



U.S. Faith Leaders Call for Immediate Recognition of the Equal Rights Amendment

*On the 50th Anniversary of the ERA, Diverse Faith Leaders Are United:
Women Must Be Equal Under the Law*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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March 22, 2022 | Washington, D.C. - On the 50th Anniversary of the Equal Rights Amendment, a diverse, multifaith coalition of U.S. faith leaders is voicing moral support for the ERA and calling on public officials to acknowledge its status as the duly ratified 28th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Although religious opposition has historically played a notable role in frustrating the long running movement for women's equal rights in the United States, today hundreds of faith leaders are stepping forward and speaking out in unequivocal support of the ERA.

The #Faith4ERA campaign includes over a dozen national faith organizations that represent a diversity of religious traditions, all united in support of equality under the law. Some 560 faith leaders nationwide—including Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, and Hindu advocates—have already signed the campaign's [Interfaith Statement of Support for the ERA](#). It proclaims a shared belief that:

"all people are equally valuable in the sight of their Creator, and thus deserve equal regard in human laws and legal systems."

Many religious leaders are moved to champion the ERA due to concern for high maternal mortality, pervasive violence against women, harmful pregnancy discrimination, the gender wage gap, and other abuses that remain widespread



under the current legal framework. The ERA would offer new legislative and judicial avenues for responding to problems of injustice plaguing U.S. mothers and their families, and most harshly impacting communities of color.

Religious opponents typically cite fears that the ERA might somehow buttress abortion rights, but leaders within the #Faith4ERA campaign are pushing back on this argument as unwarranted by legal precedent. They point out that the ERA is needed to remedy violent, often lethal problems of gendered injustice, and that it carries historic potential to safeguard women against abuse, which would benefit their children and families in the process.

Allyson McKinney Timm, founder and executive director of **Justice Revival**, explained:

“As people of faith who value the sacredness of human life, we at Justice Revival care deeply about women, mothers, and their families. In order to save lives, we must work to end violence against women, and the ERA is essential to this goal. In order to support America’s families, we must work to end the gender wage gap, pregnancy discrimination, and the economic hardship that falls so heavily on mothers and other women. Here again, the ERA is crucial. Ensuring the safety and well-being of women by affirming the ERA is a just and a life-giving path, which will uplift our nation as a whole.”

Gina Kelley, Government Relations Specialist at **NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice**, pointed to her organization’s long history of advocacy for the ERA and its continued relevance today:

“Shortly after NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice opened its doors in 1972, our founding Sisters supported the ratification of the ERA. Fifty years later, our faith calls on us to continue vocal support for the ERA to affirm the dignity of women and promote gender equity. NETWORK Lobby and its community of Catholic Sisters and justice-seekers have spent decades advocating for federal legislation that promotes the economic security of women and people of color who disproportionately face systemic barriers such as wage divides, pregnancy discrimination, and worse health outcomes. The ERA is crucial in ensuring legislative solutions to these problems are



supported by our Constitution. As people of faith, we know that the ERA is necessary to creating a just and equitable society for all.”

Paola Fuentes Gleghorn, Immigration and Women and Girls Campaign Manager at **Sojourners**, underscored how the ERA reflects Christian faith values:

“As Christians, it is our conviction of faith that every person, regardless of sex, gender, race, ethnicity, ability, and sexual orientation, is made in the image of God. That understanding, that conviction, means that any kind of discrimination, any kind of assault on the dignity of women and LGBTQ people, is an affront of our faith. We must seek to protect and promote the inherent human dignity and worth of each person. The ERA reflects and promotes these values by guaranteeing equal treatment under the law. The ERA will promote an equal justice under the law, reducing gender economic inequity, pregnancy discrimination, gender-based violence, sexual harassment, and other forms of systemic gender injustices in society. Let us put our faith into action to make the ERA the law of the land.”

Tim Whitaker of **The New Evangelicals** echoed this sentiment:

“As Jesus people, we believe that equity and the fair treatment of all people are core to thriving societies which is why we support the ERA.”

Ani Zonneveld, founder and president of **Muslims for Progressive Values**, warned about the risk of allowing religious objections to foreclose gender equality in a democracy:

“As a feminist Muslim woman, I know what theocracy looks like and it is a path to becoming a failed state. No interpretation of religion should infringe on a woman's right to self-determination and happiness.”

The ERA was passed by a bipartisan supermajority of Congress on March 22, 1972 and has since been ratified by 38 states, or the required three-fourths of states. A renowned group of legal scholars maintains that the ERA has now met all requirements for recognition as the 28th Amendment. Advocates and lawmakers



celebrated January 27th, 2022 as the amendment's effective date, despite procedural objections currently being litigated in federal court.

Mary E. Hunt, co-director of the **Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual (WATER)** in Silver Spring, Maryland, expressed strong support for the ERA as an idea whose time came many years ago:

"It falls now to people of faith and good will to operationalize equality as an integral part of U.S. democracy," she explained.

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[Justice Revival](#) is a diverse, inclusive community of Christian faith and a leading voice for human rights in the United States. See the [Justice Revival Press Kit](#).

[Allyson McKinney Timm](#), founder of Justice Revival, is a human rights lawyer and faith leader with two decades of experience defending the dignity and rights of those on the margins, in the U.S. and globally. Timm is available for interviews and further commentary via Justice Revival's press contact.

Founded by Catholic Sisters in the progressive spirit of Vatican II, [NETWORK](#) works to create a society that promotes justice and the dignity of all in the shared abundance of God's creation. Today, our community continues to educate, organize, and lobby for economic and social transformation.

Ani Zonneveld is founder and president of [Muslims for Progressive Values](#), values that are rooted in human rights and social justice for all.

[The New Evangelicals](#) is a digital community centered on Jesus and committed to pushing the church forward through accountability. Tim Whitaker is the creator of The New Evangelicals. He is committed to the work of holding space for the voices that the Church has marginalized.

[WATER](#) is a non-profit educational center and public charity in Silver Spring, MD, USA, that focuses on feminist work in religion. [Mary E. Hunt, Ph.D.](#), is a Catholic feminist theologian who is cofounder and codirector of WATER.