

Equal Rights Amendment, Ratification Demonstrations, 1970s

VIRGINIA ERA CENTRAL

Box 962 • Court House Station • Arlington, Virginia 22216

Room 212, Raleigh Hotel
Box 12462, Richmond, Va. 23241
(804) 648-2665

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LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN # 1

Friday, 25 January 1974

ERA GATHERING SUPPORT

The Equal Rights Amendment will be introduced in both houses of the General Assembly with a substantial number of co-patrons. Chief patron in the House of Delegates will be Dorothy McDiarmid (D-Fairfax County). The following Delegates have already signed on as co-patrons:

7th District: Ray L. Garland
11th District: Joan S. Jones
15th District: A. R. Giesen, Jr., J. Marshall Coleman
17th District: Raymond R. Guest, Jr.
18th District: Dorothy S. McDiarmid, Carrington Williams,
Raymond E. Vickery, Jr.
19th District: Thomas J. Rothrock
22nd District: Mary A. Marshall, John L. Melnick, Warren
G. Stambaugh
23rd District: Ira M. Lechner
24th District: Lewis F. Fickett, Jr.
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33rd District: Eleanor P. Sheppard
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Robert E. Washington
40th District: Owen B. Pickett, Glenn B. McClanan
41st District: Lester E. Schlitz
42nd District: Joseph William O'Brien
51st District: George W. Grayson

That's 25, a quarter of the House. If your man isn't on this list, write and ask why. (The only woman not on the list is Eva May Scott, who represents Dinwiddie, Lunenburg, and Nottoway counties, Phyllis Schlafly, and Stop ERA.) Please send us whatever reply you get.

We'll report on the Senate next week.

WRITE TO YOUR LEGISLATOR(S) AT 8th STREET OFFICE BUILDING,
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23219

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4. The "hot" issues (other than ERA) are pari-mutual betting, blue laws, death penalty, state lottery. Write separate letters to each legislator giving your views on each of these, with a last sentence or short paragraph about ERA. That way you can write a letter every week without overdoing it.

Constituent mail is super-IMPORTANT to legislators!!!!

MIND YOUR MANNERS

We must repeat, though we regret the necessity, that all pro-ERA persons must be on their best behavior. Don't fail to convey your sense of urgency about ratification of ERA, but do it with good taste and good manners. Dorothy McDiarmid, Elise Heinz, and ERA supporters in their home district had to work overtime last week to salvage a couple of co-patrons who had been publicly abused and villified by an overly enthusiastic pro-ERA constituent. Don't make us cope with the adage that "With friends like that, who needs enemies?"

HOUSE COMMITTEE IMPROVES

Our first concern is getting the Amendment to the floor to be voted upon. After the House Privileges and Elections Committee's 13-2 negative vote last year, this was a very major problem. It still is. But

Speaker John Warren Cooke has increased the committee from 15 to 20 members. Including one existing vacancy, that made 6 new appointments. Five of the six new members are known to support ERA -- three are co-patrons. The committee members now are (with party affiliation and district number):

Thomson (Chairman) (D-21st)	Pendleton (D-11th) (new)
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If you have a delegate on this list, it's IMPERATIVE that you write, telegraph, visit, to say that he should vote for ERA, and he MUST vote to send it to the floor even if he reserves the right to vote against it once it gets there. (* indicates co-patrons.)

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We don't know exactly which legislators were there, because some came but failed to pick up their name tags. So we can't ask you to chide the absentees. The legislators who came tended to be those already on our side, which is too bad. But many of those who oppose ERA or are undecided were favorably impressed, either because they were there or because of surprisingly good coverage in the Richmond newspapers.

MAINE AND MONTANA RATIFY

Maine ratified the Equal Rights Amendment on Friday, January 18, and Montana followed on Monday, January 21. The pattern continues of our Amendment's doing better the second time 'round. In 1972, unfavorable votes occurred in Vermont, Connecticut, Illinois, and Oklahoma. Vermont and Connecticut ratified in 1973, the Illinois House voted 95-75 in favor instead of 73-69 against but ran into a rule (probably unconstitutional) requiring a 60% majority, and Oklahoma improved from 52-36 to 53-45.

The Montana vote was its Senate's 14th, following 13 tie votes last year. ERA passed the Maine House 74-72 last year, 78-68 this year; the Maine Senate last year defeated it 17-16, this year ratified 19-11. The anti's worked hard, even importing Phyllis Schlafly. But ERA is an idea whose time has come. They may delay ratification a year or two, but ratified it will surely be, well within the 7-year time limit.

But -- let's have Virginia participate, not drag its heels for fifty years after the rest of the country guarantees equal rights for men and women. Remember, Virginia didn't certify its ratification of the women's suffrage amendment until 1970, fifty years after that one had become part of the U.S. Constitution.

ANTI'S ATTACK N.O.W.

Some of you may have encountered anti-ERA propaganda giving equal attention to attacks on the Amendment and attacks on the National Organization for Women (NOW). They're crediting NOW with most of the pro-ERA efforts, and saying its real interests are pro-lesbian legislation and destruction of the family.

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Don't let them convince anybody that all ERA supporters fit the Bella Abzug-Gloria Steinem-Betty Friedan mold. We're responsible citizens of Virginia, not New York radical feminists. We're anxious to admit women to full participation in today's society, not to destroy it.

REPORT ON TASK FORCE STUDY

The result of the ERA study committee's efforts has been made public. Rather than a thorough and complete study of the Amendment's probable effect on Virginia law, it turns out to be a rather spotty composite. It consists of four separate reports of four task-force members.

(The 1973 General Assembly adopted a resolution directing the Privileges and Elections Committees of both Houses to conduct the study; they appointed a subcommittee of 3 senators and 3 delegates; they appointed a task force of 5 distinguished Virginia lawyers.)

The first report, by Robert E. R. Huntley (President of Washington & Lee University) covers labor and employment, and concludes that ERA would have "little impact on Virginia law" in this area -- largely because Virginia has never had much "protective" labor law.

The second, by William F. Swindler (Professor of Law at William & Mary) deals with property rights, and concludes that men and women already have identical property rights in Virginia. The only effect of ERA in this area would be to reinforce the intent of existing laws.

The third report, by Carroll Kem Shackelford (practicing attorney in Culpeper) deals with domestic relations and family law. Mrs. Shackelford concludes that the statutory changes required to base rights and duties on function instead of gender would be minimal. The

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Staff Photo by Bob Brown

Jean Marshall Clarke of National Organization for Women Is Taken From Grounds

Citation: "Jean Marshall Clarke of National Organization for Women is Taken from Grounds," photograph by Bob Brown, *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, February 10, 1978.