

1 A RESOLUTION commemorating the centennial anniversary of a woman's right to
2 vote.

3 WHEREAS, for more than a century following the founding of this great nation,
4 women were denied the right to vote; and

5 WHEREAS, in 1837 the Kentucky General Assembly enacted legislation providing
6 to women who were heads of households and taxpayers the right to vote on tax and
7 school issues, making Kentucky the first state in the nation where women could engage in
8 the electoral process; and

9 WHEREAS, women in Kentucky were at the forefront of the national movement to
10 give all women the right to vote; and

11 WHEREAS, among these women was Mary Barr Clay and Laura Clay, daughters of
12 famed Kentucky abolitionist Cassius Marcellus Clay. Mary Barr Clay was a fervent
13 women's rights advocate, organized the Fayette County Equal Rights Association in
14 Kentucky, and later served as president of the American Woman Suffrage Association;
15 and Laura Clay headed the Kentucky Woman Suffrage Association and, at the 1920
16 Democratic National Convention, became the first woman to have her name placed in
17 nomination for the presidency by a major political party; and

18 WHEREAS, Dr. Mary E. Britton, the first African American woman physician in
19 Lexington, was an activist for women's right to vote; and

20 WHEREAS, Madeline McDowell Breckinridge, the great-granddaughter of
21 Kentucky statesman Henry Clay, has been classified by many as the most influential
22 Kentucky suffragist through her powerful writings; and

23 WHEREAS, many women, including Susan B. Anthony, were arrested and jailed,
24 with some incarcerations subjecting protesters to deplorable conditions and forced
25 feedings as a result of their efforts to secure the right to vote for women; and

26 WHEREAS, a proposed amendment to the United States Constitution that had been
27 introduced at every session of Congress for 42 years was finally passed by the Congress

1 on June 4, 1919; and

2 WHEREAS, this amendment was submitted to the states for ratification as the
3 Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution providing, "The rights of
4 citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States
5 or by any State on account of sex"; and

6 WHEREAS, on January 6, 1920, the first day of the 1920 session of the Kentucky
7 General Assembly, Kentucky became the twenty-fourth state and one of only four
8 southern states to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution by a
9 margin of 72 to 25 in the House and 30 to 8 in the Senate; and

10 WHEREAS, on January 6, 1920, less than a month after taking office and
11 surrounded by a large number of women suffragists, Governor Edwin P. Morrow signed
12 the Act of the General Assembly into law; and

13 WHEREAS, the required thirty-sixth state ratified the Nineteenth Amendment on
14 August 18, 1920, and, after a more than a one hundred year battle, women were given the
15 right to vote; and

16 WHEREAS, while the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment was immediately
17 met with litigation, proceeding to the United States Supreme Court, its adoption was
18 unanimously upheld in an opinion written by Louisville native Louis D. Brandeis; and

19 WHEREAS, on November 2, 1920, more than eight million women across the
20 United States voted in elections for the first time; and

21 WHEREAS, the year 2020 marks the 100th anniversary of Kentucky's ratification
22 of the Nineteenth Amendment and of women having the right to vote;

23 NOW, THEREFORE,

24 ***Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of***
25 ***Kentucky:***

26 ➔Section 1. The members of the Senate hereby commend and celebrate the strong
27 and faithful women of this Commonwealth, past and present, on the 100th anniversary of

1 the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution ensuring a
2 woman's right to vote; and recognize the invaluable contribution women have made and
3 continue to make to promote and preserve the right to vote, and the rights of liberty and
4 justice for all.

5 ➔Section 2. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this
6 Resolution to the Kentucky League of Women Voters, 115 South Ewing, Louisville,
7 Kentucky 40206.