



September 28, 2022

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Schumer,

The League of Women Voters of the United States writes to urge you to schedule a vote on S.J. Res. 1. This resolution would eliminate the timeline for ratification of the *Equal Rights Amendment* (ERA). The ERA will constitutionally protect the equality of rights under the law regardless of sex and is necessary to uphold the rights of more than half of the nation's population. The resolution passed in the House with bipartisan support multiple times and is led by Senators Murkowski and Cardin.

Women gained the right to vote over 100 years ago, but it is past time to protect equality for women in the US Constitution. Despite the significant legal and legislative advances that have been made in recent decades, women continue to face discrimination on the basis of sex. The symptoms of this systemic discrimination are apparent in the ongoing fights against unequal pay, workplace harassment, pregnancy discrimination, domestic violence, and limited access to comprehensive health care. It is not enough to treat the symptoms; we must address the root cause of inequality. This need is apparent in the Supreme Court's ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, which erodes a fundamental right that women and people who may become pregnant have held for nearly 50 years. We have already seen the devastating consequences of this decision, which underscores the vital need for constitutional protections against the denial of equal rights.

The ERA has satisfied all ratification requirements in Article V of the Constitution and should be added as the 28th Amendment. In 1972, Congress passed the ERA with well over the necessary two-thirds vote and sent it to the states. It has been over two years since Virginia became the 38th state to ratify the amendment, fulfilling the three-fourth state ratification requirement. The best way to ensure that the will and ratification rights of the states are respected is by removing all barriers blocking the ERA from being published.

Congress has an established basis of authority to remove the time limit on the ratification of the ERA. The idea of time limits on constitutional amendments is a modern congressional addition to the amendment ratification process. Before the twentieth century, there was no discussion of imposing a time constraint on the states' consideration of a proposed amendment. Further, the timeline for ratification contained in the ERA does not appear in the amendment itself but its resolving clause. As such, Congress is now responsible for passing a joint resolution to eliminate the arbitrary time limit and declare the Amendment ratified.

The League of Women Voters supports equal rights for all regardless of sex and, as an organization that defends democracy, believes there cannot be a time limit on establishing equality. The passage of S.J. Res. 1 will remove the ratification timeline and enable the publication of the ERA, a vital step to ensure genuine equality under the law for every person in the nation. The time is now.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Virginia Kase Solomón". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Virginia Kase Solomón
CEO