The ratification of the 19th Amendment was a landmark moment in American history that dramatically changed the electorate. It enshrined in the United States Constitution fuller citizenship for women and a more expansive democracy for the nation.

“The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.”

— 19th Amendment, August 18, 1920

Why is Tennessee's ratification of the 19th amendment significant?

After Congress passed and proposed a woman suffrage amendment, three-fourths or 36 states at that time, had to ratify the 19th Amendment before it could be added to the Constitution. Many states quickly approved the 19th amendment and by the end of March 1919 only one additional state was needed for ratification. On August 18, 1920, after calling a special session of the state legislature, Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify the 19th Amendment.

OUR ABILITY TO AMEND

The Founders purposefully made it hard, but not impossible, to change the Constitution. In 1869 the first amendment proposing suffrage for women was introduced in Congress. It took fifty years and 900 proposals for Congress to pass a resolution that became the 19th amendment to the Constitution.