Resources at the Women and Leadership Archives

Chicago Metro History Fair 2024-2025

Rights & Responsibilities in History

ERA. We can—and must—win!

Six decades of struggle

Paula Kassell

The thousands who marched, the hours of lobbying, the months of organizing, the pamphlets, the passions and frustrations of those who work to finally bring women into the Constitution...

...the falsehoods, the innuendoes, the fears and ignorance of those who wish women would remain second-class citizens forever...

...all are part of the legislative history of the Equal Rights Amendment.

The last passions are being spent, the last lies told as we all count down the final months to the deadline for ratification.

IN CONGRESS

1923

The Equal Rights Amendment was first introduced in Congress, three years after the women's suffrage amendment was ratified.

1923-1972

Originally drafted by suffragist Alice Paul, it was introduced in Congress almost every year until 1972

The House of Representatives passed the ERA by a vote of 354-to-23 on Oct. 12, 1971. The Senate passed the ERA by a vote of 84-to-4 on March 22, 1972. The amendment was then sent to the states for ratification.

IN THE STATES

1972

Hawaii was the first state to ratify (within hours of the Senate vote). In all, 22 states ratified during the first year: Alaska, California, Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

1973

Eight states ratified: Connecticut, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oregon, South Dakota, Vermont, Washington and Wyoming.

1974

Three states ratified: Maine, Montana and Ohio.

1975

North Dakota ratified.

1977

Indiana became the 35th state to ratify.

1978

Deadline for ratification was extended by Congress from March 22, 1979 to June 30, 1982.

June 30, 1982

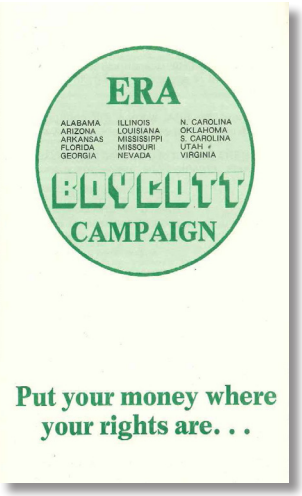
Deadline for ratification. Three more states must ratify. Fifteen states have not ratified: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Utah and Virginia.

May June 30, 1982 be wiped forever from our history, replaced by a new final entry—THE DATE OF RATIFICATION!

Excerpted and adapted from information provided by ERAmerica.

ALICE PAUL, author of the ERA, toasts the National Women's Party Flag after passage of Suffrage.

The Equal Rights Amendment



The Women and Leadership Archives (WLA) welcomes History Fair students!

Located in Piper Hall, the WLA is on Loyola University Chicago's Lake Shore Campus at 970 W. Sheridan Rd, Chicago, IL. The WLA is open by appointment only, Monday-Friday 9am-4:30pm. We are sometimes able to offer special/weekend appointments with advance notice. Find more information at luc.edu/wla/contactinfodirectionshours

Explore collections at: luc.edu/wla | WLArchives@luc.edu | 773-508-8837

Individual vs. Collective Rights

These collections represent the responsibility assumed by individuals and groups to advance the rights of themselves and others. They did this work through service, activism, and elected office.

*Carol Moseley Braun Papers *Homemakers' Equal Rights Association Records
*Zonta International Oak Park Records

Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)

The Equal Rights Amendment, first introduced in 1923, would legalize gender equality. While it has not yet been passed, it made significant headway in the Senate in the 1970s. These collections contain materials from the grassroot efforts that promoted the ERA around this period.

*Homemakers' Equal Rights Association Records *8th Day Center for Justice Records
*Women and Children First Records

The Right to Health, Safety, and Wellbeing

These collections reflect efforts to ensure these rights are equally enjoyed by everyone, including by women, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

*Ruth Dear Papers *Chicago Woman's Club Records *IMPACT Chicago Records

Equal Rights in the Church

The Christian and Catholic church have historically been dominated by men. The organizations in the following collection made progress in elevating the place of women and queer people in church services and community.

*8th Day Center for Justice Records *FutureChurch Records
*Massachusetts Women-Church Convergence

Images: Homemakers' Equal Rights Association Records