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STANDARD LETTER

THE OFFICIALS IN CHARGE ARE ADVISED THAT YOU WILL BE

1626 Rhode Island Ave.,
Washington, D. C.,
March 7, 1918.

Hon. Woodrow Wilson,
The White House,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. President:

The Texas Equal Suffrage Association of 16,000 members requests me to present to you a matter which, in their view, has an important bearing upon winning the war.

This matter is the prompt enactment of a primary suffrage statute which would give Texas women the power to vote in the July primaries.

Under the constitution of Texas women can be made qualified electors for general elections only by constitutional amendment, but it is well recognized that by the passage of a statute they may be given the right to vote in primary elections, and as all important political question in Texas are substantially determined by primary elections, such a statute would go far toward giving them equal potential political rights with male citizens. As you know, in the state of Arkansas, where similar political conditions exist, the Arkansas legislature has already conferred the right to vote in primary elections upon women by statute.

The legislature of Texas - which is more progressive than usual - is now assembled in special session and undoubtedly will consider amendments to its election laws, and an effort is now being made to procure the enactment of a statute permitting women to vote in primary elections. This session closes in less than three weeks. Your well known views on the subject of equal suffrage and your effective help given to other states lead us to believe that an expression from you favorable to such a primary suffrage measure would be a big help in securing its enactment, and we earnestly hope that you can see your way clear to give such an expression.

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Hon. Woodrow Wilson -2

3-7-18.

An unofficial poll of the Texas legislature gives us a safe majority in both houses, but Governor Hobby has not yet said he will submit the bill. Since he is an avowed suffragist, a word from you to him or to us would be all powerful at this juncture.

Our impeached governor, who has followers and money, is in Austin attempting to control the state through a compact of the brewery and alien vote. Every sixth man in Texas is an alien, and votes on "first papers." Being white, he votes in the Democratic primaries, and is a greater menace than the negro, who has no part in the choice of candidates.

As the primary suffrage bill would go into effect at once, the white loyal educated Southern women would vote in the July primaries and offset disloyal and disintegrating forces.

Mr. President, our educational suffrage work in some districts of the state leads us to believe that the danger is a deeper one than our people know, and we feel that the addition to the electorate of Texas of a body of patriotic homogeneous women is the best way to save a bad situation.

The women of Texas have not spared themselves in war work, and have done all they could and can to comfort our soldiers and sailors and their dependents. They are self-sacrificing and enthusiastic in supporting the Administration in its splendid conduct of the war.

State and Nation need their votes as never before, and immediate provision can be made so they may give the utmost expression of this loyalty in the nomination of candidates for senators and representatives in Congress, and for state and local officials in Texas in this year of national peril.

We expect to get full suffrage through the Federal Suffrage Amendment. We believe we will have easy ratification, but the Federal Amendment has been so delayed that it might be too late to relieve our present local need, and we believe the very greatest service we can render our nation and our state is to gain the vote in the July primaries.

The suffragists in Texas are hoping that you will help us.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs Elizabeth H Potter

Third Vice-President.

EHP-LA

Also Chairman of Fed Suff Amendment Com.

