



Building Democracy
EP #4 Womens' Suffrage
ADA Transcript
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SFX: SMALLISH CHAPEL ON HOT SUMMER DAY:
DOZENS OF WOMEN RHUBARB

MEGAN: In July 1848 in a sweltering Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls, New York roughly 300 people attended the first ever women's rights convention. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott and other prominent abolitionists and suffragists billed the meeting as "a convention to discuss the social, civil, and religious condition and rights of woman".

MARTHA: Women (although all white and mostly wealthy) gathered en mass for the first time to discuss their rights and roles as American citizens and resolved to demand their place as full-fledged citizens via a document titled the Declaration of Sentiments, cleverly modeled after the Declaration of Independence.

MEGAN: Initially the convention was intended to address women's civil rights as property owners and in regards to their children. The right to vote was not included. However, Cady Stanton, while editing the Declaration with her husband and lawyer, added suffrage to the list of demands. Henry Brewster

Stanton, along with many of his male peers, was not supportive of women's right to vote and warned her that it would, "turn the proceedings into a farce". She left it in.

SFX: EXTERIOR: SENECA FALLS
TOWN CENTER C. 1848: HORSES, PEOPLE,
OUTDOOR AMBIANCE

MARTHA: The convention got wide coverage in the newspapers: Some positive, such as the National Reformer reporting that the convention "forms an era in the progress of the age; it being the first convention of the kind ever held, and one whose influence shall not cease until woman is guaranteed all the rights now enjoyed by the other half of creation—Social, Civil and Political."

MEGAN: And some, like the coverage by the Oneida Whig, was quite negative, writing, "This bolt is the most shocking and unnatural incident ever recorded in the history of womanity. If our ladies will insist on voting and legislating, where, gentleman, will be our dinners and our elbows? Where our domestic firesides and the holes in our stockings?"

MARTHA: Over two days women spoke and deliberated. Frederick Douglass was the only African American in attendance to speak.

Along with a unified list of demands and the reasoning behind them, the Seneca Falls Convention provided

exposure and momentum for the women's suffrage movement. Momentum that would drive the movement well beyond the civil war, and for the next 100 years as women and their allies fought to expand civil rights.

MEGAN: Surprisingly though, it was not from the high society and wealthy states to the East that women's suffrage came to America first. But from the rough and tumble West! It was from pragmatic need and, in some cases, less high-minded motivations that women's right to political participation takes root in Western state legislatures. Holding the Nation to the promises of its founding ideals and. . . Building Democracy.

TITLES

SFX: ESTABLISH MOUNTAIN EAGLE SCREACH

SFX: FRONTIER CITY OUTDOORS, 1969 (a little more sparse on people than the above, but still horses, more outdoor white noise)

ANNOUNCER: *Building Democracy*, the Story of Legislatures. With Megan McClure and Martha Signs.

MARTHA: This is South Pass City, 1869, a rough and exposed mining town in the mountains of the Wyoming territory. The frontier of the frontier. Wyoming State Senator, Affie Ellis describes it for us. . .

ELLIS: “Wyoming and other neighboring states this was Indian country. So, when you think of this place in the 1860's, it was a home to a number of tribes. And in 1868, the United States entered into several treaties with an Indian nation. And as a nation, we were coming out of the Civil War and you saw many former Union and Confederate soldiers moving West. And at the time Denver, Colorado and South Pass City were both booming mining towns.”

SFX: SALOON

MEGAN: William Bright, a former Union Soldier from Virginia and his new wife, Julia find their way to the South Pass gold rush by way of Salt Lake City. Leveraging his influence and social standing as a saloon keeper in a town nearly the size of the capitol, Cheyenne. William is quickly elected as a Democrat to the Council. The Council in the territorial legislature was equivalent to the Senate or upper chamber while the lower was called as it is today, the House of Representatives.

MARTHA: Actually, all 22 of the legislative seats were won by Democrats, much to the dismay of the Republican governor appointed by President Grant. Bright is then selected as the president of the upper house and then as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention that year.

MEGAN: His role as the president of the counsel meant he had tremendous control over which bills made it to the floor to be debated and voted on. When the Wyoming

Territorial Legislature met for their first session in October of 1869 laws were quickly passed guaranteeing equal pay for teachers regardless of sex and guaranteeing property rights to married women who were separated from their husbands. The lawmakers began to entertain the idea of a bill granting women's right to vote and hold office.

MARTHA: It has been suggested that Julia Bright, more than 10 years William's junior may have influenced her husband to advocate for the expansion of women's rights in the territory. She had volunteered in the suffrage movement back in Washington D.C.

ELLIS: “Unfortunately no record was kept of what Wyoming lawmakers actually said when they were debating the bills. But what we know we can glean from newspaper articles and other documents from the time. There was a widespread belief that William Bright's wife Julia was a strong supporter of the suffrage movement and that she was successfully the person who encouraged her husband to champion the bill. And in Wyoming, historians really debate kind of, some of these motives. And there's a lot of talk about a woman named Esther Hobart Morris who was a suffragist at the time. Morris has a fascinating history.”

MEGAN: Seeking to settle her husband's estate in Illinois after his death, Morris encountered significant barriers to women's ability to exercise their rights as citizens and landholders. Eventually, she remarried, and she and her

new family moved to South Pass City with the gold rush.

MARTHA: It can be surmised that she and Julia Bright socialized together being two of the few women in the town of approximately 5,000, mostly men, working in the mines. It is speculated, not without controversy, that the two managed to convince William Bright to put the suffrage bill up for a vote.

MEGAN: More than likely it was a combination of pressure from these influential women, racist motivations to suppress black American's from voting, and the belief that it would never actually pass that led to the legislation's success.

MARTHA: The road to universal women's suffrage was not only long, but largely split, often times by racial tensions brought on by the 14th and 15th Amendment, abolishing slavery and enfranchising black men.

NCSL's own Donna Wilson shares more on this.

[MUSIC: FC BBCPM90 10_Dark Glasses Instrumental Harms 1242755 up under](#)

DONNA: The civil war era and the 14th and 15th amendments created divides for women. Two organizations formed representing competing strategies of how women could win the right to vote.

The National Woman Suffrage Association was led by popular suffragists, Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton who

ensured their narrative and legacy was tattooed into American history books. Anthony and Stanton were opposed to the 15th Amendment and believed that women (particularly white, educated women) should have the vote before black men.

And the other was the American Woman Suffrage Association. Led by Lucy Stone and Julia Ward Howe.

The two organizations would later unite, in 1890 when Stone and Stanton's daughters formed the National American Woman Suffrage Association. Segregation and the alignment of race and gender equity continued to bear opposing views and values.

Although black women were members of both, they were often silenced at state-by-state conventions.

In 1896, prominent black abolitionists and suffragists, Mary Church Terrell, Ida B. Wells, Frances Ellen Harper and Harriet Tubman formed the National Association of Colored Women.

Even at the famous 1913 march in Washington D.C., black women were asked to participate and support from the back. Some agreed, while others, such as Ida B. Wells did not, joining her fellow white activists to represent the Illinois delegation.

After the 19th Amendment was ratified, women and men of color continued to encounter disenfranchisement strategies such as poll taxes, understanding clauses and violence when trying to exercise their right to vote, an issue that wasn't addressed until four decades later in 1965 with the Voting Rights Act.

MUSIC: OUT

MEGAN: Thanks Donna. So it's no surprise that race and racism provided some support for white women's enfranchisement at the time.

ELLIS: "The motivations of these territorial legislators were likely very mixed and we can only speculate what their intentions were but it's likely that some of these legislators wanted to attract more women to the territory of Wyoming. Some legislators likely wanted to strengthen vote for Democrats. They were worried about Black Americans being allowed to vote and voting for Republicans and thought, "Hey if we let women vote, maybe we can bolster our numbers as well." But I think most importantly, and if you look at some of the historic documents at the time, there were some legislators who simply thought it was the right thing to do. And so the Democratic-led legislature passed a bill and likely assumed that the Republican appointed Governor Campbell would veto the bill. But to their surprise he didn't. The bill became law on December 10th, 1869 making Wyoming the first place to secure women's suffrage without repeal."

MARTHA: Very shortly thereafter Esther Hobart Morris was appointed as Justice of the Peace. With no official legal training, she became the first woman to serve as a judge in the United States. While her time in the role was limited, none of her decisions were overturned on appeal

ELLIS: "In her papers, she talked about wishing that she was better qualified to serve. And I'm guessing that she was

alluding to the fact that she hadn't gone to law school and had that formal legal training. But I really admire that she took that step up because even today I think that's a relevant conversation about some of the barriers women express of wanting to run for office, is that feeling of not feeling qualified enough or not knowledgeable enough about a subject.”

MEGAN: The precedent set by Esther’s appointment and service was a first for many women in The Territory, the Nation and the World. Wyoming women also began to serve on juries, the first female bailiff served in court and Louisa Swaine of Laramie became the first woman to vote in a presidential election.

MARTHA: While the legislature attempted to repeal the suffrage law the next year, Governor Campbell vetoed. The House managed to get the vote of two thirds of the chamber to override the veto. However, the Council fell short by one vote and the law remained in force.

SFX: EARLY CHURCH CHOIR: SOMETHING THAT MIGHT PLAY IN AN EARLY MORMON CHURCH

MEGAN: Around the same time as the Seneca Falls convention and not too far away a new group of believers began to gather around a man named Joseph Smith. This new Church of Latter Day Saints, with practices and beliefs seen as unorthodox were unwelcome in their wider communities.

CLARK: “In Missouri, there was actually an extermination order signed by the Governor there legalizing the killing of anyone who was a member of the church.”

MARTHA: That’s Rebekah Clark, a historian with Better Days 2020, an organization dedicated to popularizing Utah women’s history.

In 1846 after the assassination of Smith, a group of approximately 1,600 Latter Day Saints crossed the Mississippi River and went west to land that still belonged to Mexico.

MEGAN: In just a few years, the area where this religious minority settled became the Utah Territory. While the territory was predominantly home to Latter Day Saints, the new designation as an American Territory and the recent extension of the transcontinental railroad into the area, caused fear that their freedom to practice their religion, not to mention their lives, would be threatened once again.

CLARK: “Right from the start women's voting rights were inextricably linked with the controversial practice of plural marriage or polygamy in early Utah.”

MARTHA: This concern for preserving their religious freedom sets apart Utah women’s fight to have their political rights recognized and only a couple months after Wyoming’s victory.

CLARK: “Polygamy at the time was seen as one of the twin relics of barbarism. Is how the platform of the

Republican Party put it. And so it was kind of linked with slavery and so as soon as the Civil War was ended, there was a shift of focus on to eradicating polygamy.”

MEGAN: Latter Day Saints practiced polygamy at the time, and it was argued that this led to the oppression and degradation of the women in these plural marriages.

MARTHA: It was the drive to preserve their religious freedom against the influx of outsiders brought by the railroad - and congress’s attempts to ban plural marriage that created an alliance among the male Mormon leadership and the women fighting for suffrage.

SFX ANOTHER LARGE INDOOR MEETING, C. 1870, MANY WOMEN’S VOICES RHUBARBING

MEGAN: On January 13, 1870 between 5 and 6 thousand Latter Day Saint suffragists congregated in the Salt Lake City tabernacle for the [Great Indignation Meeting](#). Railing against legislation in congress and calling on the territorial legislature to grant women the right to vote.

CLARK: They were protesting against proposed Federal anti-polygamy legislation and in the process of that they proved that they were intelligent and articulate and that they were going to defend their civil, political, and religious rights. During one of those meetings they also passed a resolution to demand the right of franchise or the right to vote. And then it was just a few weeks later on February 10th in 1870 that the all-male

Utah Territorial Legislature unanimously passed a law that granted equal voting rights to female citizens in Utah territory. It was signed into law on February 12th and two days later on Valentine's Day, Utah held its first municipal election under that law and 25 women made history that day as they cast their ballots.

MARTHA: Congress and some national suffragists felt that recognizing women's right to vote in Utah Territory would lead to the downfall of polygamy. It was assumed that Mormon women when given the choice would side against the practice of plural marriage.

MEGAN: However, their assumptions did not play out how they imagined.

MARTHA: Women like Emmeline B. Wells a staunch supporter of women's rights, writer, intellectual, and newspaper editor, argued that "the world says polygamy makes women inferior to men -- we think differently. Polygamy gives women more time for thought, for mental culture, more freedom of action, a broader field of labor..."

MEGAN: The fact that women's suffrage didn't have the effect congress had wished led Utah women to have to fight for their political enfranchisement not once, but twice.

MARTHA: In 1887 after 17 years of women voting in Utah congress rescinded the legislation granting them their right.

CLARK: It was part of the most stringent Federal anti-polygamy legislation that was passed, The Edmunds Tucker Act. And this applied to all women in Utah, all of the citizens whether they were members of the Mormon church or not, whether they were married or not, whether they were polygamous or monogamous, it applied to everyone.

MEGAN: Women in Utah were galvanized. They continued to fight for their rights both locally and on the national scene. Their tenacity paid off when Utah wrote their constitution and sought statehood in 1895. Though it was seen as a risk that could possibly cost Utah their bid. Men like B.H. Roberts, a delegate to the constitutional convention, argued that women should wait until Utah was a state to fight for the vote.

MARTHA: However, Roberts was in the minority.

Franklin F. Richards, husband of local suffragist, Emily Richards, argued that

RICHARDS: “If the price of statehood is the disfranchisement of one-half of the people; if our wives and mothers, our sisters and daughters, are to be accounted either unworthy or incapacitated to exercise the rights and privileges of citizenship,”

MARTHA: Then he was content remaining a territory until

RICHARDS: “all can stand side by side on the broad platform of human equality, of equal rights, and of equal capacity.”

MEGAN: The grassroots efforts of Utah's politically savvy suffragists, along with a visit from the renowned Susan B. Anthony and the support of the church ensured that women's suffrage **and** the right to hold office was included in the State's Constitution when it was ratified in 1895.

MARTHA: Enter Martha Hughes Cannon

CLARK: or Maddie as she was often called. She was a medical doctor, a polygamous wife, and the first female state senator in the nation. So, she's this fascinating example of the complex and often paradoxical lives of many Utah suffragists. She earned four degrees by the time she was 25, at a time when women rarely went to college. And in 1884, during the height of the National Anti-polygamy Movement, she secretly married a prominent Latter Day Saint church leader Angus M Cannon.

MEGAN: As the fourth of his six wives, she fled in exile to Ireland with her newborn daughter. For more than a year she went underground. Her mere presence would have incriminated her husband and her role as a doctor meant she could have been compelled to testify against her patients and their families.

MARTHA: Upon her return to Utah, Cannon became a force to be reckoned with. She put one of her degrees in oration to good use, eloquently advocating for the return of the right to vote. And after the new

constitution granted that right once again, she became the first to register.

CLARK: And I love that, I can just imagine her eagerness to get there and register as soon as possible.

MEGAN: Her enthusiasm continued into the next year. In 1896, Martha ran for one of 5 open state senate seats. Notable, not only as one of the first and few women to run for office, she ran against her own husband, Angus, who ran as a Republican while Martha was on the Democratic ticket.

MARTHA: And she won! Becoming the first female state senator in the nation.

MEGAN: Cannon's service in the senate was not just for show. She and an ally in the Utah House, Alice Merrill Horne resolved to help each other accomplish their goals.

CLARK: As they were trying to achieve success on the bills that they were proposing, once those bills were under debate Martha and Alice scattered yellow daffodils all across the desk of each male state senator. Yellow flowers were a symbol of the suffrage movement. And they really symbolize the influence that those women wielded among the female voters, it was a very clear reminder that they had the votes of the women behind them, and they needed to be taken seriously on those issues.

MARTHA: These two lawmakers worked to improve the lives of their fellow Utahns. Alice by

establishing a state art collection and art institute and Martha by legislating the Utah board of health and instituting infectious disease regulations to name just a few of their accomplishments.

SFX: COLORADO 1893: PEOPLE GATHERED FOR OUTDOOR MEETING

MEGAN: Now we cross back over the Rocky Mountains to Colorado in 1893. Suffragists had sought to have women's enfranchisement included in the constitution when the territory became a state in 1876. However, the convention felt that it's inclusion would be a detriment to the constitution's congressional approval and endanger Colorado's chances of becoming a state.

MARTHA: As a consolation, and maybe a bit of a patronizing pat on the head, the men of the constitutional convention allowed women to vote in school elections, and promised that women would get their chance for full enfranchisement via popular referendum in 1877.

MEGAN: Susan B. Anthony, Lucy Stone and other national suffragists barnstormed the state, along with local influential women and men, they reached the remotest mountain towns to make their case for the referendum. Even with all their best efforts, the referendum was defeated by almost two to one.

MARTHA: But they didn't give up. They spent the next 16 years continuing to build grassroots support and proved their political effectiveness and ability to organize.

MEGAN: Then, an economic downturn hit. Congress had switched from silver to the gold standard and then removed subsidies. The price of silver plummeted along with wages and jobs dwindled.

MARTHA: The entire economy of Colorado was based on mining. Silver was one of the main ores being pulled from the Rockies. Hundreds of unemployed men ended up on the streets in Denver and the mining towns across the state.

MEGAN: Suffragists capitalized on this downturn and a favorable political climate. Colorado Representative Meg Froelich explains. . .

FROELICH: In Colorado, our moment in history in 1893 was a confluence of events based on the silver crisis, which created a terrible economic depression. The already existing Progressive Movement, which was sort of an anti-East Coast, anti-banking, anti-corporation movement, which of course then spoke directly to the economic crisis. The movement came very much out of organizing and ally-ship, and of course it was a popular referendum.

MARTHA: The savvy suffragists allied themselves with mining and other labor unions who wrote letters of

support for a second referendum. They also hit the streets. Capitalizing on the perception that women would “clean up” the corrupt politics that had led to the current situation.

FROELICH: These men were literally camped out in camps where the women who wanted these men to vote yes on the referendum vote, campaigned and they went with blankets, cup of soup, perhaps you know a little bit of bread and a pamphlet that said, "You're in the situation because of corrupt politics and vote for women to get the right to vote and we will clean this up."

MEGAN: And it works! Representative J.T. Heath of Montrose County had the referendum drafted and the General Assembly voted to add it to the ballot. Local suffragists wrote about it for papers, prominent and affluent women gave office and campaign space, not to mention their influence to the cause.

MARTHA: All their hard work resulted in the referendum passing with a 6,000 vote margin! The majority of men in the state voted to recognize women’s right to enfranchisement. Making Colorado the first state to pass women’s suffrage via popular referendum.

MEGAN: And that wasn’t the only first for Colorado.

FROELICH: And then in 1894, right after the first election in which women had the right to vote,

Colorado elected three women to the legislature and when those three women took office, they were the first three women as far as we can tell, in a parliamentary body in the world.

MARTHA: So, 2 years before Martha Hughes Cannon was elected to the Utah Senate, Clara Cressingham, Carrie Holly and Francis Clock, all republicans, were elected to the Colorado House. Causing change in many aspects of how the legislature worked and how business was conducted.

MEGAN: Decorum was a concern, hats were worn on the floor, smoking was allowed, would gloves be necessary? The previously all-male body had spittoons, and of all things, lobbyists were allowed on the floor during session!

MARTHA: All of this changed when women entered the chamber. No more smoking or spittoons and lobbyists were out. As outdated as it sounds to us now, women really were cleaning things up.

MEGAN: Not only did chamber etiquette change but as women exercised their right to vote and hold office, the legislation changed too. Issues important to women and their daily lives began to be discussed and legislated.

FROELICH: We do start see at the turn of the century and on into the early 1900's focus on, for example there was a laundry girl law in 1912 that talked

about safety and hours and those were girls, principally, working in these laundries for long hours in actually quite dangerous circumstances, Similarly, there was a hand housemaids union, domestic workers rights bill passed in 1917.

MARTHA: Agnes Riddle was a 2-term Colorado senator from 1910-1914 who denounced legislation being proposed to lock-down women sex-workers in the red-light district.

FROELICH: She got up and said, very dramatically I think, you know, "Why shut the Gates of Hell on the girls and not the men who visit them," and sort of looked at her male colleagues. One account says that she said to them you know, "who among you would not be locked in," The only person ending up voting for that was the bill sponsor, so she changed minds. The next day her desk was covered in roses and I think that's in recognition from her male colleagues that she offered a viewpoint that was completely foreign to them. And so that's one woman in one chamber one time, and that repeats out over and over again, but it is a ripple. It's a pebble in the pond, and we don't really start to see real waves until we get a lot more women elected later in the 20th century.

MARTHA: And those waves continue. Today women are running and being elected in ever greater numbers. Just a couple of weeks ago, we saw more chambers than ever (for the first time) increase their representation of women lawmakers. In the Colorado

and New Mexico House women are the majority, not to mention Nevada, where women are the majority in both chambers. Half of Rhode Island's Senators and Oregon's Representatives are now women.

Nationally, women make up roughly 30 percent of the representation in state legislatures, a number that we've seen tick up over the last 10 years.

MEGAN: As we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th amendment in 1920 we also celebrate the 150th anniversary of Wyoming and Utah women's enfranchisement and the 127th anniversary for Colorado along with the other strides made in Western states and territories during this time. Paving the way for the 19th Amendment.

EPILOGUE:

MARTHA: Across the country, women began using religious groups to organize suffrage movements. The Women's Christian Temperance Union is often said to have been the gold key in unlocking the right to vote.

But let's go back a bit to how we got here...

MEGAN: Suffragists worked to pass a bill allowing Tennessee women to vote in municipal and presidential elections. On April 14, 1919, the measure passed. This effort would provide a lot of political clout down the road when it came time to ratify the 19th amendment.

MARTHA: In a rare, unified effort, white and black suffragists quickly began working across the state to register women to vote.

Catherine Kenny, a prominent Tennessee suffragist worked with Dr. Mattie Coleman, the first black woman physician in Tennessee and Juno Frankie Pierce who opened the first vocational school for African American girls to organize voter registration drives. Coleman and Pierce registered over 2,500 black women to vote in the state.

MEGAN: By March 1920, 35 states had ratified the 19th Amendment. At the time for an amendment to be made to the U.S. The Constitution 36 state legislatures needed to ratify the proposed change. There was only one state where hope for a special session remained. Until now, Tennessee Governor Albert Roberts had resisted pressure to call a special session, fearing that if the women won the right to vote they would not re-elect the democratic governor.

MARTHA: In a savvy political move, Governor Roberts told suffragists that he would call a special session after the early August primaries if the women of Tennessee voted for him as the Democratic candidate. The voter registration efforts paid off and the women of Tennessee helped Governor Roberts secure his spot for the general election giving him confidence that they would come through once again in a few months.

MEGAN: On August 9, 1920, Governor Roberts called the legislature to a special session that would consider the ratification of the 19th Amendment, putting Tennessee in the spotlight and possibly changing the course of history for women in the U.S.

MARTHA: Which brings us back here, to the floor of the Tennessee House, commemorating the results of that special session....

[CLIP: SPEAKER ASKS TO TAKE THE CHAMBER BACK TO 1920](#)

MEGAN: There's something you don't see every day. The Tennessee General Assembly- by unanimous consent- travelling back in time to 1920.

MARTHA: Diverse lawmakers, seated at their desks both women and men, people of varying race and ethnicity all playing the parts of Tennessee representatives of 100 years ago. Some wear the pro-suffrage yellow roses in their lapels, their anti-suffrage adversaries wearing red roses. A lot has changed since Representative Harry Burn, the youngest ever elected to the TN House, cast his tie-breaking vote, spurred by the words and advice of his mother to ratify the 19th amendment.

[CLIP: BURN'S REASONING](#)

MEGAN: Lawmakers, historians, actors and spectators gather in the Gallery and House Chamber of the Tennessee General Assembly. Some dressed in suffragette white, all donning masks sitting behind newly erected plexiglass partitions, they take us back in

time, to an era just recovering from a pandemic, to re-enact a vote that would make history.

MARTHA: TN Woman 100 is celebrating the ratification of the 19th Amendment recognizing women's right to vote, 100 years later.

MEGAN: 2020 is an important year in the history of American Representative Democracy. The year that marks the centennial commemoration of a massive expansion of civil rights and participation in America.

And while we have only told the story of a few states in this episode, many more have their own tales of political maneuvering and stalwart determination of women to exercise their rights as citizens. Check out our bonus interview with scholars Lori Lahlum and Molly Rozum to hear more details and about what happened in other states.

MARTHA: The story of women's suffrage in America does not start or end with the 19th Amendment. The struggle to legislate suffrage nationally and eventually amend the constitution is widely known and told when speaking of the history of women's rights, and yet, momentous events in the American West are overlooked. While their sisters fought in the salons, houses of worship and halls of government in the urban "civilized" East, women strode ahead helping to form government in the rough and yet malleable West.

MEGAN: 50 years before the pivotal vote taken in Tennessee, Wyoming women won their rights to vote and hold office. Falling the first domino in a women's rights movement that would sweep the country.

Broadening the possibilities of most American women .
. .and Building Democracy.

OUTRO

ANNOUNCER: *Building Democracy: The Story of Legislatures* is created by the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Your hosts are Megan McClure and Martha Signs.

Thanks to today's guests Wyoming State Senator, Affie Ellis, Colorado Representative Meg Froelich, and Rebekah Clark of Better Days 2020, and Mike Tennant and Nina Pollock of Podfly for production and editing. Thank you to NCSL's Donna Wilson for lending her voice and guidance.

How did state legislatures evolve to meet the demands of the 20th century? That's on our next episode. Watch for it this winter.

Building Democracy is recorded at the hastily crafted home studios in Denver, Colorado.