



The ERA is Back!

Why We MUST Stop the Equal Rights Amendment/Women's Equality Amendment

Most Americans have wrongly assumed that the proposed Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the U.S. Constitution has been dead and buried for over 25 years. In the 1970s and early 1980s, the effort to stop this anti-family and anti-motherhood amendment from being ratified was the key battle against radical feminists and other left-wing social engineers.

Indeed, many of today's pro-family organizations trace their origin to this issue. For many pro-family leaders of today, stopping the ERA was how they first became involved in the pro-family cause.

But the ERA is back. 1982 was the original deadline for ratification imposed by Congress. At that deadline date, the ERA was still three short of the 38 states needed to ratify it to make it part of the U.S. Constitution. Also by the deadline date, five of the states that had originally ratified it rescinded their approval. Yet pro-ERA supporters have recently introduced bills to ratify the ERA in several states, and have refused to acknowledge that any state could rescind its ratification.

They are now pushing Congress to create a new deadline for ratification. **They have recently introduced the same constitutional amendment in Congress,** but this time they are calling it the "Women's Equality Amendment" or the WEA.

At first glance, the ERA/WEA looks not only innocuous enough but even beneficial. It states that "*Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex.*" But to understand why it is at best misguided and at worst dangerous, it is only necessary to recall that **men and women are inherently different**, not only physically but also emotionally and psychologically.

Radical feminists and their liberal allies do not acknowledge these differences between men and women. Yet in the generation since the ERA was first introduced, scientific research documenting these differences has continued to mount. From the scientific perspective alone, the case against the ERA/WEA is far more conclusive than it was in the 1970s and early 1980s. **All healthy societies have recognized these differences by promoting dramatically different**

roles for men and women. They have recognized the fact that only women can bear and nurse children. Since the future of every society lies with its children, they have also recognized that **this essential role for women must be promoted and protected.** Our society currently provides protections for women and incentives and prerogatives for mothers. **The ERA would take all these away with disastrous consequences for our future.**

We can easily predict many of the harmful consequences that are likely to occur should the ERA/WEA pass, such as:

- Activist judges could use the ERA/WEA to **mandate same-sex marriage.**
- The **opportunity would be lost forever of overturning *Roe v. Wade*** and making abortion once again illegal in this country.
- If the military draft was reinstated, **all women would be subject to induction equally with men.** It would be illegal to prohibit them from serving in any combat situation or military specialty, regardless of the impact on unit effectiveness. They would be more vulnerable to abuse as prisoners of war, including rape.
- Inevitably, **more sexual issues will arise** with more women serving in the military and living in close quarters with men.
- **Adoption by same-sex couples could not be prohibited** or even specially regulated, since under the ERA/WEA, the proven benefits of having children raised by a male and a female could not even be considered.
- Terms such as **“man,” “woman,” “father,” “mother,” “husband” and “wife” would have to be struck** from all laws and regulations across the board.

Of equal concern are the yet unpredictable consequences that would undoubtedly result from such an amendment. **Because it is impossible to predict all of the ways that activist judges could apply this amendment,** the consequences could be much worse than we can now foresee. For example, activist judges have already interpreted state constitutional equal rights amendments to require abortion and same-sex marriage.

It is essential to understand that **this is precisely what backers of the ERA and WEA are counting on.** They are pushing these amendments in large measure to give activist judges all the opening they need to “legislate from the bench” all types of social engineering policies that they could never achieve democratically.

FWI is closely monitoring the ERA/WEA in Washington and in the target states. Sign up for our free e-newsletter at www.familywatchinternational.org to stay informed.