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## Women and the Constitution

Jan 22, 2020

As a longtime supporter, I was extremely delighted to read in the Green Valley News that the Pima County Board of Supervisors voted 4-1 to approve a resolution supporting the Equal Right Amendment. The Amendment first proposed by the Women's political party in 1923, approved by the U. S. Senate in March 1972, and sent to the states for ratification, has traveled a long, laborious journey from then to now.

My hope was that Arizona would be the 38th state to ratify, however both chambers of the Virginia state Legislature passed the Equal Rights Amendment this month with bipartisan support making it the 38th state necessary for ERA to be included in the Constitution. However, it is still uncertain because of the legal roadblocks to adoption.

Isn't it difficult to understand why any legislative body would oppose the ERA, the proposed amendment to the United States Constitution to guarantee legal rights for all American citizens regardless of sex? Passage will provide for the legal equality of the sexes (genders) and end legal distinctions between men and women in terms of divorce, employment and other discriminatory matters.

Last year, Arizona women across the state wrote letters of support and spent a day at the Capitol promoting the ERA. However, a vote in the Arizona Legislature has failed the past three years. Feb. 4, many of us will be back at the Capital again, requesting equity laws that represent equal pay while opposing all gender discrimination.

I am proud to have testified in the 1970s, when the state of North Dakota, along with 35 other states supported the amendment. Hopefully, in 2020, Arizona lawmakers will affirm the ERA so we can become the 39th state to ratify. What a milestone for women if we could celebrate equality under the law the same year as we celebrate the 100th year of our right to vote. Certainly, the time has come to write women into the United States Constitution, don't you think?

**Sharon Rezac Andersen, Green Valley**