



**Representative  
Lauren  
Matsumoto  
Serving You in District 45**

**Aloha friends and neighbors!**

This year marks the 100th anniversary of women winning the right to vote. August 26 is National Women's Equality Day where we get to celebrate the social, cultural, economic and political accomplishments and leadership of women both past and present.

Here in Hawai'i, I am proud to be a part of the Women's Legislative Caucus. We are a coalition of women legislators from both the Hawaii State Senate & House of Representatives. Established over 20 years ago to advocate bills on behalf of women in the state of Hawai'i. Our bills have included subjects such as human trafficking, health care, domestic abuse, and education. In addition to championing women through legislation, the members of the Women's Legislative Caucus work in our communities to benefit women in need and promote the interest of Hawai'i's women and improve the overall quality of life here in Hawaii. I have also been honored to be elected to the National Board of Women In Government, a non-partisan group of female legislators that work collaboratively across the country to address many pressing issues.

Beginning in the 1840's the women's suffrage movement began their crusade for political equality. 170 years of effort made by individuals and associations on both the state and national level through spirited protests and strategic campaigns resulted in a victory for women in the ratification of the 19th amendment on August 18, 1920. The 19th Amendment states, "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."

This victory is one of the most significant achievements of women in our history as a nation. Today women not only have the opportunity to vote for those in office, we also have the ability to run for office ourselves. If it wasn't for the women's suffrage movement, myself and many others would not have the privilege we do to serve in public office.

There are so many incredible women we can look to in our history as a nation whose hard work and dedication continue to influence our lives today. For example, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton held the first Women's Rights Convention in the US which took place in Seneca Falls, New York 1848. Elizabeth Cady Stanton presented "The Declaration of Sentiments" which was written to show parallels between women's suffrage and the founding fathers'

struggles against England in the Declaration of Independence. This document was signed by 68 women and 32 men and helped launch the women's suffrage movement.

Susan B. Anthony was also one of the most prominent figures of women's suffrage. She and Elizabeth Cady Stanton led the charge along with determined and courageous women to win equality in voting rights. They championed women's suffrage for over fifty years, never giving up the fight. While they both passed away before they were able to see their work pay off in the 19th amendment, their legacies benefit all American women to this day.

Another prominent figure was Alice Paul. Founder of the National Woman's Party. Paul led over one thousand women called "silent sentinels" in an eighteen month protest in front of the White House. They stood at the gates picketing with signs asking President Woodrow Wilson to act on behalf of American women. Paul organized a hunger strike which led to her arrest. Fortunately for the movement, her arrest and seven month imprisonment only served to fuel the passion of the picketers and garnered sympathy for her cause from the public. President Wilson took notice and by 1918 he announced his support of suffrage. Alice Paul played a vital role in the events which led to the ratification of the 19th amendment two years later in 1920.

I am proud to continue the legacy of the incredible women who have come before us, making a way not only for female legislators, but for all women in our state and nation to participate in voting. This August 26, 2020, let's celebrate all of the women in our lives and encourage them to continue making a difference by using their voice in honoring and productive ways that creates lasting change to benefit our communities.

As always, please don't hesitate to contact my office with any questions or concerns about happenings in our community. You can reach me at (808) 586-9490 or at [repmatsumoto@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repmatsumoto@capitol.hawaii.gov).