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A mother's activism

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Today in 1920, women throughout the U.S. won the right to vote when the Tennessee legislature approved the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution (the last of 36 states then required to approve it). An amendment for universal suffrage was first introduced in Congress in 1878, and Wyoming had granted suffrage by state law by 1890.

This amendment to enfranchise all American women had been introduced annually for 41 years without passage; it had gotten two-thirds of both houses of Congress to approve it just the year before.

In the Tennessee House, 24-year-old Rep. Harry Burns surprised observers by casting the deciding vote for ratification. At the time of his vote, Burns had in his pocket a letter he had received from his mother urging him, "Don't forget to be a good boy" and "vote for suffrage."

Read more about the suffrage movement (and many other topics) at the Web site [This Week in Peace History](#)

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