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## Women's Equality Day, 1984

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

On August 26, 1920, the 19th Amendment, which guarantees women the right to vote, became part of the Constitution, the supreme law of our land. By that measure, women became equal partners with men in the responsibilities of citizenship.

The contributions of American women to free government in the United States date back to the Colonial Era. The importance of those contributions has been recognized by writers such as the French historian Alexis de Tocqueville, who attributed the success of the American experiment in self-government largely to the extraordinary qualities of our Nation's women.

In democracies, government is founded on popular consent, expressed through the process of free elections. Indeed, the absence of free and fair elections is a crucial element by which we define regimes that are not democratic. By exercising the right to vote, American women and citizens of other free countries continue to affirm their faith in self-government.

The 19th Amendment gives women the same political means as men have to participate in the process of self-government. On this 64th anniversary of its ratification, we honor the pioneer suffragettes, and we applaud today's women who are pioneering in fields new to women and men alike. Most importantly, we reaffirm our national commitment to the goal of equal opportunity for each individual to pursue and to achieve her or his goals.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim August 26, 1984, as Women's Equality Day. I call upon all Americans and friends of popular government around the world to mark this occasion with appropriate observances.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 16th day of August, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and ninth.

*Ronald Reagan*