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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 406

Offered February 27, 1998

*Commemorating the 150th anniversary of the first Women's Rights Convention.*

Patrons—Keating, Almand, Barlow, Baskerville, Bennett, Brink, Christian, Councill, Cranwell, Crittenden, Croshaw, Darner, Davies, Day, Diamonstein, Drake, Hall, Hull, Johnson, Jones, D.C., Jones, J.C., McEachin, McQuigg, Melvin, Moran, Murphy, Plum, Puller, Rhodes, Scott, Sherwood, Spruill, Thomas, Van Landingham, Van Yahres, Watts and Woodrum

WHEREAS, on the afternoon of July 13, 1848, five women met for tea in upstate New York and shortly thereafter bravely announced the world's first Women's Rights Convention, to be held on July 19 and 20, 1848, in Seneca Falls, New York; and

WHEREAS, that first convention, held in the hometown of women's rights pioneer Elizabeth Cady Stanton, attracted more than 300 people, 40 men among them; and

WHEREAS, these courageous pioneers drafted a Declaration of Sentiments, based on the Declaration of Independence, which was itself only 72 years old at the time; and

WHEREAS, the Declaration of Sentiments listed 18 areas of life in which women's rights were denied in the America of the mid-nineteenth century, and by the end of the convention 100 people had signed their names to the new declaration; and

WHEREAS, all of the resolutions in the Declaration of Sentiments passed unanimously, save one: the call for women's right to vote, which had to wait another 72 years before becoming reality; and

WHEREAS, out of that convention of 1848 in the small town of Seneca Falls was born the women's rights movement, which persists to this day in its efforts to win full equality for women; and

WHEREAS, in the 150 years since the first Women's Rights Convention, women have made significant progress in all fields of endeavor, evident in America's legislatures, professions, board rooms, workplaces, and playing fields; and

WHEREAS, such immense progress notwithstanding, substantial barriers to the full equality of America's women remain as the 20th century comes to a close; and

WHEREAS, successfully meeting the challenges of the 21st century requires the full participation of all of America's men and women, and remembering the courage and foresight of those 300 pioneers who met in Seneca Falls 150 years ago is an appropriate place to start; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commemorate the 150th anniversary of the first Women's Rights Convention; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the General Assembly urge the citizens of Virginia to mark the sesquicentennial of this landmark event by rededicating themselves to the goals and ideals expressed in the Declaration of Sentiments approved by that first convention.

INTRODUCED

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