



# The Equal Rights Amendment in 60 Seconds

## What's at Stake:

Women and men are equal, but we are not the same. The Equal Rights Amendment would harm women and girls by eliminating separate spaces for women and making it impossible for the law to recognize situations where women's unique vulnerabilities matter.

- The ERA would jeopardize hundreds of laws designed to specifically address the unique needs of women and the demands of motherhood, including:
  - The Women, Infants, and Children program
  - Spousal Social Security Benefits
- The ERA could take away women-only spaces such as:
  - sports teams
  - bathrooms and locker rooms
  - detention or prison centers
  - single-sex dormitories at public colleges and universities
  - sororities and other female-only clubs, singing groups, or health centers at state colleges and universities
  - shelters for the homeless / battered
- It could enshrine the right to an abortion in the Constitution, even requiring taxpayer funding of abortion.

## We don't need the ERA:

- **Women have the same rights under the Constitution as men.**
  - The 14th Amendment protects women from unfair discrimination.
  - Various federal and state laws protect women from workplace discrimination and guarantee equal pay.
- **Women are experiencing unprecedented prosperity, freedom and success.**
  - Lowest unemployment rate since 1965
  - Opening new businesses at high rates
  - Earning the majority of higher degrees
  - Comprising the majority of voters in nearly every election

## Ratification faces legal hurdles:

- While Congress approved the ERA in the 1970s, only 35 states had ratified it by the extended ratification deadline in 1982 (38 are needed).
- Nevada and Illinois have since ratified the amendment. But four states have rescinded their ratifications, and another's expired.
- In ERA proponents' conception of the amendment process, there is no way for an amendment ever to be rejected by the American people.

# Addressing Concerns:

CONCERNS	RESPONSES
<p><b>The ERA will help women by closing the pay gap and addressing the harassment highlighted by #MeToo.</b></p>	<p>Federal and state laws already prohibit sexual harassment and wage discrimination in employment. To the extent there exists a pay gap, it is primarily the result of women's and men's divergent choices: Women are more likely to work in lower-paying professions and to choose, flexibility and time with family over hours at the office and higher pay. The ERA will not change this.</p>
<p><b>The ERA needs just one more state and a simple majority vote in Congress to be ratified.</b></p>	<p>There are serious legal challenges to the ratification strategy proponents are pursuing. The strategy of combining ratifications from the 1970s with modern-day ratifications clearly violates the spirit of Article V, which sets a high bar to ensure that changes to the Constitution are only made with overwhelming popular support. Even Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, a proponent of the Amendment, has said ratification would require starting over.</p>