



Faith Leaders Urge Senate to Recognize Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

*Violence Against Women, Gender Pay Gap, Pregnancy Discrimination
Inspire Religious Support for Gender Equality*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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February 28, 2023 | Washington DC - The Senate Committee on the Judiciary convened a hearing on the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) this morning to consider bipartisan legislation that would recognize the ERA as a valid part of the U.S. Constitution and remove the arbitrary time limit on its ratification. Committee Chairman Dick Durbin (D-IL) presided.

A diverse, interreligious coalition of faith groups and leaders are among the pro-equality advocates voicing support for the resolution, in a year marking the 100th anniversary since suffragist Alice Paul first introduced the ERA in 1923. The [#Faith4ERA campaign](#), led by Justice Revival, includes Catholic, Evangelical, Jewish, Muslim, Protestant, Sikh, and other religious leaders across the country that are united in support of gender equality under the law. A dozen religious organizations representing over 400,000 Americans support the campaign.

On behalf of the #Faith4ERA campaign, Justice Revival submitted [testimony](#) to the committee emphasizing the urgency of recognizing the ERA as the 28th Amendment. The testimony affirms that “all people are equal in dignity and worth before God” and deserve equal protection under the law. The testimony identifies the importance of the ERA for addressing various injustices that women disproportionately suffer in the U.S., including sexual and domestic violence, pregnancy and pay discrimination, and needlessly high maternal mortality.

It explains that “As people of faith, we believe that recognizing the ERA as the 28th Amendment is fundamentally the right thing to do—from the perspective of American democratic values, human rights ideals, and the conviction that all people are equal in dignity and worth before God.”

At the hearing, witnesses Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD), Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Juliana Stratton (Lieutenant Governor, IL), Kathleen Sullivan (legal expert), and Thursday Williams (ERA Coalition board member and youth advocate) powerfully testified that:

- The ERA is a clear, straightforward equality provision. It is integral to upholding the rights of women and gender minorities, in the context of continued threats.

- The ERA has overwhelming public support, and most Americans believe that the ERA has already been recognized as part of the U.S. Constitution.
- There should be no time limit on equality. After 100 years of struggle, the ERA is long overdue.
- Now that 38 states have ratified the ERA, it is and should be recognized as valid.

Following the testimony, Allyson McKinney Timm, Founder and Executive Director of Justice Revival, said:

“Our constitution is more than a legal charter; it is a moral document. More than any other aspect of our legal framework, it reflects and influences the vision and values of American democracy.

Until our constitution reflects the bedrock principle of equal rights, we will be ill-equipped to overcome violence against women, pregnancy discrimination, and all the forms of gender-based injustice that women have fought for generations. After 100 years of struggle, we must do better, without delay. For the sake of working mothers, sexual violence survivors, and all of our daughters and granddaughters, Congress should respect gender equality by recognizing the ERA.”

Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD), a chief co-sponsor of the resolution, remarked that “the ERA is all about equality, the most fundamental of American values.”

Co-sponsor Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) summarized her support for the resolution: “Women should have equal treatment to men under the law and Congress should do all it can to ensure that the ERA is finally made part of the Constitution.”

Illinois Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton explained that the COVID-19 pandemic has “deepened economic disparities” that women have faced for generations, and emphasized that the equal pay protections the ERA is expected to strengthen will carry “particular significance to women of color.”

Kathleen M. Sullivan, Senior Counsel at the law firm of Quinn Emmanuel and former dean of Stanford Law School, testified that the deadline imposed on ERA ratification by a previous congress is not a barrier to Congress recognizing the ERA today. That deadline was not contained in the text of the amendment ratified by the states, but relegated to an advisory preamble. “Preambles can have eloquent power,” she explained, “but they do not drive the interpretation of an amendment to the Constitution.”

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[Justice Revival](#) is a leading Christian voice for human rights in the United States and home to the #Faith4ERA campaign. As a diverse, inclusive community, Justice Revival inspires, educates, and mobilizes people of faith to respond to the call to justice by defending the human rights of all.