

Timeline - Highlights of U. S. Women's History

1848 - Seneca Falls Convention (the first Women's Rights Convention) drafted the "Declaration of Sentiments," often termed the beginning of the US women's movement.

1851 – Sojourner Truth of Battle Creek delivers her famous "Ain't I A Woman" speech in Akron, Ohio.

1855 – The first college for Michigan women, the Michigan Female College, is founded in Lansing by Abigail Rogers.

1867 – Michigan grants women taxpayers the right to vote for school trustees but rejects total woman suffrage.

1869 – Susan B. Anthony and Lucretia Mott found the National Woman Suffrage Association. Lucy Stone forms the American Woman Suffrage Association. They merge in 1889 to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association.

1870 - Madelon Louisa Stockwell of Albion is the first woman admitted to the University of Michigan.

1871 – Sarah Killgore Wertman is the first woman to practice law in Michigan.

1872 – Victoria Claflin Woodhull is first woman to declare for the U.S. Presidency.

1878 – "Anthony" Amendment introduced in Congress to give women the right to vote.

1904 - Anna Howard Shaw of Big Rapids, the first woman ordained minister in the Methodist Protestant Church, is elected president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association.

1911 – Harriet Quimby of Branch County is the first woman in the US to receive a certified pilot's license.

1916 – Margaret Sanger opens 1st US birth control clinic in Brooklyn, New York.

1918 – Michigan voters approve a state constitutional amendment to grant women the full right to vote.

1920 - Women's Right to Vote amendment is ratified by last state, and made law. "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

1921 - Eva McCall Hamilton of Grand Rapids is the first woman to serve in the Michigan Senate.

1923 – Alice Paul drafts the Equal Rights Amendment, which is introduced in the U. S. Congress, “Men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction.”

1925 - Cora Reynolds Anderson of L’Anse is the first woman elected to the Michigan House of Representatives.

1925 – 2 wives of former Governors become the first woman Governors of Wyoming and Texas.

1932 – Hattie Wyatt Caraway of Arkansas is appointed U.S. Senator and elected in 1933.

1936 – Emma Schaub of Leelanau County is the first woman to be elected and serve as a county prosecutor in Michigan.

1950 – Ruth Thompson of Muskegon is the first Michigan women elected to the U.S. Congress.

1955 – Rosa Parks is arrested in Montgomery, Alabama for refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a white man.

1961 – President John Kennedy establishes the Presidents’ Commission on the Status of Women.

1963 – Federal Equal Pay Act is enacted.

1964 – Title VII of Civil Rights Act is passed, prohibiting employment discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion and national origin.

1965 – Married couples in all states can obtain contraceptives legally.

1966 – National Organization for Women is formed.

1967 – President Lyndon Johnson expands Executive Order 11375 to provide affirmative action based on gender.

Noreen Hillary of Grand Rapids and Kay Whitfield of Flint are the first women to be Michigan State Troopers.

1968 – The Michigan Women’s Commission is established by PA 1 of 1968, sponsored by Senator Lorraine Beebe.

1972 – U.S. Equal Rights Amendment is passed after re-introduction by U.S. Representative Martha Griffiths of Michigan “Equality of Rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.”

Mary Stallings Coleman of Battle Creek is the first woman elected to the Michigan Supreme Court.

Title IX of the Education Codes of 1972 requires equal access to academic and athletic programs in education regardless of gender.

Michigan is the 20th state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment.

1973 – The US Supreme Court legalizes abortion with certain restrictions, *Roe v. Wade*.

1976 – Michigan is enacted the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act, that states “the opportunity to obtain employment, housing and other real estate, and the full and equal utilization of public accommodations, public service, and educational facilities without discrimination because of religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, height, weight, familial status, or marital status is recognized and declared to be a civil right.”

1978 – Pregnancy Discrimination Act is enacted to ban employment discrimination against pregnant women.

Michigan enacts several comprehensive statutes dealing with domestic violence.

1981 – Sandra Day O’Connor becomes first woman justice of the U. S. Supreme Court.

1982 – ERA fails as it is three states short of 38 states needed for ratification.

Martha W. Griffiths of Romeo is the first woman elected to serve as Lieutenant Governor of Michigan.

1984 – Congresswoman Geraldine Ferraro of New York is chosen as the vice-presidential candidate on the Democratic slate.

1987 – The Michigan Women’s Historical Center and Hall of Fame is opened in Lansing.

1993 – Federal Family and Medical Leave Act is enacted.

1994 – Federal Violence Against Women Act is passed.

Candice Miller of Macomb County is the first woman elected as Michigan Secretary of State.

1998 – Record number of women are elected to the Michigan House of Representatives, 31 out of 100 members.

Jennifer M. Granholm is elected as first women Attorney General of Michigan.

2000 – Debbie Stabenow is elected as first Michigan woman to serve as US Senator.

2002 – Record number of women are elected to the Michigan Senate, 11 out of 38 members. I

Jennifer M. Granholm is elected as first woman Governor of Michigan.

2006 - Governor Jennifer M. Granholm is re-elected to her second term as the Governor.

The Michigan House of Representatives has 20 women out of 110 and the Michigan Senate has 9 women out of 38 members.

Proposal 2, banning certain affirmative action programs that gave preferential treatment to groups or individuals based on race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin, is passed by a majority of Michigan citizens in the November election.

2007 – Nancy Pelosi is the first woman to serve as Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.

2008 - Sarah Palin is the first woman to be listed on the national G.O.P. ticket.

2009 – President Barack Obama is inaugurated and issues a Women’s Agenda. The 2008 election changes the Michigan House of Representatives to 28 women out of 110. The Michigan Senate continues with 9 women out of 38 members.

– President Obama signed the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Restoration Act, which allows discrimination victims to make a complaint with the government against their employer within 180 days of their last paycheck.

2010 – President Obama signed the Healthcare Reform Legislation. Gubernatorial Candidate Virgil Bernero selects Brenda Lawrence as candidate for Lieutenant Governor.

This timeline is based on the extensive timeline developed by the Michigan Women’s Hall of Fame, found at <http://www.h-net.org/~michigan/timeline/miwchron.html> ; Women’s rights movement time line, www.factmonster.com/spot/womenstimeline1.html ; Information at www.gendergap.com/states/michigan ; Timeline of women’s legal history in the United States, <http://members.aol.com/aacdrcnnea/lawtime.html>

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