

Dear Members of the Virginia Legislature:

In the name of helping women, a worthy goal, once again the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) advances on the Commonwealth of Virginia where forces with interests that don't involve women's true needs will argue that ERA is a solution to a problem it doesn't address. **Let us be clear, laws protecting women's interests will be undercut by the radical language of ERA** that strips away from women their unique place in the law. Not only will real protections be overwritten by this heavy-handed measure, the most profound change will be creating a constitutional foothold for abortion.

A vote in favor of ratifying ERA in Virginia will be a vote *against* women's interests, weakening their hard-won rights to advance abortion industry interests. In the coming days, we will be calling on Virginia legislators to support other measures designed to meet women's actual needs, but today, **we call for a NO vote on the ERA measure, to protect women's status in the laws already in place.**

ERA specifically states that a person's sex could not be considered in making a legal preference. With that in mind, consider the many protections designed for women that would be impacted and harmed including the Equal Pay Act of 1963; the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972; the Federal Minimum Wage Act of 1974, and the Pregnancy Nondiscrimination Act of 1964. In fact, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg wrote in *Sex Bias in the U.S. Code* that the ERA will change 800 federal laws including the elimination of social security benefits for wives and widows. The financial impact on women is incalculable, and ERA will do nothing to focus attention on sexual crimes against women, as a focus on women would be discouraged.

This is not the Equal Rights Amendment, but rather the Everything Related to Abortion Act, as this measure will in fact do what *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* do not -- create an actual place in our Constitution on which to hang the interest of the abortion industry.

Rather than empowering women, the radical ERA empowers courts, Congress and regulatory agencies among others to decide that a pet political project of theirs should have status and power of the law. Ironically, the arguments used for ERA in the 70s are moot today as laws requiring equal pay, forbidding discrimination by sex or barring entry into schools, the workplace or public life have long since been enacted. We are no longer in need of the women's movement of the 1970s; times have changed.

The issue today is not the absence of laws protecting women; the issue is a radical agenda of empowering abortionists with new, constitutional cover.

Abortion advocates including those at NARAL, the ACLU and Planned Parenthood, have argued in state courts that state-ERA laws require abortion on demand with taxpayer funding. In the states of New Mexico and Connecticut, courts have agreed that abortion should be covered by taxpayers based on their reading of ERA language similar to what has been proposed. At EqualRightsAmendment.org a Who's Who of abortion industry voices are all in unison about their desire for this to pass.

[Consider that](#) in *Doe v. Maher*, "the Connecticut Supreme Court wrote, 'Since only women become pregnant, discrimination against pregnancy by not funding abortions...is sex-oriented discrimination...The Court concludes that the regulation that restricts the funding of abortions...violates Connecticut's Equal Rights Amendment.' In *New Mexico Right to Choose, NARAL, et al v. Johnson*, the New Mexico Supreme Court ordered the state to pay for Medicaid abortions, saying the state could not differentiate between abortions and medical procedures sought by men. 'Equality of rights under law shall not be denied...on account of sex.'"

The abortion lobby consistently pushes a narrative that camouflages the many dangers of abortion. But pregnancy is not a disease cured by abortion, requiring that preborn life be ended.

The abortion industry, from day one, has used the courts to force an agenda that compassionate voters do not embrace. And even as legislators are asked to waste a valuable vote on ERA, this matter will

have to go to the courts as the deadline for ratifying ERA passed decades ago. Abortion advocates say they can win in court, but why waste the time of Virginia legislators or Virginia taxpayer dollars to work on a measure destined for the costly and time-consuming environment of the courts?

We believe that missing all the deadlines and failing to follow the lawful constructs of the political process is reason enough to vote NO as the measure wastes valuable time, money and political will to advance the agenda of aging feminists. This dated agenda is not worth the time or effort required to pass it or defend it in court and does not represent the needs of today's women.

Virginia can do so much more for the women of the commonwealth by voting NO on ERA ratification, and voting YES on things that actually help women achieve in the current marketplace. The Everything Related to Abortion Act should remain an historical footnote in the story of efforts to advance women's true needs in this country. We the undersigned urge you to vote NO on ERA and YES to matters that truly help empower women to realize their dreams and fulfill their potential, women born and preborn, who have moved past the dated agenda being pushed on the legislature today.

Regards,

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