

1907. The "Strauss Amendment" had added property qualifications and a written examination but it failed to include a time limitation which rendered its constitutionality doubtful and posed a potential burden to future generations of all races.¹⁶ In the state and local elections of 1909 this second disfranchisement attempt was beaten 106,069 to 89,808. The final attempt, labeled the "Digges Amendment," cut through the legal jargon and provided clearly and discriminatorily that all adult white males could vote without any other requirements but age and residence while all other male citizens (meaning Negroes) had to have paid real estate or personal property taxes for two consecutive years.¹⁷ Incredibly bolder than ever, the supporters sought registration law changes to prevent blacks from participating in the 1911 ratification vote. This last and most outrageous proposal brought national criticism from the north and south and lost 83,920 to 46,220 at the general election on November 7, 1911. Ironically, and perhaps justifiably, simultaneous with the defeat of this disfranchisement proposal, the son of the Democratic boss Gorman lost his bid to become Governor of Maryland by 3,000 votes to Republican Philip Lee Goldsborough.¹⁸

On the period's other major suffrage question—the women's vote—Maryland's history was anything but progressive. The Maryland General Assembly repeatedly defeated suffrage bills from 1910 to 1920. Political leaders of both parties opposed the 19th Amendment as an unwarranted extension of Federal power on states' rights. Thus, the right to vote for Maryland women was extended because of the ratification of the Constitutional Amendment by 36 other states not by any positive action of Maryland lawmakers. In Congress, Maryland's representatives had voted four to two against the 19th Amendment.¹⁹

The "Progressive Era" had brought new ideas and new faces into Maryland politics as new conditions and issues arose in the state. Political competitiveness had, on balance, been productive for the State but that competition would be endangered by national and international events which had to be too remote and impossible for anyone to contemplate in 1928.

1896

The second Cleveland administration soon found itself with economic forces out of control. The Panic of 1893, business collapses, labor unrest, farmer discontent, unemployment and currency valuation all rushed into the political forefront. These issues not only troubled the nation but they were also responsible for creating severe disruption within the Democratic party. President Cleveland disagreed sharply with Democratic Congressional leaders and soon found himself relatively alone politically.²⁰ In the 1894 mid-term elections the Republicans scored high gains achieving a 245 to 104 advantage in the House of Representatives where 24 states sent no Democrats. The Senate margin was less (44 to 39 with six "alliance members") as only one-third of its members faced re-election. The Democrats and President Cleveland moved toward the