

MESSAGE FROM LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL

Here in New York State, we have a long-standing reputation to uphold. It's an enduring legacy of empowerment and equal rights that began nearly 170 years ago. And the voices of its champions echo today in the corridors of power around the globe. Voices of bold women who stood against the tides of their time.

This year marks the one hundredth anniversary of women's suffrage in New York State, which led the fight to get women the right to vote, setting the stage for future battles against workplace discrimination, to achieve pay equity and to preserve a woman's right to make decisions about her health care.

The first-ever women's rights convention, held in Seneca Falls, was organized by Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Sixty-nine years later, women in New York State won the right to vote. Three years after that, the Nineteenth Amendment was ratified, granting all women the right to vote as protected by the United States Constitution.

As chair of the New York State Women's Suffrage 100th Anniversary Commemoration Commission, I am proud to lead an effort to promote this anniversary through a series of statewide programs and events large and small and through this exhibit at the New York State Museum. We are celebrating the accomplishments of women and their contributions to our history and taking the message of women's equality across the state.

At the same time, as the state's highest-ranking elected woman, I hope we can inspire the next generation of young women who want to arise and achieve great things themselves.

In Congress, only 19 percent of our representatives are women. In the New York State Legislature, women are very proud to have moved up to 26 percent. But across the nation in local government, where many elected leaders get their start, only 13 percent of women are chief administrative officers like mayors, supervisors, or county executives. And that number hasn't moved since 1970.

We still have a long way to go, yes, but let's seize the opportunity we have in the coming years and join to lift and inspire the next generation of women leaders. One hundred years from now, when women in the future look back to 2017–2020, what are they going to say about us? What will

they be celebrating about the men and women in New York State from our era, and what are we doing to further the legacy of the courageous women on whose shoulders we now stand?

I hope you will join me and the other commission members at events in every corner of the state in the years ahead. Bring your friends and, most importantly, share these occasions with younger generations. Together, we can continue our progress forward and make our foremothers proud.

KATHY HOCHUL
Lieutenant Governor of the State of New York