

Kansas

1867—Kansas became the first state to hold a referendum on suffrage, bringing national suffrage leaders out to campaign—but voters voted against suffrage two-to-one. Six years earlier, when Kansas had become a state, it adopted the Wyandotte Constitution, allowing women to vote in school board elections.

1879—Kansans formed the Equal Suffrage Association (ESA) in Lincoln, and the ESA joined the Kansas Equal Suffrage Association (KESA) in 1884.

1887—The legislature passed legislation giving women the right to vote in municipal elections. Shortly after, as a joke, men included Susanna Salter's name on the Prohibition Party ticket for Argonia mayor, and she received two-thirds of the vote, becoming the first female mayor in the country.

1894—Legislators considered another suffrage constitutional amendment, and KESA enlisted the assistance of Susan B. Anthony, Carrie Catt, and Anna Howard Shaw to campaign in the state. But the liquor and railroad industries funded opposition efforts and soundly defeated the measure by 35,000 votes. KESA continued to organize non-partisan campaigns and conventions to spotlight the cause and discouraged speakers from including political rhetoric in their speeches.

1911—When the legislature considered an amendment granting women full suffrage, Governor Walter Stubbs supported the measure. This time, the legislature passed the amendment in a three-to-one vote, and the issue was sent to the voters via a 1912 referendum.

1912—With 175,246 votes in favor and 159,197 votes in opposition, Kansas voters approved a suffrage amendment.

June 16, 1919—Kansas ratified the 19th Amendment.

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