Once a Trailblazer of Women’s Voting Rights, Tennessee Now Trails Nation in Women’s Political Representation

August 18 marks the 99th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment. The date is an important civic milestone in America’s history, but especially here in Tennessee, which was the final and decisive state to vote in favor of the amendment’s adoption, providing millions of women across the country access to the ballot box for the very first time.

Today, Tennessee women outnumber men in both voter registration and turnout. But this power in the voting booth does not translate to power in elected office: Women in Tennessee hold far fewer seats in legislative, judicial and executive offices than in most other states.

### Women in the Electorate

- **54%** of 2018 registered voters in Tennessee were women
- **53%** of 2018 voters in Tennessee were women

### Women in Political Leadership

- **24%** of all elected officials in Tennessee are women

We are one of two states with a decline in women legislators, and one of nine states with a decline in the number of women candidates in recent years.

### How does Tennessee stack up?

- **46th** in the % of women in the state legislature: **16%**
- **48th** in the % of women in the state courts: **22%**
- One of **20** states that has yet to elect a female governor


5 For the sake of consistency, rankings have been standardized so that low numbers always reflect positive outcomes. In other words, being ranked 1st is always preferential to being ranked 50th. The national average in the percentage of women legislators is 29%. Nevada has the highest percentage with 52% and Mississippi has the lowest percentage with 14%. Source: National Conference of State Legislatures. (2019, July). Women in State Legislatures for 2019. Retrieved from http://www.ncsl.org/legislators-staff/legislators/womens-legislative-network/women-in-state-legislatures-for-2019.aspx.
