



Election Result Is Good News for Women and Girls Across America

RICHMOND, VA. (Nov. 5, 2019) – With a change in House leadership and a majority of equality candidates elected (55 in the House of Delegates and 26 in the Senate), Virginia is poised to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment during the 2020 legislative session. The ratification is supported by 83% of Virginians, according to a recent Washington Post-Schar School poll (September 2019).

The Equal Rights Amendment states: “Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex.” It authorizes Congress to pass legislation to enforce its mandate and will take effect two years after the date of ratification.

If the General Assembly approves the Amendment in the 2020 Session, Virginia will be the 38th and last state needed for ratification.

“People across the United States and Americans abroad watched our election tonight for this one issue,” said Kati Hornung, Campaign Coordinator for VARatifyERA. “It’s not a matter of party affiliation,” continued Hornung, “both Democrats and Republicans support — and will continue to support — the Amendment.” VARatifyERA’s calculations of equality supportive legislators are conservative, and based on incumbents’ prior votes and newcomers’ commitment to the Amendment.

Once ratified, according to Hornung, the ERA will have far-reaching impacts that will affect the daily lives of many women and their families.

Hornung explained, “the Amendment will provide a tool to challenge sex discrimination by the government. For example, it should provide a tool for challenging state action that results in 75-80% of women acting in self-defense going to jail or state inaction that leaves so many rape kits untested.”

Trish Wallace, an attorney volunteering with VARatifyERA, said the Amendment will also provide a basis for challenging government discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and sexual identity.

VARatifyERA is a campaign for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment that started in October of 2017 when representatives of many organizations came together and decided to work together under one umbrella. Some volunteers have been working for the ERA since before it was proposed by Congress in 1972 and others are not yet of voting age.

VARatifyERA is so confident of ratification that it is already planning an Equality Ball.

Hornung explained, “Women have been demanding constitutional equality for centuries, and with Virginia set to make history as the 38th state to ratify the ERA, you better believe that’s cause for a major celebration.”

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BACKGROUND ON SUPPORT: Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), has the support of 81% of Virginians according to a December 5th, 2018 Wason Center for Public Policy at Christopher Newport University poll. Constitutional scholars and legal professionals across the country assert that Virginia has the power to ratify the amendment, and should do so. Justices Antonin Scalia and Ruth Bader Ginsburg both noted that gender is not protected in the Constitution as does the 400,000 member American Bar Association (ABA) which sent letters to house and senate leadership on Jan. 2 as shown [here](#). Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring submitted a [formal opinion](#) last year underscoring the Commonwealth’s ability to ratify, noting the recent ratifications of Nevada (March 2017) and Illinois (May 2018).

For more information on the Equal Rights Amendment and Virginia’s campaign, visit www.VAratifyERA.org.

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