



**IWV Strongly Opposes H.J. Res. 17, H.J. Res. 28,
And All Efforts To Resurrect The 1970s-era ERA**

March 10, 2021

Dear Member of Congress:

Independent Women's Voice (IWV), the leading women's organization advocating for policies that enhance women's freedom, choices, and opportunities, strongly opposes H.J. Res. 17, H.J. Res. 28, and all efforts to resurrect the moribund and mis-named Equal Rights Amendment (ERA).

In America in 2021, men and women are equal under the law. The ERA, which has not been ratified by $\frac{3}{4}$ of the States as required by Article V of the U.S. Constitution, would go much further, requiring the government to treat men and women exactly the *same* in all circumstances.

By prohibiting the government from ever distinguishing between males and females, the ERA would limit opportunities for women and girls, infringe on privacy, and, in some instances, place women and girls in harm's way. Moreover, it could require not just equal treatment of individuals, but equal societal outcomes for males and females as groups. In practice, this would:

- prohibit the state from operating or funding any female-only spaces, such as women's shelters, prisons, sororities, bathrooms, and sports teams;
- require women to register for the selective service and require the military to send equal numbers of women and men into combat; and
- eliminate countless programs designed to support women and girls—programs such as the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), federal grants that attempt to increase the participation of females in STEM, and grants administered pursuant to the Violence Against Women Act.

Those are just some of the downsides. Unfortunately, the ERA has no upside.

H.J. Res. 17, which seeks retroactively to “remove” the deadline for ratification of the ERA has one additional problem: It is unconstitutional, as the ERA expired last century. Any attempt to lift the ratification deadline and add the proposal to the Constitution without giving the States a fresh chance to debate and weigh in on the matter violates Article V, which requires contemporaneous approval by three-quarters of the States. H.J. Res. 17 would illegitimately short-circuit the constitutionally-mandated ratification process and deprive the American people of their right to fully consider the ramifications of the proposed amendment.

The ERA might sound nice, but it will not improve women’s lives. To the contrary, by prohibiting public policy from ever taking into account biology and common sense, the ERA would have significant negative consequences on women and girls.

Independent Women’s Voice, therefore, vigorously opposes H.J. Res. 17, H.J. Res. 28, and all efforts to resurrect the ERA, and we urge you to vote against these bills.

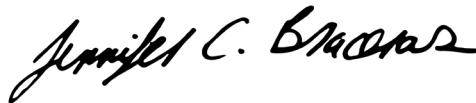
Sincerely,



Inez Stepman

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Independent Women’s Voice



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