

December 18, 2024

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

As women of the labor movement, representing the strength, diversity, and resilience of working people across the nation, we write to urge you to take immediate action to certify and publish the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in the Constitution. It is time to take the steps necessary to enshrine gender equality as a foundational promise of our democracy.

The ERA has met every constitutional requirement to become law. Ratified by 38 states, it is no longer a question of legality, but of leadership. We call on you, Mr. President, to instruct the United States Archivist to publish the ERA without delay, making the United States Constitution explicitly protective of gender equality.

Our workplaces, homes, and communities are shaped by the persistent challenges of inequality. Women—particularly women of color, immigrants, and LGBTQ+ individuals—disproportionately experience pay gaps, workplace harassment, and limited opportunities for advancement. Through our work in the labor movement, we see the aspirational become realized when the playing field is leveled to create opportunities for all people to build a better life for themselves and their families. Every day, educators, nurses, health care professionals, service workers, caregivers, hotel workers, tradeswomen and other women all over our nation go to work and carry forward the fight for basic dignity, fairness, and justice for all. These struggles are compounded by systemic barriers that the ERA would help dismantle.

The ERA is not just a legal tool; it is a symbol of our collective values. As Alice Paul said when she first drafted the ERA nearly a century ago, "Freedom from sex discrimination is a basic human right." Decades later, we march to the same drumbeat, joining generations of suffragists, labor organizers, and activists who demanded that equality knows no qualifiers.

The urgency of this moment cannot be overstated. We have seen the rollback of hard-fought protections and the weaponization of government against those who dare to demand better. Certifying the ERA would not only protect us from future threats but also serve as a beacon of hope, affirming that America values and protects all its people equally.

As union women, we are also inspired by the Broadway musical *Suffs*, which honors the courageous suffragists who paved the way for us. In the stirring words of the song *Keep Marching*:

"It's a long, hard road, but we know the way.
So we'll keep marching, keep marching,
Marching till the day."

We have marched, Mr. President. Through picket lines, protests, and negotiations, we have carried the cause of justice forward. Now, we look to you to march with us. You have the power to take this historic step, not just for us, but for our daughters and sons, for every American who believes in equality under the law.

Mr. President, your legacy will be defined by what you choose to protect and advance. By publishing the ERA, you can ensure that gender equality is no longer a contested battleground but a constitutional guarantee.

Respectfully,

Randi Weingarten, President, American Federation of Teachers
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Liz Shuler, President, AFL-CIO
Becky Pringle, President, NEA
Ai-jen Poo, President, National Domestic Workers Alliance
Sara Nelson, President, Association of Flight Attendants-CWA
Gwen Mills, President, Unite Here
Fran Drescher, President, SAG-AFTRA
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Gabrielle Carteris, President, International Federation of Actors
Amy Chin-Lai, President, Nonprofit Professional Employees Union, IFPTE 70
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Elissa McBride, Secretary-Treasurer, AFSCME
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Kim Anderson, Executive Director, National Education Association

Additional Signers
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