

Maryland

1648—Attorney Margaret Brent requested that the General Assembly hold a vote on suffrage. Brent argued that as a landowning female, she should be able to vote like any male in the state. The Assembly rejected Brent's request.

1867—Maryland suffragists began organizing in Baltimore, when Lavinia Dundore founded the Maryland Equal Rights Society (MERS). Before it disbanded in 1874, MERS included black and white men as well as women.

1907—Edith Houghton Hooker, one of the first women admitted to Johns Hopkins Medical School, founded the Just Government League (JGL) of mainly highly-educated, wealthy, white Protestant women. JGL used hiking trips and public meetings to reach individuals outside of cities, becoming one of the largest suffrage organizations in the state.

1912—Hooker founded the *Maryland Suffrage News* to coordinate with JGL in reporting on state and national suffrage news.

1915—Augusta Chissell founded the Progressive Women's Suffrage Club to address the lack of racial diversity in the suffrage movement. Chissell advocated for education, healthcare, Prohibition, and suffrage. Chissell wrote "A Primer for Women Voters" column in the *Baltimore Afro-American* to update women on their voting rights following the 19th Amendment passage.

1916—The Senate passed a suffrage bill, but opponents argued that allowing women to vote would empower Black women voters and tilt in favor of Prohibition. The bill failed in the House of Delegates by almost 20 votes.

February 20, 1920—Maryland rejected the 19th Amendment, with legislators arguing that the amendment would violate states' rights. After the 19th Amendment became the law of the land, attorney Oscar Leser argued before the U.S. Supreme Court that Maryland need not register female voters, as the state had not ratified the 19th Amendment. The U.S. Supreme Court rejected this argument.

March 29, 1941—Maryland ratified the 19th Amendment.*

* Jim Crow laws were enforced in Maryland until passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, and Black women were not able to vote post-1920.

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