

Texas

1875—When Texas amended its constitution to incorporate Jim Crow laws, it explicitly limited voting to men. This change made suffrage passage more difficult because it would have to meet the state's constitutional amendment requirements to become law.

1893—Based in Galveston, the Texas Equal Rights Association (TERA) formed under the leadership of Rebecca Henry Hayes, Sarah McBride, and Jenny Bland Beauchamp and petitioned the legislature to consider suffrage bills. During the next two decades, members of the Texas Legislature introduced suffrage bills, but none advanced to a vote. TERA foundered in 1912 and shuttered its operations.

1913—In response to women's nationwide interest in suffrage, Minnie Fisher Cunningham founded the Texas Equal Suffrage Association (TESA). Along with TESA leaders like Mary Eleanor Brackenridge, TESA opened offices statewide, held parades, organized debates and parades, canvassed, and distributed pro-suffrage literature.

1918—Texas passed legislation by a large margin to allow women to vote in primaries. Once Texas women had primary voting rights, suffragists launched enormous voter registration campaigns, registering thousands of women in weeks to vote in the governor's race.* Suffragists also launched a sizable campaign in support of Governor William Hobby, who endorsed women voting in primary elections. When Governor Hobby won reelection, women could point to their influence in the election and their willingness to exercise their voting rights.

June 28, 1919—The Texas Legislature ratified the 19th Amendment, becoming the first Southern state to ratify.

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

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