

NEWS RELEASE

Board invites communities to raise Women's Suffrage flags in June
Woodward and Gershenson announce 2019-2020 plans celebrating milestone in nation's history

June 4, 2019, OAKLAND COUNTY, MI. – Today, Board Chairman **David T. Woodward** (D-Royal Oak) and Vice Chairwoman **Marcia Gershenson** (D-Bloomfield) held a press conference announcing that Oakland County will begin a year-long celebration to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which guaranteed women the right to vote.

The Board has invited every local government, school district and library across Oakland County to fly the 19th Amendment Victory Flag for the week beginning June 10, 2019, which marks the 100th anniversary of Michigan's ratification of the 19th Amendment. Michigan, Illinois and Wisconsin were the first three states to ratify the amendment on June 10, 1919.

On March 14, 2019, the Board unanimously approved a resolution establishing the Celebration of Women's Suffrage Ad Hoc Committee. Gershenson serves as chair of the committee, which also includes Commissioners **Angela Powell** (D-Pontiac) and **Tom Kuhn** (R-Troy).

"We welcome all Oakland County communities and schools to join us as we celebrate and recognize the largest expansion of rights since our country was formed," said Gershenson. "This is as much America's story as it is a woman's story. We learn from our past to make our future better."

The 19th Amendment Victory Flag was designed by the National Women's Party. The flag's colors – purple, white and yellow – stood for loyalty, purity and hope, respectively. The flag is decorated with 36 stars, which represents the number of states required to approve the amendment. On August 18, 1920, Tennessee became the 36th and final state to approve the amendment, granting all women the right to vote.

"Celebrating the 19th Amendment recognizes a major milestone in our democracy and provides us the opportunity to explore its relevance on the issues of equal rights today," said Woodward. "Women's right

to vote was not given, it was fought for. It's a reminder that America's greatness is the result of expanding the rights of all, not the other way around."

Gershenson and Woodward also announced that the Board will host a Women's Suffrage Centennial Celebration Ceremony on June 14, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. at the Oakland County Courthouse, which is located at 1200 North Telegraph Road (Building 12E) in Pontiac. Dignitaries will be invited to speak, and information about future commemoration programming and events will be announced.

Communities, libraries, schools and other non-profit organizations that are interested in participating and receiving a 19th Amendment Victory Flag should contact Megan Sellers at the Board of Commissioners. She can be reached at sellersm@oakgov.com or (248) 858-0103.

For more information about the Board of Commissioners, please visit www.oakgov.com/boc or call 248-858-0100.

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