Commission on the Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Passage of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution

2014 Annual Report

In July 2013, the Commission on the Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Passage of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution was authorized by Chapter 603, Acts of 2013; Code State Government Article, sec. 9-3001. In compliance with the law, the Commission presents the following annual report of its progress and activities.

From July through December 2013, the Commission was formed and appointments made. The membership is comprised of esteemed women from across the state, representing many organizations and perspectives. These Commissioners are united to fulfill the vision as laid out in the founding legislation under the leadership of Chair Gloria Lawlah.

The Commission held its first meeting on January 9, 2014. Commissioner Emily Oland Squires shared a brief historical overview of the national suffrage movement to establish a context for the meeting and the Commission itself. Individual members offered ideas of how best to address the charge set forth in the founding legislation including: creating an inventory of historic sites; promoting tourism; identifying and highlighting related facilities; planning and publicizing commemorative events; coordinating with federal and local organizations and receiving relevant testimony.
As a result of this first meeting, the following action items were completed:

- The Commission issued a press release announcing its formation, explaining its mission and calling for information and assistance. The press release called for assistance from local libraries, historical societies, women's organizations, and other interested parties throughout the state, to help compile the history and to actively participate in the commemoration of the passage of the 19th Amendment.

- Commissioners compiled a list of contacts to identify existing research on Maryland’s suffrage story, to create a pool of interested stakeholders/volunteers, and to issue invitations during event planning. Commissioner Oland Squires has begun to develop a data base that can reach the widest possible audience with its message.

- Responses to press release were collected and responded to by the Maryland State Archives. The Archives is keeping an ongoing data files for the offers of assistance and share information for use by the Commission.

The second meeting of the Commission was held on March 12, 2014 in recognition of Women’s History Month. During this meeting, the Commission formed Committees to best fulfill the goals of the legislation. The three Committees are: Event Planning led by Commissioner Hannah Byron, Historic Sites Inventory led by Commissioner Nancy Kurtz, and Communication/Coordination led by Commissioner A. Diane Williams. In addition, the following action items were completed as a result of the second full Commission meeting:

- The Commission created and published a website hosted by the Maryland State Archives to help communicate and publicize its efforts online (http://msa.maryland.gov/mdvotesforwomen/).

- Chair Gloria Lawlah created and Commissioner Dietra J. Lucas printed an informational brochure to introduce the Commission and its mission to the general public. These brochures will be handed out at Commission events.

- The Communication/Coordination Committee was tasked with organizing the Commission’s Kick-Off Event. This Committee, comprised of Chair Gloria Lawlah, Commissioner Ariana B. Kelly, Commissioner Katherine A. Klausmeier, Commissioner Dietra J. Lucas, Commissioner Emily Oland Squires, Commissioner Blair Burns Potter, Commissioner Kathleen White, and staff Ms. Irnande Altema, Ms. Tiaa Rutherford, Ms. Allison Seyler and led by Commissioner A. Diane Williams, met on April 22, 2014, May 6, 2014 and May 20, 2014 to complete this task.

Kick-Off Event - Overlea

On June 9, 2014, the Commission, with assistance from the Maryland Historical Trust and the Maryland State Highway Administration erected an Official Roadside Marker in Overlea (Baltimore County) to commemorate the historic women's suffrage march
through Maryland in February 1913. Commissioners Klausmeier and Kurtz led this project and were able to get approval for both the site and the text. The marker states:

**Women’s Suffrage**

*Before the 19th Amendment was passed in 1920, American women were not guaranteed the right to vote. The National American Woman Suffrage Association organized a large parade in Washington, DC, for March 3, 1913. On February 12, a group of women called “The Army of the Hudson” began marching from New York City to the capital. They were met by supporters at Overlea Town Hall on February 23. After a journey of 230 miles, they joined the parade of 8,000, bringing national attention to voting rights for women.*

*Maryland Historical Trust*

*Maryland State Highway Administration*

The goal of this event was to make more people aware of the Commission and the upcoming anniversary of Women's Suffrage. The Commissioners were on hand to greet the public and provide information and build excitement for the upcoming anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment. The event was publicized on the Commission’s website and by a formal press release to both the media and the Commission mailing list.

The marker, which was placed on the site of the Old Overlea Town Hall at 6908 Belair Road, was unveiled at the Kick-Off Event on June 9th amid great celebration. In addition to the 19th Amendment Commission, representatives from the Maryland Women’s Commission, the Maryland Women’s Heritage Center, the Maryland General Assembly, the Baltimore County Council, the Baltimore County Executive Office, and Vision 2020 were on hand to offer remarks of commemoration. The event was a success on all counts and an inspirational celebration of women’s rights.

In conclusion, the Commission, as it moves toward the 2020 centennial anniversary, has adopted the following agenda:

- Promote state-wide awareness and celebration of the 100th Anniversary of women's right to vote
- Develop sources of funding to support the work of the Commission
- Discover and share a roster of the individuals across Maryland that fought for women’s suffrage
- Discover and recognize the historic sites in Maryland that played a role in the suffrage movement
- Work with other local and national organizations to promote and celebrate women’s suffrage
- Inspire women to take expanded roles in the public sphere

The Commissioners are confident that their progress to date and their common vision is consistent with the founding legislation and respectfully submit this report for your review and approval.

*Sincerely,*

_Gloria Lawlah_  
Chair
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