

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5033

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Government Operations & Elections, January 29, 2007

**Title:** An act relating to women's suffrage day.

**Brief Description:** Recognizing women's suffrage day.

**Sponsors:** Senators Prentice, Parlette, Kohl-Welles, Rasmussen, Regala, Fairley, Rockefeller, Kline, Haugen, Weinstein, McAuliffe, Spanel, Kastama, Franklin, Keiser, Shin, Hatfield, Pridemore, Hargrove, Jacobsen, Berkey, Poulsen, Kilmer, Murray, Fraser, Marr, Kauffman and Roach.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Government Operations & Elections: 1/22/07, 1/29/07 [DP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Fairley, Chair; Oemig, Vice Chair; Roach, Ranking Minority Member; Kline, Pridemore and Swecker.

**Staff:** Sharon Swanson (786-7447)

**Background:** On July 19, 1848, the first Women's Rights Convention was held in Seneca Falls, New York. Convention participants adopted a Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions that called for women to have equal rights in legal matters, to include voting and property.

In 1883, both Houses of the Washington State Territorial Legislature passed women's suffrage. Governor William Newell signed the bill into law on November 23, 1883. Washington became the third state after Wyoming and Utah to enact women's suffrage.

In 1888, the Washington Territorial Supreme Court ruled that the suffrage law was void because Congress had not intended to empower territories to enact women's suffrage.

After statehood, enactment of women's suffrage required a state constitutional amendment. On November 8, 1910, the ballot measure to amend Article VI of the Washington Constitution won by almost a 2 to 1 majority.

In 1920, the nineteenth amendment to the United States Constitution was adopted and women were granted the right to vote.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

The Legislature often recognizes significant historical persons or events by designating a specific day of remembrance. These dates are not considered legal holidays. Examples of nonlegal holidays include Columbus Day, Mother Joseph Day, Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, and Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day.

**Summary of Bill:** The nineteenth day of July is recognized as Women's Suffrage Day, but must not be considered a legal holiday for any purpose.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: This bill is 158 years past due and is a good bill.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Anne Bloch, Women's Organization.