



WHY THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT IS IMPORTANT

Stories from Americans living abroad

ABSTRACT

Even Americans living outside the United States believe that we need to add the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Despite living abroad, we still care and vote in the last U.S. state where we resided.

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Why the Equal Rights Amendment is Important

Stories from Americans living Abroad

Overview

We are submitting these accounts in support of the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. They have been written by Americans currently living outside of the United States, by men and women of all ages and from all walks of life. Many now reside in countries where equal rights are explicitly granted to all human beings regardless of sex. The stories reflect on the way that the absence of an Equal Rights Amendment has impacted their authors personally and, in many cases, has affected or even changed the way they regard their country of origin and its standing in the world.

Our hope is that these stories will demonstrate the human side of why the United States needs an Equal Rights Amendment. Submitted by active and engaged US citizens, they nevertheless frame the ERA as a matter of human rights rather than a political football or a single issue among others.

We consider it a non-partisan, humanitarian vote to support SJRes 1 and hope to live to see this long-overdue amendment to the U.S. Constitution become a reality.

Alaska

We've come so far and yet...

Catherine--lives in France and votes in Alaska

My great aunt and her sister, my grandmother, both graduated from Smith College in the 1920s. The former became a legal secretary who worked for Ohio Senator Atlee Pomerene in Washington DC and was active in numerous associations. The latter became an electrical engineer with General Electric. My mother graduated from Northwestern Nursing School and ended up building a homestead cabin singlehandedly with my dad, a structural engineer. We never talked about politics or ERA. I sincerely look forward to the day my daughter and my grand-daughter will reap the benefits of ERA!

Arizona

For my children's future

Kenzie, Arizona voter living in London



I've recently gotten engaged, and it's made me think a lot about the kind of world that I want my children to grow up in. My mom was younger than I am now when the fight for the ERA began - I don't want my children fighting the same battles! I want them to grow up in a country where their rights are enshrined in the constitution, regardless of their gender.

Before I die

Diane, Arizona voter



Born in 1947, I grew up being told I could not be the president, or a doctor, or a race car driver. The only options for smart girls were teacher, nurse, or secretary - none of which I wanted to be. I was told not to raise my hand so much in class because I couldn't let the boys know I was smarter than them. At job interviews I was sexually harassed and propositioned. I became a lawyer. In 1973 my divorced sister and chief breadwinner could not get a credit card without her divorced no good husband or her father signing on. She refused. We could not own land, keep our own wages or names, or even our own children.

The ERA is long overdue. I have been working on it for 50 years and plan to see it passed for the future before I die.

Arkansas

#ERANow

George Anna Clark, Arkansan, US-Mexican dual citizen residing in Mexico



Back in 1975 I read about Title IX in WomenSports magazine and then shared it with a friend whose love of basketball equaled mine. We were inspired to petition our local school board to provide an interscholastic basketball program for girls. Success did not guarantee a life happy-ever-after, but I sure didn't expect this year's women's Sweet Sixteen basketball teams being provided with one dumbbell set and some yoga mats and being fed what looked to me like the worst from junior high cafeteria... Such a slap in the face of these amazing athletes. So far to go, still..smh.

Glass Ceilings

Diane, Germany resident / Arkansas voter

We need the ERA to guarantee protection of women's rights because we are still underrepresented in the government, as well as many other fields that still have glass ceilings.

California

Too many generations of women in my family have died without seeing the ERA passed

Marnie Delaney/ Living in France/Vote in California



Having been a political activist beginning in the 60's I have gotten used to "hurry up and wait" experiences and have heard many specious arguments . However, the absolutely baseless arguments against the ERA and the painfully long battle they have engendered is , as the expression goes, getting on "my last nerve". I quit my job to work on the ERA campaign full time after the deadline was extended to June 30, 1982. I worked in Washington and travelled to the three targeted, unratified states and lobbied, helped organize events and supported NOW's leader Eleanor Smeal in her efforts to coordinate the fight against, ignorance and disinformation, the insurance industry and other business interests and against misogynistic and/or successfully lobbied legislators. I saw and heard things which ruined forever my blind admiration for "public servants" which

several members of my family had created by actually delivering service to the public in their elected positions. The legislatures in Oklahoma, Florida and Illinois didn't ratify and on June 30 I joined with many other men and women across the street from the White House, in shock and mourning.

My grandparents, parents, sisters, all of my family struggled to understand why something so fair, reasonable, and highly popular was so difficult to achieve. I still struggle 39 years later. Once again, the ERA not only makes sense but is absolutely necessary to protect women against the regressive actions of an unprincipled group of leaders in the Republican Senate who have forced their members into similarly unprincipled obstructionism. The right decision would be to do whatever is necessary to get this done. The archivist should be signing, Congress should be overturning an unnecessary and unusual deadline and finally women should be written into the Constitution. The vast majority of people want this to happen. Most of the rest aren't paying attention or are misinformed or are involved with a business which profits from discriminating against women. If this doesn't happen, I can only say with confidence that the rising tide of women with political, social and economic power will use it to replace those who have fought against women's rights and opportunities.

When I think of my grandmothers and my mother, I am very aware of how their opportunities were limited. When I think of myself and my sisters, I think of the many battles we had to fight , law by law, to even approach a playing field, never mind a level one. My nieces and my nephews' daughters will not accept what we put up with. They won't fight over and over again for the same crumbs. They will demand and, I assure you they will get what we have always deserved and nothing less. Check the numbers, boys, and do the math. What you've been doing isn't smart, isn't popular, and isn't in the public good. So, let's try something different, shall we?

The Equal Rights Act is long overdue - now is the time!

Martha, a California voter living in the Netherlands



The ERA was a hot topic when I was in high school in the 1970s. One of my friends claimed that the ERA would give men the right to use women's bathrooms. Women would be at risk. Where did my friend get this? At church. A scare tactic to drum up opposition to equal rights for all. Some things never change: we're hearing the same fear mongering today to justify laws that bar transgender people from using the bathroom that corresponds with their gender identity. Equality is about improving lives. It's nothing to be afraid of. The best way to protect girls and women is to guarantee us equal rights under the US Constitution.

This inequality makes me feel ashamed to be an American

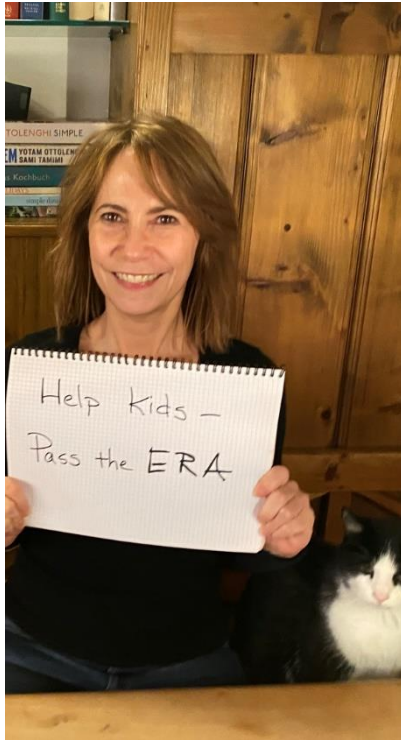
Bob Gould - UK resident, voting in CA



During the past 100 years American women have been trying to gain assurance that the Constitution assures them the same rights as men. The fear of American men to legalize equality for women has been blocking this amendment from being passed. The fact that this inequality still exists in the richest Democratic country in the world, and not in 88% of the countries, makes me feel ashamed to be an American. Women and men would gain significantly from passing the ERA. We all must dedicate ourselves to this fight until equality is enshrined in our Constitution.

All Women Deserve Equal Rights — Especially Single Mothers

Tanya Lolonis Residing in Austria, voting in California



Why is the ERA important to me? Well, in America, nearly 60% of poor children are living in single-mother families. I'm married, and my children have never experienced poverty. But I can't say that for too many kids in America. I've lived in western Europe for nearly 3 decades, and other countries take steps to keep most children out of poverty. America does not, and one reason has to do with the gender pay gap. When the Equal Pay Act was passed during the Kennedy Administration, women earned 59 cents for every dollar earned by men. The gender gap has persisted — it's nearly 60 years later, and women now earn 75 cents for every dollar earned by men, and lower if the woman is non-white. Many of these women are mothers, and this pay gap contributes to impoverishing their children. An Equal Rights Amendment will give working mothers the legal recourse to end this practice. Rights eclipse legislation, because while politicians can change laws with a majority vote, they cannot change rights. Passing the ERA won't change practices overnight, but women can begin the process of establishing symmetry in the workforce. It's important to me to end child poverty and giving working mothers the legal standing to demand fair wages is one tool to fix that.

Now is the Time--Equal Rights for Women is a Human Right

Heidi, lives in Canada and votes in California



As a woman who was born in 1965, it is incredible to me that the Equal Right Amendment is still not in the Constitution! I've had the luxury of standing on the shoulders of the women in the generations before me to have access to the same educational opportunities as my brothers, to go to university and law school, and to have a career as an attorney. And as a married woman with children, I have the peace of mind of knowing that I am in control of my own destiny and those of my children, and not dependent, either legally or financially, solely on my partner. All women in the US must be assured of these same rights! It is a travesty that it has taken so long for this basic right to be recognized and for there to be any further delay in adding the ERA to the Constitution.

A moral marker for who we are

Jesse, Lives in Germany, votes in California



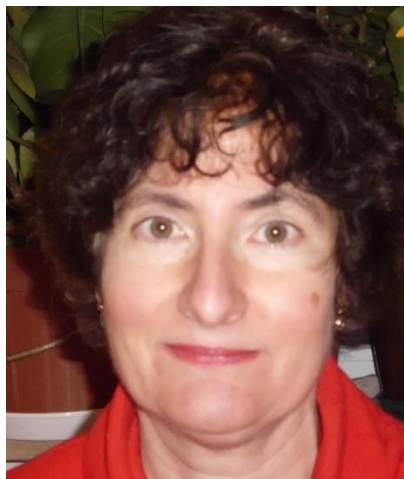
Growing up as the son of a single mom, I can recall a number of moments when she openly and publicly challenged what she perceived to be unjustified inequality in how she was treated based on the mere fact that she was a woman. These ranged from manifest restrictions in certain religious contexts to more systematic gaps in society at large. I don't know if she meant it to be so overt, but these are some of the earliest moral lessons she passed on to her son. Looking back and reflecting on how she and I have grown since then, I can say that she showed me that equality for women is a powerful issue that transcends political boundaries.

As a man, I believe that we need the Equal Rights Amendment because we it is clear to me that the steps the US has taken to ensure that American women are legally equal to men are far from enough. It is not enough that women are able to vote (enshrined in the 19th Amendment). (This kind of thinking was first taken up first at local and state levels before it became part of the Constitution. The early examples set by Wyoming and Utah towards equal voting rights for women show that this issue is one that cuts across political boundaries.) It is not enough that the private sector tries, in its own way, to correct for these problems. We need to take this issue up at the highest level: the Constitution. Our Constitution is our moral core. Amendments to it are aspirational markers for who we are and what we want to be as a country. Some of them may appear to be technicalities, or merely define terms in a previously undefined space. Other amendments have a more obvious moral aspect to them. The Bill of Rights, for instance, and the amendments passed in the wake of the Civil War, as well as the 19th Amendment, make our moral backbone most clearly visible. But we are not there yet.

A man with any moral sense and honesty can see this gap. He should acknowledge our moral blind spot, and those in positions of power should understand their power to make a difference. The fact that our Constitution is open to amendment is a recognition that it is incomplete. America changes, and with it so should our Constitution. For my mother, my wife, and my daughters, I want to see the ERA become the next amendment. I want it for all American women who are limited in ways that I can see, and especially for the ways that I don't, or can't. Please do your part to lay down a moral marker that says that equality of rights under law shall not be denied or abridged anywhere in the US on account of sex.

High Time for Equality! Half of all Americans has been waiting for centuries!!

Patricia, Live in Germany, Vote in California



I was shocked to read that men of any race were constitutionally given the vote over 50 years before women of any race could hope to exercise this fundamental democratic right. In 1867 the 15th Amendment, stated that voting rights could not be "denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." whereas these rights were still denied to all women till 1920. My mother told me "There will be a black man as president long before we have a woman president" Women still earn considerably less than men for the same job in countries all over the world. It is embarrassing and indeed shameful for me as an American to have to explain why American women - even now in the

21st century - still do not have equal rights. How can a country which should stand for "liberty and justice for all" still deny half of its citizens equality? And rank behind a dozen other countries in equal rights? I have to ask what happened to our ideals and which century we are living in! Let us pass the ERA and finally grant American rights to all Americans!

"With liberty and justice for all"

Beverly, I live in France but vote in California



Because I have worked in schools most of my life, I have heard that phrase in the Pledge of Allegiance almost every day. Each time I have thought about the ERA. It was important to me in the 70s and my country failed me. It is just as important now. You, the Senate, have the opportunity to show me there have been some real changes. Women and girls need to know we are included. We need to hear it explicitly because we have heard and seen the opposite for so long. It's time to show us that our country values us enough to have our equality specifically included in the Constitution. If the Senate does not approve the removal of

the deadline, it will be a clear message that we are not entitled to the same rights and protections that men and boys are granted. Your vote will show how you feel about us. I need the ERA so I will be able to say "with liberty and justice for all" and believe it.

The ERA is Above Party Politics

Jennifer Rakow-Stepper, votes in California, lives in Vienna

I grew up in Northern California in a divided and polarised household. Politics were the regular side dish and both Republicans and Democrats were at the table. I know I don't see this issue as my mother did or as my great aunts did. Regardless of their politics, they

understood how important it was to pass the ERA. But growing up, I took it for granted. Growing up around strong, assertive, working women, I thought the ERA was a done deal. I couldn't have been more wrong. Now, breaching sixty years old, I finally understand what my great aunt meant when she often repeated, like a mantra, that. "Women must have their own money". Women of that generation were denied a bank account, a credit card, their own livelihood because they were not protected under the law. It's high time women were. Please vote to finally ratify the Equal Rights Amendment.

[It is about time! We need ERA now!](#)

Onélica, CA voter living in Belgium



I went to all girls college for my Master's degree in 2012. I did not understand why there were still all girls colleges! But my time in the college taught me the value of having such institutions, where women are at the center, surrounded by women and constantly inspired and encouraged by other women. I left the college empowered and with the conviction that I could achieve anything! But reality at the work place made me very aware that I was not equal to my male co-

workers and achieving my goals was going to be harder.

Much has changed in the past decades and there has been progress in guaranteeing women's rights, but it is not enough. We are still paid less, we hold fewer high and managerial positions than men in the public and private sectors, pregnancy leave is seen as a privilege instead of a right, and the list goes on. We continue to be discriminated against! We need equality engrained in our Constitutions. ERA won't be the end of the road, but it will provide a permanent protection against laws that discriminate on the basis of gender. ERA will be a powerful tool to set a consistent approach to addressing the many ways gender is covered by state and federal laws.

[Fighting for the Right to Follow our Dreams!](#)

Ann, residing in Germany and voting in California



As a young college student, I had two passions: politics and music. While I was trying to decide whether to follow in the footsteps of my beloved uncle who travelled the world as a diplomat representing our country, or to travel the world as an opera singer instead, I was blown away by the negative input I received from family, friends, and even advisors at my university. I soon realized that while both of these paths would be challenging, one path would be full of roadblocks that had nothing to do with my ability. Roadblocks put into place by the patriarchy. My uncle encouraged me and was prepared to mentor me but also warned that it would be a

constant, life-long battle against traditional norms. Although women were already breaking barriers and fighting their way into the all the traditional bastions of male power, it was, and still is, a difficult path. He asked me, "are you a fighter?" It became clear to me that as a

coloratura soprano, I would never be passed over simply because of my gender. No man would ever be able to do my job. I may or may not get a particular role, but I would be judged on my talent, not my gender. And I would never have to be “a fighter.”

I took what I believed to be the smoother path but soon ran up against a less visible, but pervasive roadblock. Patriarchy took the form of powerful stage directors, conductors, tenors and booking agents. Pay scales were unbelievably gender-biased and had to be negotiated, fought for. I learned about sexual harassment and that, as a woman, I would finally have to learn to fight.

Adding 24 words to our constitution that proclaim a woman’s fundamental equality to her brothers won’t immediately remove every patriarchal roadblock, but it will help towards clearing the path and give women a powerful legal weapon to aid in the fight. There is no law that says a young woman can’t dream of pursuing any career she’s passionate about, but there is also no law affirming her right to do so. Passing the ERA would go a long way to making the dreams of generations of young women a reality.

Unheralded Bravery

Dr. Ariadne Lucia Schulz, UK Resident, California voter



I am the first person in my family to earn a PhD. My mother wanted to attend my graduation more than she wanted to attend my wedding. She herself never even finished her baccalaureate. She had dreamed first of being an astronaut and wrote NASA as a little girl to ask what she should do to prepare. They wrote back that she should instead find a husband. Then she dreamed of being a nurse, but had to suspend her studies when my father – a refugee with his own unlikely American story – received a job offer in another state. My mom eventually built up her career culminating in a position at the Pentagon where she called on her experience as a paralegal and as an IRB coordinator to write

regulations for medical research, but while she lived to see my doctoral research completed she passed away before I was able to graduate. My mother died of pancreatic cancer at 62 years of age. This is a cancer increasingly linked to biological stress factors including extreme psychological stress. While there may have been additional factors contributing to my mother’s death I do believe that had ERA been incorporated into the constitution in 1972 – or more appropriately in 1787 – my mother might have had a longer and happier life. When I was a small girl she warned me that I should never find myself lashed to some man and growing up I increasingly understood why.

The stories from my father’s side of the family were epic and heroic. My great-grandfather had defied the Nazis to help procure paperwork for and release prisoners headed to death camps. My grandfather had stood in defiance of both Nazis and the KGB and for his efforts was tortured and twice narrowly escaped execution. My grandparents escaped with my father by putting him in my grandmother’s bicycle basket and side by side bicycling over a minefield to freedom.

But the stories on my mother's side of the family were hushed and told with a sense of shame. My grandmother had raised two children on her own telling anyone who made assumptions that their father was deceased. My grandmother's sister-in-law recognizing what her brother was doing to his family packed him up and forced him into a treatment program. My great aunt found out that she and my grandmother were being underpaid relative to their male colleagues and – unsuccessfully – demanded fair wages. My great-grandmother worked out an arrangement with another grandmother in the neighborhood to split childrearing duties so that their daughters could continue to work. This quiet feminine resilient bravery runs through my mother's family history. There was no machine gun fire over their heads or glowering fascists and sneering torturers. There was no midnight flight or the desperate need to master a foreign language for survival. There was just a constant drip of unsupported and disrespected self-reliance. My grandfather's illness was not the fault of his sister or my grandmother or my mother but all of them were nonetheless blamed for it. And yet they persisted.

In my own life although I belong to the nebulous millennial generation I have experienced obscene and dangerous levels of sexism. Crimes – particularly hate crimes – against women are not taken seriously. Simply for supporting a friend who had been attacked in high school I faced disciplinary action. She faced far worse. I have often been the only woman in the room and often subjected to threats of violence, overt harassment in various forms, extreme bullying, and – of course – actual violence. Now with a PhD in hand I face a new form of discrimination. Never mind that I had to clean up after male colleagues and was not given the supervision they were. Never mind that they spoke over me at meetings and were given preference for use of equipment I had written the proposals and gotten the money to purchase. No, even now as the first person male or female in my family to receive a doctorate degree many Americans insist I should use Ms. rather than Dr. as my title. They insist despite my years of research, hard work, enduring ridiculous indignities, being overlooked for funding largely on the basis of my sex, and putting my health on the line for my research I'm being "uppity," or "elitist," for daring to use the title I earned which my mother desperately wanted for me. Because ERA is not passed I have spent my youth being shown to the back of the line and I will never catch up.

I do want ERA for the generations behind me and for any daughters I may have. I don't want future generations to grow up the way I did. Or the way my mother did. Or the way my grandmother did. I want their humanity acknowledged. I want their rights acknowledged. I want their bravery celebrated. But I also want ERA for myself. And I will be selfish. I demand my humanity.

Equal Rights for women does not mean less rights for men

Sasha, I live in Germany and vote in CA



Throughout history the important roles of women have been downplayed, altered or left out entirely. Until 50 years ago, women could not own property, open a bank account or get a driver's license in their own name and/or without the permission of their father or husband. Fifty years is not a long time ago, and still women are not seen as equals under law in the US. Other countries have already taken the necessary step of granting men and women as equal under law. After World War II, Germany drew up new laws and made women equal to men. Our direct neighbor, Canada, needed quite a bit longer, but also gave women the same rights as men in 1981. It's unbelievable that a country heralding personal liberties such as the US has still not ratified this amendment. My grandmother graduated from high school as valedictorian. She was then told to get

married, not go to university. Nowadays girls are encouraged to study, yet they have to deal with gender biased hiring practices (we can't hire you, you're in child-bearing age), gender biased pay difference (men have to feed their families), glass ceilings, etc. I want my daughter to grow up with the possibility of becoming anything she desires. To be hired and paid based on her talent, effort and diligence. In the name of all our female ancestors who were not deemed equal, and for all our daughters entering the workforce tomorrow, I say it is high time for the ERA!

Colorado

It's that simple. And long overdue!

Pegi, I live in Germany, vote in Colorado



“Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.” Pretty simple. As a young girl and teenager, I remember how excited my mom, friends and I were about the ERA. NOW and Martha Griffiths were actively making progress in our name! It seemed inevitable and the right thing that the ERA would be passed and ratified. Decades later it still has yet to be fully ratified. Honestly that feels horrible and is a betrayal of all Americans, keeping over half the population down, limiting them in fully blossoming into all they can and want to be. How can that be good for the health and strength of a country? That was also the era when my mom, as many other women, signed and was known as “Mrs. Willard Jones”. Luckily that has ended (I

think even in Austria). We all have the right to a personal identity as well as equal opportunities and options. It is long overdue that the basic human and civil rights are guaranteed for all. Adding the ERA as an amendment is an important part of that. I know it is what my mother, Betty, would be thrilled about and proudly boast, “we finally did it!” We = USA. I live in Germany, vote in Colorado.

My mom was and still is my inspiration

My name is Christine Moritz, I vote in Colorado and live in Germany and Egypt



My mom, Vera Moritz, was and still is my inspiration for being a strong, politically active woman and fighter of the ratification of The Equal Rights Amendment. She was a patron and advocate of Planned Parenthood, worked tirelessly for the success of Title IX, and was a life-long campaigning Democrat and social activist. Thank you, Mom! She would be astounded that in 2021, we are still fighting for ratification. My mom also had a healthy disdain for, “that woman”, conservative activist Phyllis Schlafly and would turn her head whenever she was on tv. (Mom did the same for Reagan, and the Bushes) Schlafly, who led the STOP ERA campaign, was convinced that the amendment would lead to gender-neutral bathrooms, same-sex marriage, and women in military combat, among other things. Well, Phyllis,

these things and more have arrived without the ERA in place. So, your side has lost on those fronts. The time is long overdue for ratification of the ERA, and for women to occupy seats in all levels of our government and business, and to take our rightful places in the decision-making of society. We are the majority of the population, we are the guardians of

the future generations, we are the heartbeat of the planet. We the People, need Constitutionally guaranteed protection for gender equity within all realms of society and recourse for the unfair laws and regulations that are interpreted against our best interests because we are women.

WHAT IF the ERA had passed in 1923?

Jamie M, Colorado voter residing in Edinburgh, Scotland



When I was a little girl, the first hobby I picked up was Tawkwon-do. I was good. The boys in my dojo didn't like practicing against a girl who could rack up points on them without effort. I vividly remember my first district competition. I beat 6 boys, some taller and older than me. As I look back at pictures on that day, my hand held high by the referee, I was shy about my wins in the moment but super proud of my trophies once home safe with family. After a year of training, my mom told me one day that I needed to keep up my practice as I got older. She told me the reason she signed me up was so I would know how to protect myself. It was at that point I viewed the entire sport differently. I lost my passion to simply enjoy the rhythm of the moves, the confidence and passion from yelling my kais drained. I saw it as a chore, something I must do to fend off the world.

In my freshman year as a veterinary medicine university student I was surrounded by brilliant minds, taught by male professors with egos to match their booming voices. That shyness crept up again as I quietly watched the young men, full of confidence, match their professors wit and wisdom. It was a camaraderie I couldn't relate to at all. Half way through the term, I had a meeting with the professor. He asked me what type of medicine I wanted to practice. I told him "large, farm animal". His response, "You're too small to be successful. Those farm animals will knock you into next week." I changed my major to Elementary Education in the Spring.

My 4th year teaching, my colleague started planning for a family and shared her news with our team about the difficulties. She was attempting to time her pregnancy so the baby would be born in the summer. She wanted to spend more than 6 weeks with her newborn. This was for financial reasons but also because she wanted to breastfeed as long as possible. Single and carefree, it never crossed my mind to consider any of this. The whole conversation all seemed a little off but I didn't dwell on it.

All these moments in my life happened without the Equal Rights Amendment. If Congress decided in 1923, when the ERA was first proposed, to amend the Constitution and include women as equals, I wonder how would that have impacted my childhood, my college experience, my career, my family? If the ERA had been ratified 97 years ago, I would like to think that gender equality would have changed America so by the time I was born my mom would have simply encouraged Taekwon-do because I enjoyed it. Maybe that professor would have viewed my potential based on my mind instead of physical size. Perhaps

teachers wouldn't need to plan their pregnancy around the school calendar. Ratifying the ERA means more than granting women equality under law. It is a statement to the world that America views women as equals. We must ratify the ERA now or this moment might be lost for another 97 years. As Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg once explained, "I would like my granddaughters when they pick up the U.S. Constitution to see that ... women and men are persons of equal stature. I'd like them to see that that is a basic principle of our society."

Scientists: Can't live with them, can't live without them

William, Lives in Mexico, votes in Colorado



My job as a research scientist studying earthquakes and volcanoes occasionally took me to Washington, DC. I took advantage of a couple of these trips to take my kids to see the nation's capital, both my daughter and her younger brother at different times.

My daughter came with me when I went to DC as a member of a National Academy of Sciences review panel. Between panel meetings my daughter and I did most of the typical tourist things available in DC, visiting the Mall, museums and memorials. As a Vietnam era draftee and Vietnam veteran, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is always both difficult to visit and impossible to avoid on trips to Washington. But my daughter tells me we didn't visit it that trip.

One evening, maybe at the end of the panel deliberations, the NAS treated all the panelists to dinner at a fancy restaurant. My daughter came with me. She may have been the only female at the table. I believe all of the panelists were white males. I just did a brief search to see what fraction of the geoscience faculty is female. The most recent data I found was 10 years old, and at that time women constituted only 20% of the faculty positions in geoscience. This panel did not meet even that low threshold.

After dinner my daughter commented to me on how unpleasant the company was. The conversation was dominated by various scientists trying to one-up each other with how accomplished and clever they were. Having worked and lived in that world for years, I think I was desensitized, used to it, and assuming that was just how people interacted. Seeing it through my daughter's eyes gave me a whole new perspective on male behavior. Her comment when reading a preview of this story:

"I will say that that situation gave me a preview of what it's like to be the only woman at the table and probably helped me to make my way in science and speak my mind on issues I feel strongly about no matter who is in the room."

In spite of her experience with scientists during that dinner, my daughter later went on to earn a PhD of her own in chemistry, before moving on from science.

The funniest incident of the trip occurred when we checked into our hotel the first day. The desk clerk looked at our names on the register and said: "Oh, it's Bill and Hillary". My daughter's name is Hillary and mine is William. Although I have never used the nickname

Bill, it was still amusing. Our trip occurred during the Clintons' tour in the White House, obviously.

When I last lived in the US, it was in Colorado and I still vote there. My daughter lives in Germany and votes in California.

COVID-19's impact on women has given added urgency to add the ERA to the U.S. Constitution

Beverly Seebach – Colorado voter residing in Germany



I certainly have experienced gender inequality, mainly regarding equal pay, throughout my career as I am sure many have. However, in comparison, with the crisis of COVID, we know that stakes are much higher. The COVID-19 pandemic affects everyone, regardless of gender, but it clearly increases the existing inequalities because women, who comprise 70% of health care workforce globally (80% in the U.S.) including nursing and caregiving responsibilities, carry the burden.

In my family in the United States, seven of my sisters and nieces have “essential worker” occupations which require close contact with customers, children or patients. None of my male relatives are in this situation. The reality for these women ranges from anxiety dealing with the daily concern for the children in their care – the preschooler who has developed an emotional attachment to his/her mask and is distraught when it can’t be found and the first grader who is clearly not adjusting well to home-schooling, but is at high risk due to the family living conditions - to the nurse who daily goes to work with the fear of catching the virus. As a long-term care worker, another niece is not recognized as an essential worker in this crisis although she is exposed to the risk. Another female family member is victim to a system where she must make the decision to go to work and take the risk of becoming ill or the risk of losing her job. And a home-schooling mother has found it necessary to take on a part-time job – due the lack of a social safety net - but does not have the option to pass on her responsibility providing for her children’s social and learning development.

The pandemic has made it clear that the majority of essential workers are women and that the lion’s share of caregiving responsibilities are shouldered by women and girls. The dangers these front-line workers take are increased by working under poor workplace conditions such as lower standard COVID-19 health and safety measures and low pay. In addition, in a country where health systems and medical leadership is largely controlled by men, constitutional rights for women are more urgent than ever. The fight to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment within the first 100 days of the Biden-Harris administration and during Women’s History Month is the opportunity to make constitutional history with lasting change for women’s rights and gender equality. The ERA states: “Equality of Rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.” The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic has shown that Equality can’t wait any longer!

Getting done what is right!

Daniel Hoever-Eckardt. Residing in Germany, voting in Colorado



Finally having the ERA in the Constitution means to me finally getting done what is right. We Americans are a nation whose strength stems from our diversity. Equality is required to keep that diversity alive. The preamble of the Constitution stipulates that the People of the United States do ordain and establish the Constitution (amongst other things) to form a more perfect Union, to establish Justice and to promote Welfare.

When the first version of the Equal Rights Amendment, written by Alice Paul and Crystal Eastman was introduced in Congress in December 1923 both strived to end legal distinctions between men and women. By doing so, they actually proposed something with an even larger significance: fulfilling the true character of the constitution by

amending it, e.g. forming a more perfect Union and legally guaranteeing the same rights and the same significance to every part of said People. Almost a century later, we need to act now to seize the chance of finally adding the ERA to the constitution and stop the injustice.

Connecticut

I don't want the ERA but...

Fiona, Live in France, Vote in Connecticut

It shocks me that we have to instill women's rights in a document. How is it possible that we still need to make special laws so that people treat women equally. But as long as it is the case that I can still be paid less than my male colleagues of less experience, I am here to stand with all of you for what is right.

District of Colombia

Shaping a girl's perception of POSSIBLE

Claire, Living in France, Voting in Washington DC

I am 61 years old, a Washington DC native living in France since college days. I recall all those moments in the 1960s and 70s when as a young girl, I saw my mother and her friends becoming empowered, heard songs like "I AM WOMAN" and learned of the fight for the ERA. I recall also that Phyllis Schlafly led struggles against ERA and the sense of confusion and oppression that produced. My working mother and all her friends were rising in confidence and power, and there was that lady arguing that they should literally put on their frilly aprons and wait for their husbands to come home. I understood, taking all this in, that there is a struggle in society between different views of what is good or bad, right or wrong. I understood, bit by bit, that what tends to give more power to more citizens to choose their life and integrate in society, is on the side of good and right.

For me, ERA meant that it is POSSIBLE to challenge the status quo and POSSIBLE to join society as a full-fledged citizen. These power struggles of the 70s truly formed my perceptions - even if I am by no means a revolutionary. There have been so many advances in helping more people become full citizens in our land. Let's show now, at last, that POSSIBLE is REAL, and that women of all backgrounds and creeds can step up as equals to serve and to improve our American society.

Florida

ERA Now!

Andrea Host-Barth: Living in Spain; Voting in Florida



What a shame that there's even a need for the ERA! But there is and I want my grandchildren, who live in Florida, to grow up knowing they have the right to be treated fairly, equally and with respect. As a young adult ready to head out into the real world as a woman, no one told me I could or should go to college. My parents encouraged my brothers to go to college or follow their dreams, but for me it was a given that I would get married, have kids, and be a homemaker. Instead, I joined the military then used the GI Bill benefit to pay for my education. The US was a republic for 150 years before women got the right to vote. In 50 years, we haven't been able to get the ERA passed. It's time to pass the ERA now!

What Do We Want? Equality!- When Do Want it? NOW!

Angela Fobbs, Florida voter, living in Germany



I live in Germany, but I spent most of my life in the country of my birth, the United States of America. In Germany, I have equal rights, and it has improved the quality of my life. It's taken too long for women in America to have equal rights, and it's unfair. When I was a girl, people told me I could be anything I wanted, but it's not true.

Employers can pay women less than men for the same job. The first time I realized I wasn't getting paid as much as a recently hired man, I immediately went to my boss. My boss told me the man had a family and need to make more. My family's needs were the same as his family's. Why is this okay? It is acceptable because women don't have equal rights under the Constitution, so we don't have equal protection under the law. Having women in Congress, as the Vice-President, and in other positions of "power" is a hollow victory if the average woman faces legal discrimination in so many areas of her life.

My mother, my sisters, and I have been waiting all our lives for equality under the law. There is no reason for us to keep us waiting. Equality must be enshrined in our Constitution.

Eighty-four percent of countries, including Afghanistan, Japan, and Tunisia, explicitly guarantee equality in their Constitution. It's about time American women also have equal rights.

Inspired By My Grandmother

Karl Barth; in Spain; Florida voter



My grandmother was a Florida resident. After she got married in her early 20's, the government essentially treated her as the property of my grandfather. All documents and contracts had to be signed by him, whether or not he was the principal or purchaser or whatever. She had a modeling contract that had to be updated when she got married. When they moved to a new state, she could not get a driver's license without my grandfather being at the DMV office, also.

By the time she passed away, things were improved. But she never forgot that both the state and federal governments had treated her, if not as property, then as an adjunct to her husband. That is why I support the ERA. It must be codified in the constitution that women are in no way lesser beings under the laws of the United States.

The ERA Is Needed More Than Ever in 2021!

Carol Moore, live in London, vote in Florida.



In September 1966, I started college at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, only learning there was a quota in place (8 males/1 female) when I got there. Four years later there were still quotas at law schools. I did get in (in a class of 200 men and 25 women), faced discrimination when job-hunting and found the time-honored solution of work in the federal government. Living in New York City, Bella Abzug was my Congresswoman and the second wave of the feminist movement was in full swing. Naively I believed the tide was turning and, in fact, I benefitted from other women's battles: Chase Manhattan Bank had been sued for sex discrimination in the early '70's and reached a settlement, so I was welcomed with open arms when I applied in London in 1977.

Good assignments and promotions came in line with my male colleagues until I returned to work after my first child and a three-month maternity leave. My boss called me into his office, said he was glad to have me back, but I was not going to get a pay review due in the next month. He wanted to see at least six months' performance as confirmation that I was still "committed" to my job. I loved the job, was fortunate to have a healthy baby, a supportive husband and an excellent nanny, so I "put up and shut up."

Later in my financial career there were more instances of discrimination in both pay and promotion, but the work was engaging and I conveniently bought into the story that women

were moving towards pay equality and into leadership positions. Fast forward to 2021 and the global gender data shows equality has not happened anywhere in the world.

Even worse, the Covid pandemic has brought into sharp relief the expectation that women will sacrifice their work and careers to pick up the unpaid burden of caring for children and older relations. In the United States this is aggravated by the failure to provide adequate child and elder care. Many women are paying the well-documented “motherhood penalty”, where employers tend to deny women pay increases, promotions, and important assignments, and single them out for cutbacks and layoffs.

The ERA is critical as the legal basis to continue the fight for gender equality. Moving toward parity in leadership will also help end a culture of systemic misogyny, where some men (too many of those in power) continue to belittle women’s contribution to economic prosperity and well-being. Data now shows that, as richer countries improve women’s status on the scale towards economic equality, their increased contribution significantly improves the countries’ economic growth and well-being. I will reiterate: there is no country yet where women have gender pay parity. This is strong evidence that this inequality is systemic. For American women the barriers are formidable, and the timing is critical as the pandemic ends: the ERA will give substantial legal support to the case for parity as women return to the American workforce in the next 12 – 18 months. **WE NEED THE ERA NOW!!!**

[Equal Rights for American - pass the Equal Rights Amendment](#)

Jim Mercereau living in Spain and voting in Florida

The Equal Rights Amendment levels the playing field. It would benefit men and women. The ERA would create a constitutional equality principle that would hold that we can’t have laws or government practices that discriminate on the basis of sex. And that would include laws that discriminate against men. So - everyone benefits.

Georgia

What they didn't tell me about Democracy

Hilde Uhler, a Georgia voter living in Germany

In 1953, less than 10 years after WWII, at the invitation of the US government, I came to Maryland for a year as a German exchange student to learn about democracy. My initial love for the US culminated in marrying an American student I met at the Sorbonne in Paris and moving to the US. I became an American citizen, still idealistic about democracy and equal rights. But when I started working in Atlanta, GA, I realized not everything was equal. There was no equal pay, there was no equal opportunity, and there was no legal basis to help me fight for what I had earned. Then I learned about the ERA and how far behind the US is in guaranteeing in the Constitution equal rights regardless of sex. I learned that the absence of such legislation is inconsistent with American core values, and that Constitutions written after 1950 in many other countries in the world include such specific legal protection. I think it is time the various states ratify the ERA and bring the US in line with other countries in the world. We are not a country of old white men, we are a country of powerful people of both sexes, and it is time everyone in every state acknowledges this fact.

Idaho

Always encouraged to do anything I thought I wanted to or could

Jude, Lives in Mexico, Votes in Idaho

It was my father who taught my mother to cook, sew, and clean the house. He'd grown up on a farm and had to share in all kinds of chores. My mother was raised more "the princess" which I learned does no one any good. I learned it all too, including how build things, fix a flat, and mow the yard. There was a sense of joy in learning to do something with skill whatever it was. So when I went to college and then on to work for a living, I considered all kinds of livelihoods and ended up commercial fishing in the Bering Sea where I learned more skills and found I could do equal the work but had to negotiate for a fair share of the wage. I consider it Neanderthal thinking that one sex deserves more than another based on gender alone. All anyone has to do is read a few history books to understand the tyranny in this thinking. I'll continue to support the ERA for as long as I have breath in my body!

Illinois

We Are the Ones We've Been Waiting For

Teresa Ritterhoff, residing in Germany, voting in Illinois



Attending a women's college, which only 2% of American women do, was both empowering and deeply sobering. As part of a community in which women were unapologetically centered, I learned how far from the center we normally reside. There is a reason why 20% of women who serve in Congress, along with 30% of women business leaders, graduated from all-female institutions of higher education. If we want progress, we have to create the legal foundation for its emergence. I have two sons, and I believe that not only their rights, but their potential to experience their full humanity continues to be constricted in a world that both overtly and subtly enshrines men as the standard-bearers of power and authority. I want the ERA for them as much as I do for my beloved goddaughters and nieces. We must demand our rights. No one is going to give them to us

unless we insist and persist. I am in this fight with everyone who wants to live in a world where equality is not simply a "norm" half-heartedly enforced, but enshrined in the Constitution of the United States. **It's past time.**

We Need To Practice What We Preach

Michael Ramos, Democrats Abroad, Resident of Australia and Absentee Voter in Illinois

"We support women and girls in elected office." "We support women and girls getting paid the same as men in professional sports." "We support women and girls in S.T.E.M.M. [science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine] fields." ...All too often we hear these phrases, but without a constitutional guarantee that the United States practices what it preaches and indeed protects, supports, and encourages women and girls to thrive in American society, the current practice of sex discrimination will continue to make an appearance in America's schools, board rooms, military bases, sports fields, and everywhere in between. It is unconscionable that in the 21st century women are still often told things like they're not allowed to breastfeed in public, they're not "tough enough" to do traditionally-men's roles in the Armed Forces, and "because they dressed like that, they had it coming." It is time for policymakers to walk the walk and defend women by passing the Equal Rights Amendment and taking one step further to realizing true equality among American citizens. As an American who has spent enormous time living and traveling abroad, I have seen first-hand what equality looks like and what it certainly doesn't look like in various parts of the world. The United States needs to step up and be the democratic role model its citizens and others look for it to be. #EqualRightsAmendmentNow!

Justice delayed is justice denied

Will, Living in Luxembourg, Voting in Illinois



The story of the Equal Rights Amendment spans most of my lifetime, and its delay is a milestone in the titanic shift in American politics, away from social justice and the common good, and towards the horrifying attitudes that are sometimes called Reaganism.

Some commentators and historians see the long-fought-for end of Reaganism in the 2020 elections and the legislation passed by Democratic lawmakers over the past year at state and national levels. It would be fitting to overcome those malignant forces that opposed the ERA at last and seal the toxic landfill of backlash by adopting the ERA now. NOW! The countless women's stories of why the ERA matters -- and the efforts of those who worked so hard but passed before we reached this goal -- speak for themselves.

The persistence of unequal pay, discrimination in criminal justice, and misogynist culture in the United States tells us that we need more tools for pursuing justice and progress. The ERA is a simple, plain, and unqualified tool for the feminist project. We cannot let technicalities and cowardice keep us from this improvement to the U.S. Constitution.

I have Equal Rights in Germany but not when I'm in the U.S.

Jane, living in Germany, voting in Illinois



I've been an American living in Germany since 1972 and truly appreciate the democratic freedoms and standards that are protected under the German Grundgesetz or Basic Law. I fully support the ERA amendment to the US Constitution because it clearly and emphatically supports equal rights for all men and women. It is important that this amendment be enshrined in the Constitution to guard against unfair, arbitrary discriminating and biased acts and practices as well as violence against women. It would protect the equal rights of both men and women and people of gender. I am opposed to the efforts of those few states objecting to the ERA amendment based on technical questions, spurious deadline obstacles or reasons of form. It begs the question as to the motive why those states object to equal rights for all residents.

Too Long to Wait

Victoria, I live in Germany and vote in Illinois

In high school, during the late '70s, I wrote a research paper on the ERA giving the pros and cons of its ratification. At that time, it did not occur to me that it would NOT become the next amendment to the US Constitution. It was obvious to me that the pros outweighed the cons. Now, 42 years later, it surprises, and shocks, me that we are still fighting for these basic rights to equality. I grew up assuming that the USA was the world leader in human rights, but after moving to Germany and learning that the Grundgesetz has guaranteed equal rights to both men and women since 1949, I started questioning America's role as a champion of the basic rights that all humans worldwide should have. It is hypocritical of us to reprimand other countries for oppressing women and minorities. Let the ERA become the 28th Amendment so that Americans can once again be proud representatives of a country that recognizes that both sexes, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation, make equally significant contributions to our global society.

Indiana

Now is the Time to Pass the Equal Rights Amendment

Emily, lives in Berlin, Germany – votes in Indiana



I only learned a few years ago that women did not have equal rights under the law. When I heard this, I was truly shocked that this was even possible. Thanks to the women's movement, much progress has been made and women have gained a lot of ground over the years. But there is still a ways to go and the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment would be a huge step forward. This should not be a partisan issue. When the rights of one group are taken away, we are all affected. We will all benefit by ensuring that no one can be discriminated against based on their sex. It is up to us to continue the work that began in 1923 when Alice Paul first introduced the Equal Rights Amendment and was continued in the 1970s and 80s. We cannot give up and stop now. There is no other choice, but to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment once and for all.

Hoosier pride calls us to continue the fight for ERA

Respectfully, Andrew J. Stites, registered Indiana voter residing permanently in Norway since 2014

My home state of Indiana became the 35th and last state to ratify the ERA on January 18, 1977. Since then it has stalled. Just two years ago, Hoosiers marked the passing of Indiana Senator Birch Bayh. Bayh considered his authorship of Title IX of the Higher Education Act, guaranteeing women equal access to educational and athletic programs as among his greatest achievements. It's how he met his wife Marvella, who was denied admission to the University of Virginia solely based on her gender. In 1972 just out of the Navy, I was admitted to Loyola University School of Law, Los Angeles where my class was the first anywhere to admit as many women as men. What a gift at the time and looking back! I've never underestimated women as colleagues or professional adversaries. Today, I have a daughter who is a lawyer and law professor. My granddaughter is finishing her first year at Purdue. Yet both of them continue to face needless obstacles. These could be removed with passage of the ERA. Is there any possible reason NOT to make equal rights for women the law of the land? They've long done so in Norway, the country of my residence since 2014. Everyone benefits, especially we men! Could not the state in which I still proudly register and vote, my Indiana, not continue to make it a reality?

The Time Has Definitely Come!

Jonah, Indiana Voter living in Germany

Since studying the story of the ERA movement's history at the University of Southern Indiana, I have felt driven to contribute however I can to its eventual addition to the US Constitution. As a white man who has always benefited from the protections that the Constitution grants me, it is my duty to be an ally and add my voice to those of everyone

else who stands united demanding equality in the provision of our nation's foundational legal document. The time was then, and the time is now!

Iowa

Turning the Question Around

Gail Fagen, Italy, Iowa Voter



Well-meaning people sometimes wonder why an ERA is still needed in this world where our Vice-President is a woman, women are CEOs and the US Women's Soccer Team is the best in the world... but it's needed exactly because of well-meaning people - who never intend to discriminate. In today's world, most (but unfortunately not all) discrimination or forms of violence go unrecognized because they're interwoven into notions of "that's the way things are". The ERA is needed because it would turn the question around. As an article published by NOW states: "[it] wouldshift the burden of proof to the party accused of discrimination. Without a constitutional amendment clarifying women's legal standing, women will continue to have to wage extended, costly and challenging political and legal battles for equal

rights." <https://now.org/resource/is-the-equal-rights-amendment-relevant-in-the-21st-century>

Kansas

For my children

Stayce Camparo, residing in Germany, voting in Kansas



Equality is a truth, and I am ashamed that the United States of American doesn't formally recognize that truth in the U.S. Constitution. By making the ERA a law of the land, we would send the message that equality is indeed an inalienable right, and not just a promise that can be easily broken or manipulated. Every day, in some form or another, I have conversations with my children about equality, and it is so shocking to me that equality is not formally protected in the U.S. Equal rights are important to me because I am a parent, and I don't just want the ideals of equality coming from me, but I want those ideals supported by my home

country, the country of my citizenship.

Kentucky

I thought we had this matter settled

Jess, I live in Hungary and vote in Kentucky

Much of the 36 years that I was a professor at the University of Kentucky, I was active in the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). For all of that time, one of our main activities was documenting the unequal pay and other treatment of women faculty compared to men with the same qualifications, and fighting with the administration to make both more equal. Without a higher legal authority to force them to do so, it was usually impossible to get them to act. The ERA was originated during that period of the later 1900's. It was moving along well toward being fully adopted, and I'd assumed that it had been during the 20 years I've lived in Hungary. Now I'm amazed and ashamed that it hasn't, leaving the U.S. behind so many other nations in ensuring this important right. So let's do whatever has to be done to get ourselves into the 21st century in treating our women as they deserve to be treated, as equals.

Maryland

This Picture Still Awes Me

By Amy Glover in Mexico City, vote in Maryland

Photo of Carole Drake (76), Molly Glover Gallatin (50), and Kendall Gallatin (15)



I was born in 1968 in Detroit, Michigan and I grew up with a single mom and two sisters in San Francisco, California. My mother and her friends fought hard in the 1970s to get the Equal Rights Amendment passed, an effort that unfortunately failed. In our home, we had a powerful poster of a woman with dark black hair dressed like Uncle Sam and pointing her finger at the viewer with a simple message: ERA. I remember looking at this determined woman with awe as a child and the image is something that has followed my sisters and me into adulthood and is hung proudly in my mother's living room in San Mateo to this day. It is an aspirational message that has yet to become a reality. When I hear the words "All men are created equal," the inspiring words of the Declaration of Independence, the phrase now strikes me as antiquated. Language matters and leaving

women's rights out of the equation is a reflection of the lack of opportunity and protection under the law that members of our gender have experienced for centuries. It would mean a lot to my mother, my sisters, and me to finally see the ERA become part of the US Constitution so that women and men are equally recognized in the inspiring words of freedom and liberty. For us and many other women in the United States, full recognition of equal rights under the law regardless of gender has been a long time coming. I certainly hope more generations of American women do not have to wait much longer to be able to recognize themselves in the pages of a founding document of our nation.

Women Are No Longer "Asking" for Their Rights

Dona Geyer, a Maryland voter living in Germany (where there is an equal rights clause in the constitution)



When I was a young girl and writing my first thank-you note to an adult friend of the family for a gift she had given me, my mother taught me how to "properly" address the envelope to "Mrs. Her Husband's Name." What? I asked, "I am not writing to him, but to her!" That is when I learned that a married woman was worse off than me, a girl. At least I could use my name, all a married woman got was an "s". She was invisible. When I was in high school, "Ms." was introduced as the counterpart to "Mr."; a woman could use her own name and keep her age and marital status as

neutral as a man. At about the same time the ERA was passed in 1972. We were making progress, weren't we? "What do we need that for?" asked one of the local (male) student movement leaders about the ERA. For all too many men, even on the left, women may not

have been so invisible, but they were still irrelevant. Women are no longer invisible or irrelevant, but we are still not constitutionally protected against the persistence of unequal pay for equal work, discrimination in our judicial system, or cultural or systemic misogyny (e.g., why isn't rape considered a hate crime?). In 1776, Abigail Adams wrote to her husband, John Adams, to please "remember the ladies" when drawing up the first US Constitution. Neither he nor the rest of the Framers did. Well, we are no longer polite, invisible, and irrelevant ladies asking for our rights. We are demanding them—in the Constitution. Now!

[Wait... you mean this is a fight my Great Grandparents started?](#)

Elaine, I am currently residing in China and vote in Maryland.



Wow, can you believe it's been like 78 years and we STILL don't have the Equal Rights Amendment? How is guaranteeing equal legal rights for all American citizens regardless of sex POSSIBLY still controversial in this day and age? 168 international constitutions outside of America already include gender equality - so why have we chosen to keep America more regressive than most of the developed world? Why aren't we willing to give our citizens inclusiveness that other countries' women enjoy? Let's get equality written into our constitution now. The only shame

we should feel is that it took so fucking long.

[An Urgent Intersectional and Safety Necessity](#)

Beth, Maryland Voter, Sweden Resident



Passing the Equal Rights Amendment is long past due, but fortunately, we as a country have a pathway in front of us to renounce discrimination of equal rights on account of sex. I am proud my home state of Maryland is on the right side of history and passed this in 1972, as well as that Senator Cardin (D-MD) is the Lead Sponsor for Senate Joint Resolution 1 that would remove the ratification deadline.

Growing up in a state that had ratified the ERA prior to my birth meant that I had the law on my side regarding types of discrimination that impact residents of other states. For a period of time while working as an RN I lived in the state of Virginia -- prior to that state's own historic passage of the

ERA. While living there about seven years ago, I experienced domestic violence in a romantic relationship. I knew somewhat that the laws did not protect me as definitively, but I did not find out until later that Virginia had not ratified the Equal Rights Amendment. I ended up having to urgently pack and move my belongings out of the state in over a foot of snow for my own safety. I was extremely fortunate that friends helped me move, and that my proximity to my employer remained about the same. However, many do not have the ability and resources to leave their situations in this way, and ratifying the ERA means the

consistent enforcement of restraining orders and equally important measures for victims of domestic violence.

The ERA is an important milestone, but certainly not the termination of the pursuit of equal rights under the law for all Americans. We as a nation must do everything we can to support and reinforce the narrative that any legislation that is complicit with or outright justifies discrimination of any person will be removed from the books entirely. If we can take down statues that embody inequality, we must be compelled to similarly dismantle and rectify codified institutional sexism, misogyny, oppression, and objectification.

The time is NOW to pass the ERA, and I am proud to be able to advocate for equal rights alongside my Democrats Abroad peers.

Massachusetts

The ERA is important to me because my family is important to me

Peter Kaiser - Lives in Switzerland, Votes in MA



Most of us want to think of ourselves as thoughtful, compassionate persons, even when it concerns more than just our immediate families. Our religions and our ethical learnings point us there. But our families are special to us. Mine is to me, including the women – my wife, sisters, sisters in law, daughter, granddaughter, nieces... I'm determined that they be treated with equal respect by the law and by society at large, and that this CANNOT be taken away from them. That's why I support the ERA: because no one, NO ONE, should be able to treat women with anything less than the full human rights they deserve.

Onward!

Terese—Boston, Massachusetts voter currently in Germany



"Equality of rights under the law shall not be abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex." While more progress has been made in granting women equal footing in many areas, there is still a long way to go in pay equality and career advancement opportunities. I still remember when I was in high school, I wanted to participate in a journalism program offered by Junior Achievement. I walked over to their office near Symphony Hall to enroll and I was told that I could not participate because Junior Achievement was only for boys. I have never forgotten that I was discriminated against because I was a female. Until

women's rights are included in the Constitution, there is no guarantee that women will be treated equally.

Vote to Ratify the ERA Now; Waiting 97 Years Should Embarrass Us

Eliot, Resides in France, Votes in Massachusetts



I recently looked through my high school yearbook Class of '62 and was struck by the fact that all my female classmates limited their hoped-for future occupations to teacher, nurse, beautician, or secretary: no lawyers, doctors, engineers or US Presidents. In college, I remember hearing from female classmates that some of the faculty were discouraging them from going to graduate school because they would be taking the place of a man who might then be drafted and sent to Viet Nam. Some recent news, such as the election of our first female Vice-President can be seen as grounds for optimism. Yet women still need to pass niceness tests and glass ceilings are all too real. Enough! We need the Equal Rights Amendment as part of the Constitution to help us validate the beliefs that motivated our founders to declare us an independent nation. I urge my Senators to support and

vote for SJRes1 to eliminate deadline for ERA validation.

When Men and Women Live in True Brotherhood....

Connie, live in France, vote in Massachusetts



I'm an academic, I live in France, and I vote in Massachusetts. Back in the 70s I read Simone de Beauvoir's groundbreaking book "The Second Sex" and it changed my life. I realized, as did many, that women were not given equal status, either in their personal lives or under the law. Later in life I had the grand experience of teaching the book and I came to understand the deeply philosophical reasons why no democracy can exist without equality between men and women. And unless women are equal to men under the law, there can be no true equality. So from there began my quest for an Equal Rights Amendment. True liberation for women can only exist when they are protected under the law, and men and women can live in true "brotherhood" (Beauvoir's word) only when the Constitution guarantees them equal rights. So let's go, let's get it done.

Let's add that ERA to our guarantor of equal rights, the US Constitution.

In tribute to my mother and grandmother

Rachel Eugster, living in Canada, voting in Massachusetts



I support the ERA in tribute to my maternal forbears. My grandmother, the daughter of immigrants, was born into a world that did not accord women the right to vote—an injustice she fought to reverse. Her daughter, my mother, a progressive thinker and self-described radical, nevertheless viewed the ERA as first proposed as unnecessary, having absorbed the legal principle from her father (a judge) that a redundant law is a bad law. She later came to realize—as we have seen demonstrated time and again—that being included by implication is not being included at all.

It's long past time to enshrine the ERA into law, for my mother and my grandmother, my sisters and nieces—and for my sons and nephew.

Michigan

Long past due #ERAnow

Laura, Lives in China, Votes in Michigan



Both my children, my daughter and my son, deserve an America in which equality is made explicit in law - gender, racial, etc. The promises made to me in school, as a woman, were not delivered on in the workplace. It is long past time to follow through on the promises we make to girls and boys - that pay equity will be achieved, that violence against women will be addressed, that women are fundamentally believed to be equal to men.

Minnesota

Still Waiting...

Kathleen, Votes in Minnesota, Lives in France

I'm 63 years old. I've been waiting for this since the '70s. Let's hope these 24 words finally change the world for the better--and for all of us.

Try explaining this to foreigners

Jane, Living in Germany, Voting in Minnesota



It is the year 2021 and NOW is the time to change the "All Men are Created Equal" part of our constitution. I simply cannot understand how a country like America who prides itself on change has Still not passed the ERA! This is shamefully tragic. As an American who has now lived the last 30 years outside of America I continue to be amazed at how we wag our fingers at other countries about their human rights issues yet half of America is not protected under our constitution. Try explaining this to foreigners, somehow I cannot! Please for the sake of America, pass the ERA and let the great women of America shine like never before.

Missouri

How is this not done yet?

Jillian Mertsch, resident of Belgium votes in Missouri



When I sat in my civics class as a freshman in high school studying for my US constitution test it never occurred to me to ask if women were recognized under the US Constitution. I wrongly assumed that the use of the word "men" in the text was just the way people wrote official documents in the 18th century. When I learned in my 30s that the founding fathers purposely excluded women and that efforts in the 20th century to fix this anachronism failed, I was shocked. It is even more shocking that the Equal Rights Amendment which will women to the Constitution is struggling in the 21st century. Now I hope that when my child learns about the US

Constitution in a few years the fact the ERA took so long to come into effect will be an odd bit a trivia and not a cause she has to take up.

We Need the ERA Now More Than Ever

Danielle, Missouri voter residing in Canada



"Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." This is what the ERA guarantees. It is inconceivable that this language does not already exist in the Constitution. It is tempting to think that the ills this simple sentence is meant to address are no longer a concern, but it is just not so. Systemic bias exists everywhere - we need only to look at the data showing that the pandemic has disproportionately affected women - to confirm that we have not achieved equality and Congress needs tools to help us do so. Personally, as an employment lawyer, I see discriminatory decision-making in the workplace all the time. In the past, as my mother and other women of her generation experienced first-hand, employers would simply say they were denying them opportunities on the basis of

sex. They had no real recourse. Even though employers are less likely now to say that they are making a decision based on a candidate's or employee's sex, it happens all the same. Passing the ERA is essential to ending sex-based discrimination in the workplace and throughout our society, which would benefit us all. It's as simple as that.

Nevada

"The Only Job for You is a Woman's Career"

Joyce Kinnear (living in Panama; voting in Nevada)



Equality is Important. I remember the first full time professional job I held, which was at a city in Southern New Mexico. My husband and I had been in New Mexico for the military, but after he got out decided to leave New Mexico and go back to the left coast where our families lived. My boss, who was unhappy we were leaving, asked why we couldn't stay in New Mexico. He asked what would keep me at the City, and I told him that as a female, non-clerical employee, I had no promotion potential and little hope of getting a decent wage. After working so hard to get a Master's degree, it seemed a pity to not use that education anywhere. He said, "Maybe you can one day become a manager for Purchasing. That department is a place that

can have female managers." That sort of attitude exemplified my career and doesn't even begin to go into the disgust I felt at multiple times having to put in formal requests to get pornographic photos removed from City offices. I spent many years as the only woman at the table, representing my local municipal owned utility. I got tired of the number of times more qualified women were passed over for promotions, so that some young inexperienced man could be promoted over them. One time, as a manager in California, I entered the room as the only female there--more experienced than many of the men. I was asked to get the coffee. And yet, with all of these and many more instances, I can say I was lucky. I worked hard to get a Master's Degree and pushed constantly to get to a level in the organization where my skills could be utilized. I was able to do this, because my parents are white, college educated and encouraged me to be articulate and have a backbone. This resulted in many instances of being called a "bitch" and worse for engaging in behavior that was slightly assertive and not a submissive, shrinking violet. Not all young women and girls are so fortunate. At a minimum, they should have the legal rights to be an equal citizen, with equal access to education and jobs and equivalent pay for equivalent work. I would hope my daughter and nieces have more opportunities to be who they are, without needing to be the "pushy bitches" that women my age had to be to get ahead, get fulfilling careers and take care of their families.

New Jersey

No illusions - but it's long past time for the ERA

Naomi (I live in Norway and vote (proudly) in New Jersey.)

I don't have any illusions that passing the ERA will magically bring gender equality to the US. I don't believe passing the ERA will suddenly fix the systemic inequalities and racism that Black women and women of color face every day. But there is no reason for the U.S. Constitution not to prohibit sex-based discrimination. It says a lot about the United States that it doesn't already. All I need to do is look at who opposes the ERA, and why, to understand why the ERA is necessary - but not sufficient - to bring down the patriarchal system that has held women, and especially women of color, back for centuries. I owe a lot to the women who came before me and fought for the ERA, and I owe it to the women around me now to make equal rights more than a slogan, but an inclusive movement that touches every aspect of our lives.

In honor of all those who have paved the way

Marjorie, live in Austria, vote in New Jersey



Growing up in a household with a mother who was an early feminist always led me to believe that I could do anything I set my mind to. My mother was a World War 2 veteran who served as a Lieutenant in the US Navy. She worked in a variety of positions including as a code breaker of codes in German having studied it in college. However, when she became pregnant, she was forced to resign her commission, something that still made her angry years later and she wrote about it in her personal entry at the Women's Memorial at Arlington Cemetery. She went on to become a business studies teacher and an active member of the

League of Women Voters. I have also experienced the unequal treatment of the sexes throughout my career as an overseas teacher of English and teacher trainer. Women make up the majority of the profession and yet in many cases the schools are run by men and keynote speakers at conferences often include few women, although, due to the strong voices in the profession, this is finally beginning to change. The fact that the ERA has not yet been passed, however, is something incomprehensible. How can the concept of equal rights for all still be an issue in today's world? In memory of all those who have gone before me, I urge Congress to make the Equal Rights Amendment part of our Constitution. The passing of this bill is long overdue.

Take your feet off my neck

Heather, Lives in Israel, Votes in New Jersey



I am a NJ voter living overseas in Israel. I have been fighting for the ERA since I was a child with my mom in the 1960s and 1970s. I can't believe it is 2021 and my mom has been gone for 9, almost 10 years and I'm still fighting for the ERA. It is so basic and elementary as Ruth Bader Ginsburg taught at Rutgers and to the Supreme Court. "I ask no favors for my sex. All I ask of our brethren is that they take their feet off our necks." It is high time to see the ERA ratified so that we don't have to keep fighting for the same thing for so many years and can finally be treated equally before the law.

New Mexico

Womens Rights are Human Rights

Erin Watson, Lives in Republic of Korea, Votes in New Mexico



Women's rights are human rights. I shouldn't have to rely on the goodwill of a manager to find out that I am getting paid less than my less-qualified male coworker. I shouldn't have to worry that my access to medical can be abridged or denied based on my gender. I shouldn't have to do a lot of things, just because of my gender. But I do. The least the government can do to protect us is enshrine our rights.

New York

Glass Ceilings in Technology Sector

Diane Sklar, France Resident, Vote in NY



I graduated college in the 70s, just at the time when IT was taking off and pulling in lots of new female graduates. Technology was supposed to be the great equalizer because we were all, male and female, getting in on the ground floor at the infancy of this mighty new discipline. But it didn't work out that way. Today only 25% of the technology workforce is female and while there are some prominent female CEOs, I have always found the landscape of middle management in technology companies was completely male dominated. The changes we need are happening at a glacial pace! Of course, we need to get the ERA amendment ratified ASAP. But we also need pro-active programs to equalize pay, promote non-biased hiring practices and promote venture capital flow to women

entrepreneurs in the tech sector. After decades of self-questioning and refashioning myself to the demands of a male dominated workplace, my only hope is that my daughter and other young women launching into the workforce now can be more genuine and spontaneous. Here's hoping they sit at conference tables with a gender balance, and they have women role models and mentors to show them the ropes.

[“the rising of the women is the rising of the race”](#)

Larry, Living in Germany, Voting in New York



I try to be a MENSCH ... a good person. It isn't easy, especially alone. In my Jewish Tradition, there have been women that overcame, not only threats to our people, but our own patriarchy that made it even more difficult to help all the Jews. Our world has so many problems to solve, and we need all-hands-on-deck to try and solve them. But we need to un-tether ALL these hands, because only free hands can accomplish all have to do. Add to that the beauty of creation in this world, art, music, ... Hindering these creative women & men just lessens our lives. The song says, “the rising of

the women is the rising of the race”.

Enough is enough

Kirsten, Country of Residence: Belgium Voting state: New York



Here's a picture of my kids. They're standard teenagers. Yet one of these young people will have a much easier time throughout life simply because he was born male. Statistically, he will not have to work as hard to get better grades, he will find it easier to get a bank loan, he will be invited to more job interviews and be more successful getting a high-paying job, then be assigned a mentor who

will ensure he optimizes his career. He will never have to make a decision "kids or career", he can have it all. And all that without the ever-present fear of being attacked by a boyfriend or a stranger, of having his drink spiked, of being viciously mocked online (and brutally IRL) if he dares to insist on his space, his time, his voice. Why should he be entitled to an easier life, a better-paying career, more standing in society than his sisters? WHY?? I say enough is enough: American girls and women deserve to be treated EQUALLY, and if society can't manage to do that on its own, then we need the law to do it for us.

P.S. I love all my kids equally!

Time for The Equal Rights Amendment to be part of the Constitution

Esta Charlene Devereux residing in the UK, voting in New York

The past year has certainly been an education for me as up until then I was one of the 85% of the US population who thought that the Equal Rights Amendment had been incorporated into the Constitution years ago! Hopefully this will be the year to finally make this the 28th Amendment to the Constitution.

A New Yorker for the ERA

Meredith Wheeler lives in France and votes in New York



My mother aspired to be a doctor—but as an undergraduate at Northwestern just prior to World War 2, she was discouraged, because of her gender. America lost a great doctor. However, some 70 years later, her granddaughter, graduated from Georgetown Medical School and now is a practicing child psychiatrist in Menlo Park. Progress has been made. But one pillar of that campaign for equal rights and equal opportunity—the tent pole that should be at the epicenter—is missing from our Constitution. And that is the Equal Rights Amendment. Women--and people across the gender spectrum--still face discrimination. Official recognition of our equal rights deserves to be enshrined in our nation's founding document.

During my career in New York broadcast news, I benefited from the women's movement of the seventies, which campaigned against widespread

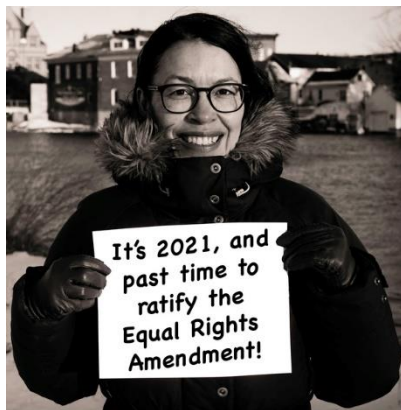
discrimination against women in the media. Barbara Walters was hired as the first evening news anchor—and the optics required that she have at least one woman writer on the network news staff—and that was me. But at various times in my career, I bumped up against overt and disguised sexism--and finally crashed out of ABC News, with a concussion from repeatedly banging my head against the glass ceiling.

The USA likes to portray itself as a world leader—yet we lag behind many other nations that already have constitutional guarantees for equal rights for women. The U.S. Constitution reflects the attitudes of its era—written entirely by white, privileged men. Our founding document needs to evolve to meet the social and cultural realities of our time—and more concretely to provide essential support for litigating sex discrimination cases in the courts. Under the last administration, we witnessed an intensified backlash against the advancement of women's rights.

We must now move forward now—and the ERA amendment is a key element in the progress, for the sake of our daughters, granddaughters and young women everywhere who have so much to contribute if given a fair chance.

None of Us Are Equal Until All of Us Are Equal - The ERA for Women is Long-Overdue in the USA!

Lisette F. Wright | Living in Canada | Voting in New York!



I am once again asking Congress to finally add the ERA to the US Constitution! While women won the right to vote in 1920, women still do not have equal rights under the law. And even though the Equal Protection Clause in the 14th Amendment prohibits states from denying any person equal protection under the law, women's rights are still not explicitly guaranteed. In 1976, around 10,000 marchers in Springfield, Illinois demonstrated for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. Many of these marchers proudly carried signs advocating, ERA is the American Way!

In a Pew Research Center poll last year, almost 80 percent of Americans supported adding the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution. In 2020, Virginia became the 38th and final state needed to ratify the ERA. It is time for Congress to affirm and ensure women's equality in the US. The US Senate must immediately pass S.J.Res.1 - A joint resolution removing the deadline for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment! Let's get on with it and join other nations like Canada, which offers women full equal rights guaranteed by law! [📄] <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2020/07/07/a-century-after-women-gained-the-right-to-vote-majority-of-americans-see-work-to-do-on-gender-equality/>

Can't believe I am going to be 60 and the ERA has yet to be passed

David, living in Spain and voting in New York

Yes, it's true, 60 is just around the corner for me and I remember, like others who grew up in the 70s, all the talk of the ERA. Frankly, it's an embarrassment to the United States government that the ERA has, in 2021, yet to become enshrined in our constitution. Women absolutely deserve this right alongside their male counterparts, hands down. I support and demand that women have this right already as a man who has been shaped and influenced by strong, caring women from my family through to my education in public schools, to my working career. Women have been influencing me my whole life; in first job, my female boss taught me well. In my second job, there was the female mentor molding and shaping me for what turned out to be quite a good career in banking. I was always open to female leadership and guidance having grown up in a household of women only. And many of my best friends in life have been strong women from all walks of life.

In this year of the pandemic and almost a quarter into the 21st century, I find it sad and discouraging that American women still do not enjoy the same rights as I as a man. The ERA must become a part of the Constitution giving them the absolute same and unquestionable rights as their male counterparts.

North Carolina

"Awakening"

Sylvia Wallach Squire – London resident, voting in NC



The question I asked myself is “why wasn’t I interested in the ERA until relatively recently?” When I married in 1968 – and what a year that was – I was settling into life with my husband and working fulltime. Having my first child in December 1970, and a second 20 months later, didn’t leave much free time. While I was aware peripherally of what was going on nationwide – after all newspapers and television were a source of current information – it didn’t enter my head to engage with anything political or that would involve activism on my part. It wasn’t part of who I was.

After 36 years in the US, I moved back to the UK where I had been born and educated. As a dual citizen who identified, and still does, as an American, I wanted to stay connected with Americans and given that I had been voting as a Democrat, I became a member of Democrats Abroad UK. Then 2016/2017 happened! I joined and became an active participant in DAUK’s Women’s Caucus and began to find areas in which I felt I could help to make a difference – the ERA being one of those. I was completely uneducated in this area, was unaware that the ERA had not been ratified, that 85% of all countries worldwide have the ERA in their constitutions yet the USA does not.

My awakening has been gradual, but the more that I learned, and realized how little I knew, the more incensed I became that rights that women in the UK take for granted are denied women in the USA – • In Alan Alda’s words – “A woman doesn’t get a discount at the butcher shop for being a woman, but she sure as hell gets a discount in her paycheck for being a woman”. Now that I’ve been ‘awakened’, I want all Americans to know that although 38 States have ratified the ERA, it is still in limbo. The expired deadline is used as the reason for not acknowledging VA as the 38th State and therefore not making this amendment to the constitution official. Each one of us, even one as uneducated as I was about the ERA and who has been a non-activist, can write letters and postcards, email, call elected officials at the Federal, State, and local levels. Inform your local television and radio stations, and newspapers about the ERA and ask them to support removal of the 1982 deadline. And don’t forget that 12 States have not yet ratified the ERA!

So, if I was to be asked today “Do you support ratification of the ERA?” my answer would be “You’re darn right I do!” Jessica Neuwirth said, “The text of the Equal Rights Amendment is 24 words: ‘Equality under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on the account of sex.’ You just feel like, Well who could be against that?”

Support your constituents - not corporations

Julia, I live in the Czech Republic and vote in North Carolina



The job of Congress is to represent the people of the United States, passing legislation that supports your constituents. 52% of your constituents are women. They are not insurance companies looking to raise their profits on the backs of women, they are not corporations, knowing full well that they can offer women lower salaries because the market will bear it - your constituents are people who are supporting their families through their income. They deserve to be represented fairly. Support the ERA and support your constituents. Support the ERA, and support families. Help ensure that finally, America becomes the land of equality for all, not just a few.

The ERA From a Veteran's Perspective

PO2 Anthony Michael Nitz, USN, Retired NC-5 Voter Living in Vietnam



Dear Member of Congress, Federal courts have ruled that the ERA cannot be included in our great nation's Constitution because the 1982 deadline has passed. This will go up to the Supreme Court. I cannot change what the Supreme Court thinks or what it may decide to do, but what I can do is talk with you. If I can convince you to join me in my support for extending or removing the deadline, the ERA may yet become ratified as the 28th Amendment. This would be a momentous victory for women in all walks of life. Veterans like me have watched the role of women in our nation's military grow ever closer to equal standing with men. In 1917, Loretta Walsh became the first woman to join the military outside of the Nurse Corps. In 1920, women finally had their own voice in elections when the 14th

Amendment was ratified. In 1947, General Dwight D. Eisenhower (later President!) commissioned Colonel Florence Blanchfield into the US Army as a Lieutenant Colonel making her the first woman to ever hold permanent rank. Soon after, in 1948, Congress passed the Women's Armed Services Integration Act that made women a permanent part of the US military. In 1970, Colonel Anne May Haes became the first woman to ever hold a flag rank when she was promoted to Brigadier General. In 1976, the first women were admitted to the US Service Academies. In 1990, Commander Darlene Iskra became the first woman to command a US Naval vessel, paving the way for women to start serving on combatant ships in 1994. In 1993, Major General Jeannie Leavitt (then a Lieutenant) became the first female fighter pilot. In 2002, Command Sergeant Major of the US Army Reserve Michele S Jones became the first woman to become the enlisted head of a branch

of the US military. In 2008, General Ann Dunwoody became the first woman to achieve four-star rank. In 2010, the Department of the Navy authorized women to serve onboard submarines. In 2011, the first group of women checked on board. In 2015, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter lifted the ban on women serving in ground combat roles, paving the way for the first groups of women to enter into the infantry in 2016. Now, in 2021, we have an opportunity to add to this list of achievements made by American women: passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. With this, the role of women in American society cannot be made less than ever again. Thank you for your time and consideration,

North Dakota

Let's not "make the best" out of what we know we can do Better

Kari, Lives in Ukraine, votes in North Dakota



In 1975 North Dakota ratified the Equal Rights Amendment. At about the same time, there is a picture of my Grandmother Helen at her college graduation. In her late 50s, Helen had gone back to college to get her 4-year teaching degree. She had been a teacher all her life, from one room pioneer schoolhouses to reservations, to small North Dakota towns, she had always made the best out of her situation. Once, when offered the chance to teach a new subject, she stayed up all night sewing her first pair of trousers so she could teach phy-ed the next morning. Her innovation was recognized and in the 1960s Helen was offered a job at the state capital to create school curriculum. She was unable to get her husband's permission to accept the offer, so Helen kept teaching locally and continued to make the best out of her situation in an over 40-year long career. Situations that women must make "the best out of" are my reason for supporting the ERA. These situations are

rarely acknowledged in society and not at all in the United States' current legal and judicial systems. Social Security, taxes, wages, pensions, domestic relations, insurance, and violence continue to be seen in a framework based only on the male experience. Women were never part of "the people" mentioned in the US Constitution and later amendments promised equal protection and voting rights only for men. There have been many attempts to make "the best out of" the current constitutional situation – and, sometimes, rulings have been interpreted to benefit women - but there are still no assurances. In my home state of North Dakota, some are arguing that the states' ERA ratification in 1975 was a mistake; that women don't need any additional recognition or protection under the constitution. This, while women in the North Dakota state legislature have never had more than 22% of the seats, and for each dollar a man earns, women in North Dakota earn 27 cents less. I support the Equal Rights Amendment because I want a world where women don't have to

problem-solve and make “the best out of” situations. I want a world where women in North Dakota, and America, can just BE their best.

Ohio

Let's cross that finish line

Christina - lives in Oslo Norway, and votes in Ohio



We have come a long way, but we still have not reached the finish line. In the United States Constitution women do not have equal rights under the law. Well over 80% of other nations do! When I tried to be an architect major at a state university in Ohio, in 1962, I was discouraged. Not because of grades but because of my sex. In 1963, my sister was denied the opportunity to complete her student teaching, when she revealed she was pregnant. A woman could not appear in front of a class "in that condition". For my first car loan for a moderately priced car in 1967, which was repaid in 6 months, I had to find a man that would co-sign, even though I had an adequate stable income. While the situation has improved the current legal and judicial systems, often have a negative impact on women. The majority of legislators & judges that make critical decisions, have been male; thus, the male perspective & experience is the norm and not the female perspective & experience.

This has affected wages, family planning access, views on violence against women and harassment, childcare options, maternity leave, promotions in the workplace, and much more. It is time women, be not just viewed as equals, but are equal under the law. We owe this to our children and grandchildren, both female & male.

Islam gave women more rights than many western women

Lorin Soultan, Ohio voter living in Canada

On my journey to becoming a Muslim, I was proud to learn that 1400 years ago, Islam gave women more rights than many western women were given for much of the last century. These include many rights western women have fought to achieve in recent history, such as the right to an education, to vote, own property, work, divorce, and inheritance, just to name a few. As an American, I would be proud to learn that The United States adds the Equal Rights Amendment to the US Constitution.

Oklahoma

Equality for My Heroes

Dash, Oklahoma voter, German resident



Most of my heroes are women. My mother, an artist and writer, possesses the most adventurous, curious and brilliant mind I've ever known and inspires me unendingly as I travel through life. My wife, a professional violist, is easily one of the boldest, most exciting musicians I've had the pleasure to hear perform live; she gives me the drive to achieve my best in my own musical career. Among those who influence me from afar are the likes of Greta Thunberg, Malala Yousafzai, Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Cara Santa Maria. Women have had an unequal effect on the person I am today, and it's high time they are no longer treated unequally in our otherwise modern country. Equal treatment is the least we can ask for and we should settle for no less. Let us delay no longer. Ratify the Equal Rights Amendment immediately!

Time to move forward

Sharon Smillie, The Netherlands, former resident of Oklahoma



Happy women = happy society and we in the United States need to move forward and acknowledge women's equality to men. We as women - mothers, daughters, sisters and wives - wear multiple hats. We are the caregiver, breadwinner, decisionmaker, and voter, yet we aren't recognized as equal in the US Constitution. Not only are we the glue that keeps the family together, but society and the world as a whole. Please vote to ratify the 28th Amendment and make Equal Rights a reality for all Oklahoman Women.

Oregon

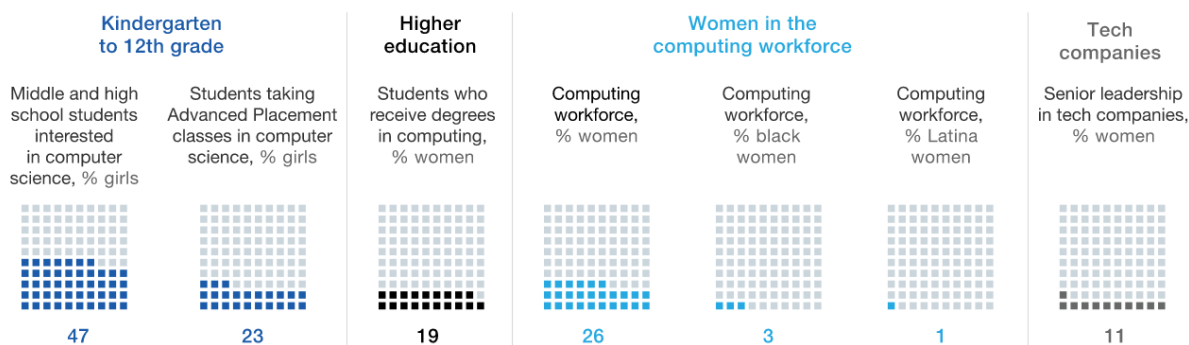
Can you accept someone's decisions for you without your involvement and opinions?

Suma Shamanna, lives in India and votes in Oregon



It has been 97 years since the first version of the ERA was written by Alice Paul and Crystal Eastman. Well, we have waited too long, and it is about time to ratify ERA. Constitution rights for me as a woman, to all women must be the same as men.

Early this month, I was preparing for the International Women's Day talk addressing delegates from around the globe. My topic was the Challenges faced by Women in Technology, fears and gaps and the impact on high-tech with less women's involvement. The data I came across while preparing for the talk was astonishing.



McKinsey&Company | Source: Rebooting representation: Using CSR and philanthropy to close the gender gap in tech

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects Computer Science & Research jobs will grow 19% by 2026. The above chart indicates there are not as many women entering the workforce. We not only have a deficit in women technologists but on average a woman earns 87% of what a man earns.

Decades have passed yet the gender parity, equality seems a distant mirage. Women are still deprived to be on the critical decision-making forums resulting in widening the gender gaps. All this arises only because women do not have equal rights under the law. We must take the step forward. Equal Rights must be enshrined in our Constitution. ERA Now!

Pennsylvania

How is NOT acknowledging and protecting women's' equality still a thing?

Stephanie, Lives Canada, votes in Pennsylvania



I was born to a working mom in 1957, and she raised me to believe I could do anything. When I applied (age 15, fully qualified) to a traditionally all-male Ivy League university, the ancient alumnus interviewer had no interest in learning about me, only in telling me how inappropriate I was and how much of a burden "protecting me" from my older male classmates would be for the institution in loco parentis, and the possible legal exposure. They admitted half a dozen young men my age or younger to that class. I went to Bryn Mawr instead, with plenty of honors. My Ivy League law school? Two different professors let me know I was taking up space and wasting training that a man with a family to support needed, as I was a mere dabbler who would likely quit as soon as she married and had babies. First non-

student job with the Federal government, Carter administration? One of 23 attorneys in the office, 4 of us female and under 30, carrying the same workload as Mad Men-era male colleagues, at least with the same pay, but not with the same mentoring and opportunity for professional advancement. Etcetera.

Fast forward 40 years, skipping over dozens of other experiences with institutionalized sex discrimination, and I still believe I can do anything. Include VOTE and PAY TAXES. Why doesn't my country acknowledge me and accord me equal status in all things?

"Women aren't equal in America? That is crazy, Mom!"

Dawn, Germany Resident, PA voter



Before we set off on the Women's March here in Munich in 2019, I told my children some of the reasons behind the March and they were genuinely shocked. I agreed with them and lamented, "I can't believe we are still having to fight this fight!" I want my daughters and my son to grow up being proud to be Americans - to know that they come from a society that is truly equal for all people. In 2021, sadly this is

still not reality for so many. We have so far to go with gender and race equality in the United States that sometimes it can feel overwhelming, but the ERA is our best tool to ensure women's equality is protected by law and we have to fight for it.

The last four years of (non)leadership within America has demonstrated the ever-present obstacle of misogyny and how important it is to have women's rights protected and enshrined in law. Achievements have been made and there is no doubt that Vice-President Harris is a role model for all Americans, but her extraordinary position is exactly why we need the ERA now.

Let's get to the point where a woman in a leadership role isn't extraordinary, it is just the norm.

[I Am Ashamed](#)

Salli Swartz - Living in France, Voting in PA



American women have been trying for almost a century to assure that they are accorded the same rights as men by inscribing such equal rights in our Constitution. And for close to 100 years, we have failed due to the refusal and fear of American men to legalize equality for over half of the population. That this is occurring in the richest Democratic country in the world makes me ashamed to be an American. We must continue our fight to get our equality enshrined in our Constitution so we can all be proud of freedom and

equality for ALL!

[In holding, I am held](#)

Carolyn, living in Germany, voting in Pennsylvania



As a child I knew that the ERA existed, and that its existence would matter. My country would care – about me. My country has a powerful and beautiful constitution, but for centuries, even this precious constitution did not actually protect the rights of women in their everyday – ordinary, simple, basic - pursuits of life, liberty and happiness. I have three sisters, five nieces and innumerable beloved women friends. The changes we could enjoy will take new awareness, advanced thought, and exceptional government.

As a little girl, I knew that the ERA existed, and that it would be good. It should be noted for both sides of this question that the full ratification of the amendment will not necessarily have a direct impact on existing laws, statutes, or lives. But its existence alone would be, for me, as essential and profound as the constitution itself. It is something we could hold onto, have faith in, and something to be proud of.

We all must keep pushing!

Candice Kerestan -- Pennsylvania voter in Germany



At its core, law is the expression of a society. It lays bare our ambitions, priorities, and boundaries as humans. It is the tangible and binding articulation of the society in which we want to live. The society I want to live in not only recognizes women and their contributions, but values them. It's one in which women aren't commanded to "shut their damn mouths and just let the men do the talking", as I was recently told. It's one where women are compensated fairly for their work.

It's one in which women can "climb the ladder" as fast and obstacle-free as their male counterparts. While I don't think my vision of society is too far-fetched, it's unlikely to fully materialize without reassessing how women are (or rather aren't) recognized under United States law. Until legislators on both sides of the aisle prioritize ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment, we cannot expect a culture that values women to take shape. That's why we all must keep pushing!

South Carolina

It's self-explanatory

Thorin, South Carolina voter in Germany

The United States has for too long touted the ideals of equality, without actually practicing them. The ERA is a crucial step toward equality for all in the United States. Our charge as Americans is to work for equality and equity at home so that everyone can prosper, everyone can participate in society, and everyone can benefit.

Tennessee

Language Matters

Lynda Sagrestano, Tennessee voter living in Germany

Photo: Lynda, left, in 1989, with sister Nancy and mother Loretta



I think I was always a feminist. As a child I grew up in a conservative Italian Catholic home in New Jersey, and my parents were active in local politics. I had heard about the ERA when I was young, but my mother said things about it that I now realize were the party line coming from Phyllis Schlafly and the conservative establishment. They claimed women were already equal under the constitution, as the language of “all men” included women. And so I believed them, too. I believe my mother was a closet feminist, but she did not know how to reconcile it with her strong beliefs about abortion. But she demonstrated her feminism in other ways. She actively volunteered with a home for pregnant teens who wanted to keep their babies, providing them shelter and access to education and employment when their families did not support their decision. She supported women candidates.

As a child I remember my parents hosting fundraisers at our home for Millicent Fenwick, a strong voice for civil rights and women’s rights, who was running for Congress (she served in the House from 1974 to 1982). I had to get out of my parents’ house to really question the messages of my childhood and start to think for myself. And that process was a huge awakening for me, culminating in several degrees in gender studies and a career focused on research and advocacy that is centered on women and girls reaching their full potential.

As a gender scientist, I can say with authority that language matters. We have so much evidence that when someone refers to men, people visualize men, not women. Language is power, and we need to create a constitution that truly includes equal rights for all people. In the 90’s when I got married, my mother, sister, and mother-in-law planned a shower for me, and the theme was “Lynda is a Feminist.” Along with the cake picturing Simone de Beauvoir and the Quotable Women book party favor, my MIL, long involved with a consciousness raising group focused on passing the ERA, led the guests in a rousing rendition of “I Am Woman.” It is among the most memorable moments of my life, and my MIL still hopes to see the passage of the ERA in her lifetime.

My mother passed away many years ago now, but I often wonder what she would think about politics today. I am choosing to believe that she would support the passage of the ERA, if not for herself, but for her daughters, granddaughters, and future generations. We owe our mothers and our daughters this legacy.

Don't let the fight for the ERA be something we pass down to future generations

Pam - TN voter living in Belgium



While we have made what are considered great strides over the last several decades in equality for women, we still have a ways to go for women to be considered and treated equally in the eyes of law and society. So long as we have to battle for every scrap at the table we'll never be equal.

Without the ERA, we will be forced to continually fight for our rights as equal citizens. Imagine if you could take all that passion and energy and channel it into other causes - imagine the great work we could do for our country. Don't let our granddaughters look back and say that they're still fighting the same battle their mothers, grandmothers, and great grandmothers were fighting. Pass the ERA so they can look back and say that they are equal citizens because we were finally able to do this for all women in our country. Pass the ERA and solidify the rights of all women.

ERA: For the Dads, and Moms, and especially the kids!

Sheri, I live in Sweden and vote in Tennessee

My husband was able to take paternity leave - what a bond that created with him and our kids! That was something my father couldn't have imagined. I've been better able to enjoy motherhood myself knowing I have a partner that can appreciate the daily demands of raising small children. Economically there are still barriers though. My husband can't imagine asking to work part-time to have more time with the family, whereas I can't imagine working full-time. So that has economic consequences especially on retirement savings. Yes, we've come a long way, but I see the ERA as a guidepost to help society and families modernize and take full advantage of all our talents regardless of our gender. And it's a safeguard too in times of extreme political shifts that our equal rights are protected under the law.

Texas

It's 2021 and Women STILL are NOT in the US Constitution

Shari Temple, Residing in Germany, Voting in Texas



How can it be that in 2021 that US women do not have rights guaranteed in the US Constitution? And how can it be that over 88% of all countries do but the US does not? That alone is my reason to support the Equal Rights Amendment. The ERA passed in the US House and US Senate in 1972, the year I graduated from college. I remember then, as I started my career, being surprised to learn how difficult it was for a woman to get a credit card. So many things have improved during my life for women but so many more

improvements are needed. I see the ERA as one way to improve equality for women in laws, rules, and hopefully also in behavior.

After retiring in 2016, I thought about the next phase of my life. I have several interest areas, but I concluded that for me, devoting my time to help women win equal rights in the US Constitution was where I wanted to focus my energy. I had spent the last 10 years of my career in the humanitarian aid sector. Hunger relief was a key part of that. Having spent lots of time in Africa, I realized there was a strong connection with women's rights and food on the table. So rather than focusing just on hunger relief, I decided that women's rights and issues were a higher priority. And the place where I could make an impact would be in the USA. I see the ERA as an opportunity for the US to demonstrate it cares about women. That act could encourage women in other countries to push harder for more gender equity in their country. The ERA is not a silver bullet to solve all gender equity issues however the ERA lays a foundation for equity in laws and rules that hopefully spills over into people's behaviors and beliefs.

I strongly believe that women must have equal rights spelled out in the US Constitution and the ERA is the way to do just that.

Mamaw

Quaide Williams, Lives in Germany, Votes in Texas



My "Mamaw" was born in 1925 in Menard, Texas and probably wasn't today's ideal of a "feminist" – but she influenced my life, and the way I think, more than anyone else in my "village"... When I was a young boy, she told me stories about how she worked as a teacher, earned her own money but couldn't make some financial decisions for herself – without the consent of her husband ("Papaw") or another male relative. It was the late 70s or the early 80s, and she said that things were "getting better" but that "we are still not even in the *** Constitution!" She talked to me

about abortion rights, how little girls are treated differently at home and at school than little boys, the "control" men had over women's lives. That said, I think it's fair to say that my

Mamaw had a thing or two to say to my Papaw about women's issues over the years. Papaw had issues he felt strongly about, for sure, but he was smart and probably never crossed her on any of her issues! She taught me that it is important how we raise our children, and what we say to them – especially our sons. And in the back of my head, I hear her words every time I talk to my sons, every time we talk about their mother, their grandmothers, etc. Dorothy Chapman White was a wonderful grandmother, and she taught me that "Men of quality respect women's equality"...

[It's Been Too Long Coming, But a Change Needs to Come!](#)

My name is Robert Scott, I vote in Texas, and I'm currently living in Germany



I was very active during the 1960s in the Civil Rights movement, and I can say that for most of my life I have been fighting for my Civil Rights. I am a Black man who has always thought myself to be well informed and very current on Civil Rights matters. It was not until 2019 that I first began to understand what the ERA was really all about, when a Democrats Abroad colleague explain the issue in a manner that it all registered for me. I had heard of the Equal Rights Amendment, but I had never thought of it as Civil Rights Legislation, again because I really did not know what it was all about. Little did I know that women had not been granted equal protection under the law in the U.S. Constitution.

My mother and grandmothers were some of the strongest women that I have ever known, and if anybody deserved equal protection under the law, they did. Most women that I have encountered in my lifetime were probably more deserving of those protections than most men that I know. Who would be against such an amendment passing? I really don't begin to understand what the opposition would have been in the past, nor what it is today to this amendment. This is a fundamental Human Rights! I understand the procedural hurdle of 38 states not having ratified the document in ten years, but why is that timeline sacred? Just drop the ten-year requirement! This is very important, and we have to get this done.

One hundred years to make this happen, come on we should be better than that! Please let's make this a reality now!

[Lock in the progress that we've made](#)

Amerika Garcia Grewal, From Fiji, Texas Voter

When I was in elementary school, I played tee ball and baseball on the boy's teams because my town didn't field teams for girls. When I went to college there were buildings with men's bathrooms and women's bathrooms on alternating floors because when some buildings were first built, they'd only included bathrooms for men in the floorplans. My first job after graduation, even though I negotiated for higher pay, new male hires made more than I did, a fact easily checked because state institutions had public budgets. When access

to facilities or pay or athletics is challenged, there's pushback. Often the burden is placed on the woman to prove that she has been disadvantaged. Thankfully while some of these discrepancies have been addressed over the years, they're too easily reversed, women can lose ground far faster than we were able to gain these rights. It's time to lock in the progress that we've made by adding the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution.

Utah

From Grandma's Pay Discrimination to A Protest Marcher Today – We need the ERA!

Merrill Oates, Utah voter in Hungary



I remember well when my grandmother, a university lecturer at BYU, (with whom I was living with at the time) informed the family that she had been refused an expected pay raise, to match the raises all the men in her department had received, with the explanation that “the men had families to support.” My grandmother was, in fact, the “bread-winner” supporting our household and the one solely caring for her extended family. It puzzled me then, as a young boy, and it

remains confounding to me now, how differences in hiring and compensation could be justified on the basis of sex, rather than appropriately based on competence and qualifications for one’s job.

While we, as a country, have no doubt made some progress since my grandmother was denied fair compensation based solely on her sex, there is still a prevailing premise of differences between men and women that has not yet been corrected in America and that leads to continued discrimination – both intentional and unintentional.

At a protest march a few years back, my photo was captured by a journalist and featured in Cosmopolitan Online magazine with the caption “woman holds protest poster”. I am not bothered in the least by any potential gender confusion here, but rather, I am proud to stand with all my fellow citizens in stating that we need to formally ratify and adopt the ERA to end any further forms of discrimination on the basis of sex.

Virginia

Women's rights are everyone's rights, including our children's

Carla, I currently live in Guatemala and vote in Virginia

When women are afforded the same rights as men, they thrive, their families thrive, their children thrive. As a Latina born in the US, I have been fortunate to have never felt the discrimination so many of my women friends have had to experience, whether they are white, black, Asian, Latinas like me or of another ethnicity. From being raped and abused, to being passed on for promotion, to earning less for equal jobs, women have suffered the consequences of been treated as unequal, as lesser than. It is high time that our Constitution make good on our forefather's intent that all people are created equal. Equal rights for women will have positive repercussions for families, our sons and daughters, as well as our careers, our communities, our country and our world. By passing the ERA you will be bringing light to darkness. You will be saying to your mothers, wives, daughters, granddaughters, women colleagues, friends, and employees that they matter, that they count, that you see them as equal. Thank you.

ERA for a young boy

Daniel James, Lives in Barcelona, Spain and Votes in Arlington, VA



When I was young, perhaps at the age of 10, I heard the term ERA for the first time. I was watching TV and people were saying some very bad things. I do not remember everything that they were saying but they probably mirrored the critics of that time in the early '70s.

I was very close to my Aunt Helen. She was my favorite aunt and I think she would like knowing that I was sharing that widely if she were alive. She was so smart, fun, and a risk-taker. She took me everywhere, taught me tennis, bought me cool records, and had a Thunderbird who would not like an Aunt like that? She asked me what did you hear about the ERA? I told her what I had heard and if I even knew what it was? I did not know at the time. She said let's read it together. She took me to her desk and she pulled out a

document from her top drawer. She said to read it with her. I liked reading and showing her I was a good reader so I read out loud to her. I will never forget reading the words 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. She asked me what do you think about that? I told her I thought it was great and why shouldn't everyone be treated equally? She said precisely, all people should be treated equally that is what the ERA says. My eyes still tear up when I read and hear those words because of the meaning of those words and I think of my Aunt Helen.

She has been gone for many years but she was a feminist, a leader, a psychologist, and a teacher and so influential on my thinking growing up, and even today I know now that the trajectory of my life changed that day starting on that afternoon. We know all over the world that when women are able to pursue their dreams, for work, family, professional life, business, government, or at home, that communities, countries, can thrive and are safe and more stable.

Men must also be part of this effort because equal rights make the lives of everyone better. My mother and my aunts were trailblazers and taught me to be courageous, curious, adventurous, and to love education to discover new things and places, and most importantly equality of rights. Helen is the one that taught me that day and that moment so many years ago, that everyone is equal. Justice must prevail and ERA needs to be added to the foundation of our Democracy. Not one more generation of women should contend with glass ceilings, unequal pay, or laws and rules that discriminate. The time is now.

Washington

Washington for Equal Rights!

Brooke, Proud Washington voter, living in Paris



Unbelievably, we are still considering whether or not to acknowledge, in legislation, that women have full and complete personhood. It should not be partisan, nor controversial, to declare in the law that equal protection, equal rights, and equal access to society for women should be enshrined in the US Constitution. As a Washingtonian, and graduate of Holy Names Academy (an all-girls high school in Seattle), I'm aware that there are a wide variety of views in WA about what *kind* of protections we should offer to women, specifically with respect to access to reproductive healthcare. Yet, as we are led by fantastic women at all

levels in Washington, like Senators Murray and Cantwell, the legacy of Governor Gregoire, and dynamic congresspeople like my 8th district's own Dr. Shrier.

I believe that our support for the ERA is essential. Washington leads the way in so many social and economic issues; there is no issue more fundamental than the equal rights of women. If support for the equal rights of women implies that we must make changes at the local, state, and national level, then the structures that need change *already* exist, and we should already feel called to change the structures that perpetuate inequality for women, especially women of color, in the United States. ERA Now!

For my mom

Kristy, Live in Germany, Vote in Washington



This is a picture of my mom and me at the Women's March in D.C. on Jan. 21st, 2017, her 73rd birthday. We'd been planning our trip to Washington for months - thought we'd be going to watch the first woman President get sworn in. My mom has fought for women's rights her whole life, so I thought she should be there on that historic day. I still hope we'll be there, when that day finally arrives. In the meantime, I'd like her to see passage of the ERA. FINALLY. That it's taken decades to accomplish is a blemish on our country. A

disgrace. If we are ever going to reach the American ideal that all are equal under the law, we can start with this one easy step, to declare that half of the country are not second-class citizens. Please extend the deadline for passage and give women the constitutionally protected equality every person deserves.

Second Class Citizens No Longer

Rachel Vette: Washington State voter, living in Scotland



Women have been second class citizens in the United States for too long and until our rights as equals are enshrined in the Constitution we will continue to be so. Unless we are considered equal in the eyes of the law, any equality we strive for elsewhere will fall short. Systemic bias will continue to flourish and women will continue to pay the price in their lives and livelihoods . How dare the United States preach superiority to the world when half of our population's rights are still not protected under the law? My home state of Washington ratified the ERA when my mother was still in high school; how much longer must we wait? As the Silent Sentinels asked in 1917, when campaigning for the basic human right of enfranchisement as citizens of their nation: "how long must women wait for liberty?"

Improving the quality of life for everyone

Jackie, voter in Washington State living in Spain



I live in a country, Spain, whose constitution dates from the same year (1978) that I first marched in support of the Equal Rights Amendment. The 14th amendment of the Spanish constitution declares that all Spanish people are equal under the law, and prohibits discrimination on the basis of birth, race, sex, religion, opinion or any other personal or social condition or circumstance. It saddens me to know that what was possible in a country which was emerging from a dictatorship that had lasted decades was not possible then in the US, and that such an amendment is still necessary today in the US today. In Spain both women and men have

benefited from the guarantees against discrimination by sex, and the same would undoubtedly be true in the US. It's time. It's past time. There's no time to waste.

Unequal pay!

Marylin, living in Hungary, voting in Washington



I was the CEO of multiple credit unions. During my tenure every position I took (I was a specialist for rehabilitating troubled credit unions). When I took my last position I, not only received awards and accolades for my work, but I had over 30 years experience. When I left that position with the credit union in a much more stable financial position, the

credit union hired a "fresh out of college" man at a salary that was over \$20,000 more per year than I was making. This happened at every credit union I worked at. I worked hard to

ensure our staff was paid equally based on experience. There is definitely a disparity of pay between men and women in the same position. The justification is that a man has to provide for the family and a woman's income is considered secondary. That is not the case and should not be a consideration for salary and benefits.

Leading the Way with the ERA

Theresa, living in Italy, voting in state of Washington



“Why do they call it ‘Apollo 11’ when we’re going to the moon, not the sun? It should be named after Artemis, Apollo’s twin sister, Goddess of the moon” I asked my science teacher in front of the class. I was twelve, and puzzled how scientists could make such an obvious mistake. “Well, maybe you should write them to ask!” she replied. So I did. And they surprisingly answered. Unfortunately their

generous packages the following two years were lost in the many moves we made. However I do remember their answer didn’t really stand up to my expectations. Why did they name the space program Apollo instead of Artemis? Well, I looked it up today. Abe Silverstein, who was the Director of the Space Flight Development proposed ‘Apollo’ “because it was the name of a god in ancient Greek mythology with attractive connotations and the precedent for naming manned spaceflight projects for mythological gods and heroes had been set with Mercury.”

So Artemis didn’t measure up? With today’s clear vision, we know why it wasn’t called Artemis 11. Men were in leadership and women weren’t. Men were astronauts, and women weren’t. No representation, and a lack of recognition, appreciation, value and equality for women- although it was a woman, astrophysicist Katherine Johnson, who got the Apollo 11 mission successfully to the moon and back that July 1969.

I understood at a young age that the patriarchy excluded women, exploited women, held them back, and were blind to their contributions and potential- which is precisely why we need the ERA. It is simply not fair, or just, when women’s efforts, excellence and equality aren’t recognized, they’re continually denied their place in history, and their value and contribution is undermined as “less than”. Without the ERA as the 28th amendment of the constitution, there is no gold standard for women. Statistics show the chance of women winning legal cases today is comparable to a coin toss, a 50-50 chance. With the ERA in the Constitution, women’s equality and protection under the law increases to 80%.

It wasn’t until 1983 that NASA allowed female astronauts. And it wasn’t until 2017, low and behold, NASA started an International human spaceflight program called Artemis. Apollo 11 on the moon in 1969, Artemis in 2024. Fifty-five years later, a female spaceflight will finally get to the moon. Why did NASA choose Artemis for the name? “The name is very symbolic, because Artemis was the twin sister of Apollo, whose name was called the first lunar mission of the USA. In addition, the choice of the goddess is associated with the intention to land the first female astronaut on the Moon in 2024.” Nice recovery. Recognition, Appreciation, Value, and Equality, #RAVE, four gold standards women deserve.

Wisconsin

Strong women

Wayne, Living in Germany, Voting in Wisconsin



I am a 52-year-old male who was raised by a strong mother who worked harder than anyone I know to raise and provide for her four children. My father's wage at a northern Wisconsin paper factory wasn't nearly enough to support our family, and my mother had an office job requiring many more skills and a higher level of education than my father's job. Nevertheless, she only earned about half of what my dad did. If the ERA had been passed decades ago,

our struggling middle-class family could have had a level of prosperity more reflective of the level of the work ethic and skills my mother brought into her work. Women have been the backbone of American families, providing for their children by working inside and outside of the home. It is an abomination that women still don't have complete equality in the US, and it is high time that all people in power step up to ratify the ERA.

Summary

Americans from all walks of life care about the Equal Rights Amendment. These stories from over 100 citizens currently living outside of the borders of the United States help demonstrate the need and desire for the ERA to become the 28th Amendment of our U.S. Constitution.

We hope that everyone that reads these stories will be compelled to make that a reality.

The time is NOW for the ERA!