



## Proclamation Celebrating Women's History Month and the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment

**WHEREAS**, since before the birth of our nation, American women of every race, class, and ethnic background have made historic contributions to the growth and strength of our nation in countless recorded and unrecorded ways, and

**WHEREAS**, American women have served as early leaders in the forefront of every major progressive social change movement to create a more fair and just society for all, despite their *treatment as second-class citizens and denial of the full rights and privileges that are available to male citizens of the United States*; and

**WHEREAS**, women fought to resist their inequality in this country, proclaiming the Declaration of Sentiments in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848 at the first Woman's Rights Convention, some 70 years after the American Revolution had been fought to win freedom from tyranny, and

**WHEREAS**, it would be 72 more years after that convention before American women achieved suffrage, with the approval of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, passed by Congress on June 4, 1919, and ratified on August 18, 1920 by Tennessee, the last of the necessary 36 states to secure ratification, so that 1920 was the first year women could vote in a federal election, and

**WHEREAS**, the 19th Amendment did not guarantee suffrage for all women. Native Americans gained the right to vote in some states in 1924, and in the final state, Utah, in 1962. Asian Pacific Islander Americans did not earn suffrage until 1952, and the voting rights of African-Americans and Latinex Americans were not secured until passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and

**WHEREAS**, this year the Tompkins County Historical Commission will celebrate the rich history of the women's suffrage movement in Tompkins County by creating and installing commemorative building plaques to honor local individuals who played a key role in the women's suffrage movement, and

**WHEREAS**, the women and their allies who are being honored are Juanita Breckenridge Bates, Lucy Hawley Calkins, Helen Brewster Owens, Carrie E. Bouton, Rev. Robert T. Jones, and Rev. Cyrus Heizer, all of Ithaca, and Libbie Sweetland of Dryden, and

**WHEREAS**, two Cornell graduates who were also important in the movement, and may be recognized at Cornell, were Harriet May Mills, class of 1879, and Isabel Howland, class of 1881, and

**WHEREAS**, records show that there were also Equal Rights groups in Groton and Newfield, and

**WHEREAS**, after the vote was finally won in 1920, women understood that the quest for their rights would be an ongoing struggle that was only advanced, not satisfied, by the vote, and we all follow in the footsteps of these resolute American suffragists, now

**THEREFORE**, I, Leslyn McBean-Clairborne, Chair of the Tompkins County Legislature, do hereby proclaim that the Tompkins County Legislature celebrates the brave women who fought to win suffrage rights for women, and commemorates that day in 1920 on which most American women earned their right to vote, and designate the month of March 2020 to celebrate

### **WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH and the 100<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY of the 19<sup>th</sup> AMENDMENT**

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I, **Leslyn McBean-Clairborne**, have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the great seal of Tompkins County, State of New York, on this 17th day of March 2020.