STATE OF NEW YORK

6109

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

March 5, 2025

Introduced by Sen. PARKER -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation

AN ACT to amend the parks, recreation and historic preservation law, in relation to creating the "Women's rights history trail" program

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. The parks, recreation and historic preservation law is amended by adding a new article 42 to read as follows:

ARTICLE 42

WOMEN'S RIGHTS HISTORY TRAIL PROGRAM

Section 42.01 Legislative intent.
42.03 Definitions.
42.05 General functions, powers and duties of the commissioner.

§ 42.01 Legislative intent. The legislature recognizes that the women's rights movement is one of the three great protest traditions in United States history, sharing that status with the struggle for racial equality and the labor movements.

The legislature further recognizes that the women's rights movement has a strong tradition in the state. In the nineteenth century the state was at the cutting edge of the women's rights movement. On July 19, 1848, a group of activists including Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott and Mary Ann M'Clintock, convened the first Women's Rights Convention at Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls. During the convention, 68 women and 32 men signed the Declaration of Sentiments calling for a broad array of rights for women, including suffrage. In 1868, Susan B. Anthony helped to found the American Equal Rights Association. In 1890, under her leadership and the leadership of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) was formed. NAWSA was instrumental in securing passage of the 19th amendment, which amended the Constitution to give women the right to vote. The 19th

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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amendment was passed by Congress on June 4, 1919, and was ratified on August 18, 1920. Susan B. Anthony also campaigned for the rights of women to own property, to keep their own earnings, and to have custody of their children. In 1900, she persuaded the University of Rochester to admit women. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the women's movement expanded to play a critical role in shaping policies on education, legal reform, and economic and social welfare. The legislature recognizes that there are many notable women in the state who fought for women's suffrage. It is therefore the intent of this legislature to have created a program that will systematically identify properties and sites for inclusion into a women's rights history trail. By creating a women's rights history trail, the state will encourage the education about and awareness of the important role of women in the state in the women's rights movement and their contribution to history as well as attract visitors to the state and enhance the state's tourism trade. Further it is the intent of the legislature to ensure that the women's rights history trail is adequately signed so that travelers may follow the trail independently and with ease.

§ 42.03 Definitions. As used in this article the following definitions shall apply:

1. "Women's rights history trail" shall mean a series of properties and sites identified by the commissioner, which may be linked by geographic proximity and alignment and thematic and historical association with women's rights.

2. "Women's rights history passport" shall mean a booklet or other publication that names and describes the properties and sites identified by the commissioner and included on the women's rights history trail, and may include discounts and other incentives related to visiting the properties and sites on the women's rights history trail.

§ 42.05 General functions, powers and duties of the commissioner. 1. The commissioner shall develop and implement the "women's rights history trail" program. Such program shall promote education and awareness of the struggle for women's rights throughout history. The commissioner, in conjunction with the commissioner of transportation, and any other properties or sites as identified by the commissioner and any local government official or entity, shall identify properties and sites that are historically and thematically associated with the struggle for women's rights and women's suffrage to be part of the trail.

2. The women's rights history trail shall include, but shall not be limited to, properties and sites which tell the story of the seventy-two-year fight for women's suffrage. These properties and sites shall include the Women's National Historical Park, the Susan B. Anthony birthplace, the Elizabeth Cady Stanton Houses in Washington county and Seneca Falls, sites associated with Elizabeth Cady Stanton in Johnstown, Woodlawn Cemetery, sites associated with Carrie Chapman Catt, the Gerrit and Ann Smith House, the Matilda Joslyn Gage House, the Harriet May Mills House, the Harriet Tubman Home, the Stone Store Museum, the Seward House, sites associated with the Seneca Falls women's rights convention, the First Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls, the Ontario County Courthouse, the 1816 Farmington Quaker Meetinghouse, the Susan B. Anthony House in Rochester, the Susan B. Anthony childhood home in Washington county, the Alice Austen Home in the borough of Staten Island, Barnard College in the borough of Manhattan, the Michigan Street Baptist Church in Buffalo, sites associated with Grandma Moses in Easton, and any other properties or sites as identified by the commissioner. The commissioner

shall develop the women's rights history trail so that it is relatively simple and easy to follow for patrons.

3. The commissioner shall cause to produce and disseminate appropriate educational materials regarding the trail route, such as handbooks, maps, exhibits, signs, interpretive guides and electronic information.

4. The commissioner shall cause to be developed vacation itineraries based on the women's rights history trail, which shall identify for visitors surrounding attractions, restaurants, farms, lodging and other exhibits or places of entertainment as may be a part of the historical theme linking the properties and sites on the women's rights history trail.

5. The commissioner shall work to develop discount packages for such women's rights history trail, which may include the development of a women's rights history trail passport. Nothing shall preclude the commissioner from contracting with an independent vacation or travel package company to help develop vacation packages along the women's rights history trail.

6. The commissioner of transportation shall cooperate with the office in carrying out the provisions of this section. The commissioner of transportation is authorized to permit the installation and maintenance of signs on the state highway system for trails designated pursuant to this section. However, to avoid confusion and to limit any possible disruption of commerce, the trail designation called for pursuant to this section shall be of a ceremonial nature and the official names of such highways shall not be changed as a result of such designations.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.