

ERA

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YES

YES

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**The Equal Rights Amendment is much more than a symbol. It is a bread-and-butter issue. It means dollars and cents for women.**

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**Without the ERA, women will not have constitutional or economic equality in this century.**

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**Without the ERA, women will continue to earn only 59¢ for every dollar earned by men.**

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**The Equal Rights Amendment holds the answer for many families, headed by women, who now live in poverty—and for families with two full-time wage earners who earn only one-and-a-half incomes simply because of sex discrimination.**



### **The Need for the Equal Rights Amendment**

We need the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to establish a national policy that sex discrimination will not be tolerated.

Current laws to prevent sex discrimination are simply not doing the job. These laws:

- are full of loopholes
- are subject to change
- are not comprehensive

Women need the Equal Rights Amendment as part of our Constitution—the supreme law of the land—to fight discrimination based on sex.

- Women who work outside the home need the ERA for better pay and more opportunities.
- Women who are full-time homemakers need the ERA for full economic security through elimination of sex discrimination in Social Security, pension plans, property rights, and credit.
- Girls and women need the ERA to guarantee that education—a chief determinant of each person's economic life—is not discriminatory on the basis of sex.

### **Equal Pay and Equal Opportunity Do Not Exist**

Women continue to be denied equal pay and equal opportunity on the basis of sex alone. In 1978 the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights published a report which showed that *even when occupation, age, education, and time worked are taken into account:*

- Women still earn less than 60% of what men earn

- Minority women earn less than half of what men earn
- Women with college degrees earn less than men who did not complete high school
- Women earn less today (as compared to men) than they did over twenty years ago

The same report showed that full-time homemakers have the least economic and legal protection of all.

- Homemakers' labor is not recognized as having economic value.
- Homemakers suffer economic discrimination during marriage, as well as after—whether the marriage ends by death or divorce—in Social Security, pensions, and credit.

The report clearly showed that without the ERA—despite laws prohibiting sex discrimination in education—opportunities for girls in educational programs and institutions are still not what they are for boys.

- Girls still are steered away from mathematics, science, and the training needed for the better paying fields currently dominated—solely on the basis of sex discrimination—by men.

### **The Future of Millions Is Being Decided Now**

If the Equal Rights Amendment is not ratified now, a whole generation of American girls will grow up unequal, limited in their options, penalized for being born female.

What you do now will affect the lives of generations of girls and women. Progress toward equality will not only stop—it will go backwards.

- The most recent Gallup Poll shows that Americans approve of the ERA by 58-31 percent, nearly two-to-one!
- A recent Harris Poll shows a 55-38 percent support for ERA.
- Polls conducted in unratified states show that citizens of those states support ERA, even though their state legislatures have not yet approved ratification.

A few legislators in three states are blocking equal rights for women, but it's not because you and a majority of your fellow-citizens oppose the Amendment.

Please don't let your silence cause another generation of sex discrimination.

Don't let equal rights be won without you—don't let them be lost because of you.

### What You Can Do:

Whether you live in a state that has already ratified the ERA or in one of the fifteen unratified states, you can help by joining NOW's national campaign to ratify the ERA. Remember, we all live in an unratified nation. Equal rights will not become the law of the land until three more states ratify it.

What you do today could very well determine the difference tomorrow between winning and losing the ERA nationally—the difference between equal tomorrows for all of us or generations of inequality.

To find out ways in which you can help win ratification nationwide, contact your local or state NOW chapter or:

#### **NOW National Action Center**

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## The Equal Rights Amendment

(complete text)

*Section 1.* Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

*Section 2.* The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

*Section 3.* This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification.



#### **National Organization for Women**

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