



US WOMEN'S CAUCUS

Feminist Advocacy at the UN

What is the ERA?

The Equal Rights Amendment was first written by Alice Paul and Crystal Eastman in 1923 to ensure that the equal rights of US women would be guaranteed by the Constitution. The Amendment was introduced in every session of Congress until finally passing in 1972 with this wording: "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 Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article."

How many states ratified the Amendment?

As specified by the Constitution, the Amendment was sent to the states for ratification, with a minimum requirement of 38 ratifications. The Congress imposed a seven-year deadline for states to ratify the Amendment and later extended it by three years. By 1982, however, only 35 states had ratified and the Amendment was defeated.

In 2017, the Amendment garnered renewed interest and the state of Nevada ratified it. Illinois followed suit in 2018. On January 15, 2020, Virginia became the 38th state to ratify the Amendment, pushing it over the required Constitutional bar.

What happened to the deadline?

Congress imposed the 1982 deadline and many argue that Congress can change that deadline. The US House of Representatives voted on March 17, 2021 to waive the deadline, and the US Senate has not yet voted.

Does the US Women's Caucus at the UN support the Equal Rights Amendment?

Yes! We feel that our Constitution should guarantee equal rights for women as specified in the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We have joined the ERA Coalition that advocates to waive the deadline and add the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution.

Resources

[History of the Equal Rights Amendment](#)

[Equal Rights Coalition](#)

[Alice Paul Institute Resources](#)

[Equality Now](#)

Submitted by Susan Lee