

Paul Thissen

District 61B
Hennepin County



Minnesota House of Representatives

March 24, 2015

HOUSE DFL LEADER

Majority Leader Joyce Peppin
Minnesota House of Representatives
459 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Majority Leader Peppin:

I write to request that you grant a hearing on House File 212 - a resolution urging Congress to remove the deadline for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. The bill was introduced in the House on January 15, 2015. It was referred to the Committee on Rules and Legislative Administration. The companion to the bill met committee deadline in the Senate and is currently awaiting action on the floor of the Senate.

For the past 239 years, our nation has been on a continuous pursuit of attempting to perfect itself, and ourselves, with each successive generation; to anticipate the problems of the future and addressing the wrongs of the past. Undoubtedly, we have overcome many challenges, but we still have many more to overcome. One of those great challenges is overcoming a legacy in our country of failing to provide equality of opportunity and fair treatment for our women and girls.

As the Majority Leader of the Minnesota House of Representatives, you have great influence in leading our state on key issues of national importance. In my opinion, ensuring equality of opportunity and fairness for our women and girls is of national importance and imperative. More personally, we're both parents of girls who deserve just as much opportunity for success as any boy.

The facts are startling. While we've made progress, we still have significant barriers for our women and girls: Twice as many elderly women live in poverty as elderly men, the pay gap between men and women of color is nearly 40%, and the list goes on. What's clear is that despite our policy efforts, women continue to face structural and institutional barriers to equal opportunity.

Part of how we address these structural and institutional challenges is by securing permanent rights and status that are not subject to the whims of a particular election, but are rather codified



in our country's most foundational documents and will live, beyond any particular person. The right of women to be equal is not an issue subject to a policy debate; it's an American value.

I hope you will strongly consider granting a hearing and, ultimately, passing House File 212, authored by Representative Rena Moran.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul Thissen". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Paul Thissen,

Minority Leader, Minnesota House of Representatives