State of New York

Executive Chamber

Proclamation

Whereas, the State of New York is proud to be the birthplace and foundation of the women's suffrage movement, serving as the site of the historic Seneca Falls Convention of 1848, where 68 women and 32 men signed the revolutionary Declaration of Sentiments, proclaiming that women had the same rights as men; and

Whereas, courageous suffragists launched the first White House picket in United States history on January 10, 1917, initiating a peaceful demonstration as "Silent Sentinels" that would endure six days a week for nearly three years; and

Whereas, during this prolonged campaign, these resilient women faced unlawful arrests, suffered deplorable jail conditions, and endured brutal forced feedings during hunger strikes, ultimately capturing national sympathy and achieving a landmark legal victory when all charges against them were dismissed; and

Whereas, on November 6, 1917, women in New York State secured the right to vote, a monumental victory that galvanized the suffrage movement on the national stage; and

Whereas, the 19th Amendment was ratified to the United States Constitution on August 26, 1920, granting many women the right to engage in our democratic process, though true universal suffrage was not achieved in the United States until the passage of the landmark Voting Rights Act in 1965; and

Whereas, the path to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 marked the culmination of a long journey to overcome the historic and systematic delay of the right to vote for distinct groups of women, with Indigenous peoples denied national voting rights until 1924, Chinese American women until 1943, all Asian American women until 1952, and African American and Latina women until 1965; and

Whereas, it remains imperative to acknowledge that the comprehensive disenfranchisement of women across all groups only ended recently and the full inclusion of women's voices in the national dialogue is a fundamental right, and current attempts by the federal government to restrict voting and voter registration—some that specifically target women who have changed their last names—threatens to strip the right to vote from millions of eligible citizens and stands abhorrent to the United States Constitution; and

Whereas, Women's Equality Day is a day to celebrate but should also serve as a reminder that our work is not done, particularly as the gender pay gap persists in the United States and reflects a widening disparity when accounting for race or disability, underscoring our duty to continue striving to secure equal rights and true equity for every individual; and

Whereas, the State of New York proudly serves as a national leader in equality, with the smallest gender pay gap in the United States, enacting statutory measures to ensure pay equity, eradicate workplace discrimination and harassment, eliminate health disparities, and strengthen protections for survivors of gender-based violence; and

Whereas, defending equal rights is an enduring commitment for all New Yorkers—with particular emphasis on protecting those historically underserved or denied a voice—and the state will continue to work tirelessly to cultivate an equitable future for successive generations of women leaders;

Now, Therefore, I, Kathy Hochul, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim August 26, 2026, as

WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY

in the Empire State.

Given under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State at the Capitol in the City of Albany this twenty-fourth day of August in the year two thousand twenty-six.

Secretary to the Governor
Karen Persichilli Keogh

Kathy Hochul
Governor