

HOUSE No. 409.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, April 20, 1888.

The Committee on Woman Suffrage, to whom was referred the portion of the Governor's Address relating to woman suffrage, the petition of the Massachusetts Woman's Christian Temperance Union for the enactment of a law giving to women qualified to vote for members of the school committee in any city or town the right to vote in all town and municipal elections, the petition of Theodore D. Weld and others for the enactment of a law enabling women to vote in all town and municipal elections, and who were ordered to enquire into the expediency of granting female citizens the right to vote in all city or town elections and to hold city or town offices, report the accompanying Bill.

For the Committee,

DANIEL L. MILLIKEN.

Mr. SLATTERY, of the Senate, and Mr. CARMAN of Fall River, of the House, dissenting.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighty-eight.

AN ACT

Giving to Female Citizens the Right to vote in City or Town Elections and Meetings, and to hold City or Town Offices.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Every female citizen of twenty-
2 one years of age and upwards (except paupers,
3 persons under guardianship and persons excluded
4 by article twenty of the amendments to the con-
5 stitution), who has resided within the state one
6 year, and within the city or town in which she
7 claims a right to vote six months next preceding
8 any election of city or town officers, and who has
9 paid, by herself, her parent, master, guardian or
10 trustee, a state, county, city or town tax as-
11 sessed upon her in this state within two years
12 next preceding such election, shall have a right to

13 vote in such election and in all city or town elec-
14 tions, or meetings in such city or town, upon all
15 matters and questions, as if she were a qualified
16 male citizen therein: *provided*, that nothing herein
17 shall entitle any female citizen to vote in any elec-
18 tion of county or state officers, of representatives
19 to congress, or of electors of president and vice-
20 president.

1 SECT. 2. Every female citizen qualified under
2 the provisions of the preceding section to vote in
3 elections of city or town officers in any city or
4 town, may hold any city or town office therein to
5 which she may be elected or appointed; but
6 nothing herein shall be construed to disqualify
7 any woman now qualified to hold any city or town
8 office.

1 SECT. 3. In the months of May and June of
2 each year, the assessors or assistant assessors of
3 taxes shall visit each dwelling-house or building
4 in their respective cities or towns, and make a
5 true list of all women who, personally or in writ-
6 ing, express to an assessor or assistant assessor a
7 desire to be assessed for a poll tax, together with
8 their occupation and age, as near as may be, and
9 residence on the first day of May of the preceding
10 year, and shall also furnish the original list or a
11 certified copy thereof to the registrars of voters
12 of their respective cities and towns, from time to
13 time, before the fifteenth day of July ensuing;
14 and all assessors and collectors of taxes shall fur-

15 nish any information in their possession necessary
16 to aid the registrars and assistant registrars in
17 the discharge of their respective duties.

1 SECT. 4. Any woman, who is a citizen of this
2 Commonwealth, may, on or before the fifteenth
3 day of September in any year, give notice in writ-
4 ing, accompanied by satisfactory evidence, to the
5 assessors of a city or town, that she was, on the
6 first day of May of that year, an inhabitant thereof
7 and entitled to pay a poll tax, and furnish under
8 oath a true list of her estate, both real and per-
9 sonal, not exempt from taxation; and she shall
10 thereupon be assessed for her poll, not exceeding
11 fifty cents, and for her estate, and the assessors
12 shall, on or before the first day of October,
13 return her name to the registrars of voters, or
14 board charged with the preparation of the list of
15 voters of the city or town, in the list of the per-
16 sons so assessed. The taxes so assessed shall be
17 entered in the tax list of the collector of the city
18 or town, and he shall collect and pay over the
19 same in the manner specified in his warrant.

1 SECT. 5. If any woman who will become
2 twenty-one years of age before the election of
3 city or town officers next ensuing shall make ap-
4 plication to the registrars for registration, in
5 order to entitle her to vote at such election, she
6 shall be examined under oath and admitted to
7 registration: *provided*, the registrars shall be sat-
8 isfied that she will be of age before such election,

9 and that she has the other qualifications required
10 by section one of this act, and is the identical
11 person she professes to be.

1 SECT. 6. The names of women may be placed
2 upon a separate list ; and when the name of any
3 woman has been placed upon the list of voters of
4 a city or town, it shall remain on the list so long
5 as she continues to reside in such city or town,
6 and has paid any state, county, city or town tax
7 that has been assessed on her or her trustee in
8 this state within two years next preceding any
9 election.

1 SECT. 7. All laws in relation to the registra-
2 tion and polling of male voters, applicable to the
3 registration and polling of females voters and not
4 inconsistent herewith, shall apply to female citi-
5 zens claiming to exercise the right to vote hereby
6 conferred.

1 SECT. 8. Section one of chapter two hundred
2 and ninety-eight of the acts of the year eighteen
3 hundred and eighty-four is amended by striking
4 out all after the word "elections," in the seven-
5 teenth line of said section, and by inserting after
6 said word the words "and no other male person
7 shall have such right to vote;" and section one
8 of chapter sixty-nine of the acts of the year
9 eighteen hundred and eighty-six is amended by
10 striking out after the word "therein," in the
11 fifteenth line of said section, the words "and of

12 all women who personally or in writing express
13 to an assessor or assistant assessor a desire to
14 be assessed for a poll tax.”

1 SECT. 9. Sections four, twelve and twenty-
2 eight of chapter two hundred and ninety-eight of
3 the acts of the year eighteen hundred and eighty-
4 four, section two of chapter sixty-nine of the acts
5 of the year eighteen hundred and eighty-six, and
6 all acts and parts of acts inconsistent herewith,
7 are repealed.

