

Wisconsin's Historic Role in Women's Suffrage

Wisconsin has a proud history of advancing the rights of women, including being the first state to ratify the 19th Amendment, which granted women the right to vote. Senator Baldwin's **Women's Suffrage National Monument Location Act** will secure a place for that history on our National Mall. While Congress has already authorized the creation of a monument to women's suffrage, the Women's Suffrage National Monument Location Act is required to ensure that the monument is located in this place of national prominence, reflecting the importance of women to Wisconsin and our nation's history.



Robert M. La Follette and Belle Case La Follette at Roe farm. [Library of Congress](#)

Wisconsin was home to many leaders of the women's suffrage movement, including Belle Case La Follette, wife to Robert "Fighting Bob" La Follette. The first woman to graduate from the University of Wisconsin Law School, Belle Case La Follette fought for women of all races to have a voice in our democracy. La Follette worked arm-in-arm with suffragists and civil rights activists across the state, building on the work of other leaders including Emma Curtiss Bascom, Carrie Chapman Catt, Lavinia Goodell, Carrie Cook Horton, Ada James, and Theodora Youmans to make the case that women deserve to be full participants in civic life. Their work, and the contributions of countless other Wisconsinites of all backgrounds, set the state on a path to make history. On June 10, 1919, Wisconsin became the first state to ratify the 19th Amendment. On August 24, 1920, Tennessee Governor Albert H. Roberts certified Tennessee's ratification of the amendment, providing the 36th and final state ratification needed for the 19th Amendment to be formally adopted and grant women the constitutional right to vote. While barriers to full participation in our democracy remain, the adoption of the 19th Amendment is a profound achievement for the rights of women.

Senator Baldwin is proud to partner with Senator Blackburn of Tennessee to introduce the Women's Suffrage National Monument Location Act and ensure that Wisconsin and Tennessee's respective histories have their rightful place on our National Mall.



Wisconsin State Senator David G. James, the father of suffragist Ada James, holds his appointment by Governor Phillip as Special Courier to deliver Wisconsin's ratification of the 19th Amendment, surrounded by suffragists at the National Woman's Party headquarters in Washington, D.C. [Harris & Ewing/Library of Congress](#)



Theodora Youmans, President of the Wisconsin Women's Suffrage Association and member of the Carroll Academy class of 1880. [Carroll University](#).