



THE HOUSE OF HOPE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PEACE AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE POSITION STATEMENT / ACTION PLAN FOR THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (ERA) October 2018

Position Statement:

“The Peace and Justice Committee supports actions by House of Hope Presbyterian Church and by church members to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment into our national and state constitutions.”

Though the ERA passed through the U.S. House & Senate in 1972 and was sent to states to be ratified, it fell three states short of the 38 states or 3/4 needed for ratification due to a 10-year deadline causing the effort to lapse in 1982. Now revived efforts are strong across the nation to finally ratify it, and legislation is already in place both statewide & nationally, backed by organizations like ERA Minnesota, the League of Women Voters, YWCA, NOW, AAUW, Women’s March & ERA Coalition, Equal Means Equal, Katrina’s Dream, ZONTA and many other state and national coalitions engaged in constitutionalizing equality.

Equal rights under the law as a constitutional guarantee have not been fully extended to women in our homes, businesses, and courts of law. The Equal Rights Amendment, written in 1923 and modeled after the 19th Amendment which it mirrors, simply states, “Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex”.

The Presbyterian Church threw its support behind ratifying the ERA back in the 1970’s. Last year, for the first time in forty years, Nevada ratified the ERA leaving only two more states needed to meet the ¾ threshold for ratification. This year Illinois became the 37th state to ratify the ERA. Now only one more state is needed for passage. Likely un-ratified states vying to be the final state to ratify the ERA in 2019 are Virginia, Arizona, Georgia, North Carolina, Florida and Missouri.

24 states have state ERA’s in their constitutions. Minnesota ratified the federal ERA in 1973, however we still do not have an ERA in our state constitution. Now most of the historic objections to the ERA have already come to pass without an ERA: i.e. same-sex marriage, women in combat and unisex public bathrooms.

The ERA will provide constitutional protection against discrimination on the basis of gender, making the law a stronger shield against pay inequity, domestic and sexual violence, pregnancy discrimination, and unjust laws that discriminate against men. It’s time to finally give women the same constitutional guarantees as men.

ACTION PLAN:

The House of Hope Church (HoH) Peace & Justice Committee supports the push to ratify the ERA both at the state and national levels. The Peace and Justice Committee will inform the congregation of legislation on a national and statewide level that will advance and Equal Rights Amendment into our state and national constitutions. If you would like to become involved, contact Betty Folliard at betty.folliard@gmail.com.