

Progressive Era Reforms

Jane Addams establishes Hull House (1890) – Jane Addams was a leader in the settlement house movement. Settlement houses were community centers located in urban slums that provided important services for poor immigrants. These services included English language classes, childcare, libraries, performances, and the cooking of meals.

New York Tenement Reform Law (1901) – Established sanitation and health codes for apartment buildings in New York.

Initiative, Referendum, Recall -The “Initiative” gave voters the authority to propose laws, “referenda” to vote on laws, and the “recall” allows voters to remove officials before their term of office is up.

Teddy Roosevelt Mediates the Anthracite Coal Strike (1902): In the early fall of 1902, workers in the Anthracite Coal Mines of West Virginia struck for higher wages. Fearing that people would be without coal in the winter, President Roosevelt ordered Union leaders and owners of the Mines to the White House where he intended to mediate the dispute. When the owners refused to enter negotiations, TR threatened to send in troops to work in the mines. This was enough to get the owners to the bargaining table. As a result of his mediation efforts, mine workers received a 10% raise and a reduction in hours.

Northern Securities Case (1904) – For the first time, the federal government successfully used the Sherman Anti-trust act to break up a Railroad monopoly. President Teddy Roosevelt would go on to break up 40 trusts during his presidency, earning the nickname “Trustbuster.”

Pure Food and Drug Act (1906) –Required proper labeling of foods

Meat Inspection Act (1906) – Provided for inspection of meat packing plants by the U.S. Department of Agriculture

Oregon and New York Labor Reforms) - Oregon passed legislation limiting the time woman laundry workers could work to 10 hrs. per day, six days per week. After the Triangle Shirtwaist factory fire in 1911, New York passed a series of laws to improve safety conditions in factories

Seventeenth Amendment (1913) – People now directly elect their United States Senators (rather than being chosen by state legislatures).

Clayton Anti-Trust Act (1914) – Strengthened Anti-trust laws. Prohibited specific practices such as contract tying and interlocking directorates. Also said anti-trust laws could not be used against labor unions.

Keating-Owen Act (1916): This law prohibited the use of children under the age of 14 in the manufacture of any product that was sold across state lines. The law was declared unconstitutional in the case Hammer v. Dagenhart.