



Nellie M. Gorbea  
Secretary of State

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*Made available through the Rhode Island State Archives*

## **Petition for women's suffrage, 1867**

*Elizabeth Buffum Chace submitted the first petition for women's suffrage to Rhode Island's General Assembly in 1867. It would more than 50 years for women to fully gain the right to vote, but this petition was an important step for women's suffrage in Rhode Island.*

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To the Honorable the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island

We, the undersigned, women of Rhode Island, would respectfully represent, that, being law abiding citizens of said State, we are denied the elective franchise, solely on account of our sex; that we are taxed without our consent, and compelled to obey laws, in the making of which we have no voice; that, by the theory of our Government, "Taxation without representation is tyranny," and that "Governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed." We, therefore, respectfully petition your Hon. Body to take such steps as may be necessary, to so amend the Constitution of this State, as to secure to the women the exercise of the elective franchise, and thus make the theory and the practice of the Government harmonious.

March 6-1867

Elizabeth B. Chace, Valley Falls

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*This primary source comes from the Rhode Island State Archives, C#0869 – Petitions to the General Assembly, March 1867.*

*This transcript is intended to capture the substance of the document.  
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