, when Anne Hutchinson, a Calvinist, claimed equality for herself and other women equal to that of the men who ruled the colony. As a result, Ms. Hutchinson was the subject of an inquisition and trial which led to her banishment from the colony; and

WHEREAS, There were a number of notable women in postrevolution America who sought equality for women, including Abigail Adams, who wrote to her husband, John Adams, asking him to remind the Continental Congress to "remember the ladies" when drafting the Constitution; and

WHEREAS, After adoption of the Constitution, women's political role was largely limited to their ability to influence men. Attempts to change this state of affairs were sporadic as when women such as Margaret Brent, a farmer largely responsible for developing the major agricultural commodity "indigo," demanded and failed to get two votes in the Maryland Assembly in 1647, and when the State of New Jersey, in the late 1700's, allowed women to vote for a brief period of time; and

WHEREAS, During the 19th Century, women active in the cause for the abolition of slavery argued for human rights and began to claim those rights for themselves; and

WHEREAS, In 1848, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, and others organized the Seneca Falls Convention in Seneca Falls, New York, the first of many women's rights conventions in the United

States; drafted at that first convention was the Declaration of Sentiments, modeled after the Declaration of Independence which declared that, “all men and women are created equal”; and

WHEREAS, Between 1839 and 1860, African American women, such as Sojourner Truth, and white women formed close ties and worked to help each other in the drive for the abolition of slavery and the rights of women, including for some women the right to own private property in full accordance with the right given white men, with this coalition recognizing that the plight of African American women in the United States was the most unbearable in all of society; and

WHEREAS, With the passage of the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution, and the exclusion of women in its provisions, the fight for women’s right to vote was taken from the national platform to the states; and

WHEREAS, After passage of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, suffragists continued campaigning for the right to vote, through groups such as the National American Women’s Suffrage Association (NAWSA), the National Women’s Party, and the Congressional Union; and

WHEREAS, Numerous American men, including Aaron A. Sargent of California who introduced women’s suffrage legislation in the Congress in the 1870’s, also have arranged legislative hearings, written editorials, circulated petitions, and campaigned for equal voting rights; and

WHEREAS, In 1917 Jeanette Rankin became the first woman elected to the United States Congress, despite the fact that no woman could vote in national elections; and

WHEREAS, The work of the 70-year suffrage movement was victorious when women gained the constitutional right to vote in 1920 as, with the support of more than 2 million women, the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution was passed, and later, with the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, that right was protected by federal law; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring,* That the Legislature and the State of California celebrate the 75th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution, and recognize the contributions of women to the movements to end slavery, give women the right to vote, and provide equality of opportunity in the United States.

