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Today, we celebrate Women's Equality Day and the 97th anniversary of the ratification of the Constitution with the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote. The National Federation of Democratic Women is proud of our heritage of the Women's Suffrage movement. We are grateful for strong women like Susan B Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Sojourner Truth, Lucy Stone, Matilda Joslyn Cage, Carrie Catt, Ida Wells -Burnett, Alice Paul and so many more, who fought long and hard to gain the right to vote.

From the first Women's Convention in 1848 at Seneca Falls, NY, it took 72 years of letter writing, speaking at churches and public places, petitioning elected officials, publishing newspapers, marching and protesting for the Constitutional amendment to be ratified. When protesting in front of the White House, women were jailed, living in deplorable conditions. They continued their fight for their cause in jail with hunger strikes. Marches and protests were growing throughout the country. Finally enough men took notice. Congress and 36 States took the action needed to give women the right to vote.

On this day to commemorate and celebrate our grandmothers and great grandmothers who made the choice to join the Suffrage Movement, we say thank you.

Now, 97 years later, we still find the need to march to fight for our rights. The Women's Suffrage Movement succeeded through dedication, hard work and much sacrifice. Our history is strong and we have learned from the Suffrage movement. We, in the National Federation of Democratic Women, pledge to continue the fight for women's rights each and every day.

Susanna L. French

Susanna L. French, President
National Federation of Democratic Women