

Wyoming

1869—William Bright, Wyoming Council President, introduced the Wyoming Suffrage Act to the Territorial Legislature. The Council passed the bill, with 6 votes in favor and 2 votes in opposition. The House passed the bill with 7 votes in favor, 2 votes in opposition, and 1 vote in abstention, and suffrage passed in Wyoming Territory.

Although no records kept of the bill's debate survive, there were likely several reasons for the widespread support for suffrage in Wyoming in the late nineteenth century. First, Wyoming legislators believed that the enfranchisement of female citizens would create good publicity for the territory and attract more women to settle there.

Democrats assumed that championing and enacting suffrage would secure women's continued support at the polls. Democrats this would hurt Republican Governor John Campbell politically, as they predicted Campbell would veto the legislation. Governor Campbell and the Republican Party had been advocating for voting rights of formerly enslaved people, so Democrats felt that a potential veto could spotlight his hypocrisy. Lastly, many legislators were motivated by the 15th Amendment's ratification and believed that if minority populations were gaining the right to vote, white women should as well.

On December 10, 1869, Governor Campbell made history by signing the Wyoming Suffrage Act of 1869 into law, making Wyoming the first state to give women the vote.

1871—Legislators attempted to repeal suffrage, but Governor Campbell vetoed the legislation. The legislature attempted to overturn the Governor's appeal, but they fell one vote short in the Council.

1889—Just before achieving statehood, Wyoming included women's suffrage rights in its state constitution.

January 27, 1920—The Wyoming Legislature unanimously voted to ratify the 19th Amendment.

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