

THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT-THE GOOD NEWS

In 2017 Nevada ratified the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA); in 2018 Illinois did the same. In the last few days, the Virginia Senate Committee passed it and passed it out of the full Senate. Now, it is assigned to the VA House Privileges and Elections Committee. No hearing has been held yet in that committee. When Virginia passes the ERA, the required number of states (38) will have ratified. Unless there are some legal challenges (and there may be), the ERA will be the law of the land.

This has been a long time coming. The ERA was originally written in 1923. It was approved at the Federal level in 1972 and sent to the states for ratification, as is the procedure for amendments to the Federal Constitution. By the deadline in 1982, it was still three states short of ratification. Various states have worked on it in the interim and it has been re-introduced at the Federal level.

Currently, the states which have not ratified are Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Virginia, Utah, Arizona, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina and North Carolina.

In Missouri the Senate (Senator Jill Schupp) and the House (Representative Judy Morgan) have filed it in recent years; both legislators have filed in again in their respective bodies. Last year, it got a hearing in the Senate Committee but no action was taken.

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