

# Women and Voting

## Why is it Important that Women Vote?

Thirty five million American women did not vote in the last presidential election. Nearly *half* of those women said they did not vote because they did not feel part of the political process or they were not interested in the election.

Since that election, laws about the minimum wage, equal pay for women, funding for child care programs, and support for higher education have all come before Congress and the President.

*Women have an enormous stake in electing representatives who will fight for adequate and equal pay, and other issues important to women's ability to provide for themselves and their families.*

*Here is why:*

### **Poverty is an enormous problem for women in America.**

- There are over 14 million women living in poverty in the United States – that's one out of every eight adult women in the country.
- Women are more than 40 percent more likely than men to live in poverty.

### **Women earn less money than men.**

- A woman earns on average 78 cents to a man's dollar. However, this number is far worse for women of color. African American women earn just 66 cents to the white male dollar, and Latina women earn just 54 cents.
- Women with children earn 10-15 percent less than women without children – a phenomenon sometimes referred to as the "mommy tax." There is not a comparable tax on men's wages when they become parents.

### **The jobs that women work are generally lower paying jobs.**

- Eighty percent of women work in just 20 of 420 types of jobs. Many of these jobs have low salaries, lack employee benefits, and lack opportunities to get promotions.

### **Women are far more likely to have care giving responsibilities than men.**

- Between 59 and 75 percent of family caregivers are women.
- A large portion of poor women are single mothers. Thirty-seven percent of single mothers live in poverty.

## An Introduction to How American Women Won the Right to Vote

**1866** The American Equal Rights Association is formed by Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

**1872** Susan B. Anthony attempted to vote for Ulysses S. Grant in the presidential election and was arrested.

**1912** Theodore Roosevelt took on a woman suffrage platform for his Bull Moose Republican party.

**1869** The suffrage movement split into two organizations: the National Woman Suffrage Association and the American Woman Suffrage Association.

**1878** Woman Suffrage Amendment (19<sup>th</sup> Amendment) introduced in Congress.

**1870-1875** Women tried to use the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment to vote but were not allowed.

**1913** The National Women's Party was organized by Alice Paul and Lucy Burns, who protested in front of the White House.

**August 26, 1920** The 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment was accepted and ratified, giving women the right to vote..

### Online Resources

#### Resources for Registering and Voting

*Women Work!'s Single Mother Voter Engagement Project* offers:

- State-specific voter registration information and online resources.
- State-specific absentee voting information and online resources.

Visit [www.womenwork.org/network/gotv/smvep.htm](http://www.womenwork.org/network/gotv/smvep.htm) to learn more!

**For more information about how American women won the right to vote, visit**  
<http://www.suffragist.com/>.

**For more information about American women's economic security, visit**  
<http://www.womenwork.org/policy/ourissues.htm>.

### A Women Work! Resource

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