

## Prezi Presentation: 1982 Equal Rights Amendment

### Transcript:

#### 1982 Equal Rights Amendment

1. 1982: The Equal Rights Amendment: You get to decide if Florida should ratify the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). The ERA would guarantee men and women equal rights. Thirty-five states have already ratified the amendment. If Florida does too, it would set the stage for it to be added to the U.S. Constitution.
2. But wait! Doesn't the U.S. Constitution already grant men and women equal treatment?
3. In 1982, the Constitution did not clearly grant equal treatment for men and women. The 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment was the only amendment that spoke of any kind of equal treatment between men and women.
  - a. Text of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment: Passed by Congress June 4, 1919. Ratified August 18, 1920.
    - a. Section 1: The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.
    - b. Section 2: Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.
    - c. Image from Library of Congress
      - i. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3a52979/>
4. Let's look at the text of the proposed amendment to see what the ERA would add to the U.S. Constitution!
5. The full text of the Equal Rights Amendment was short. It read:
  - a. Section 1: Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.
  - b. Section 2: Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.
  - c. Section 3: This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification.
6. Question? How is a constitutional amendment different from a law?
7. Answer! An amendment goes into the nation's founding document, the Constitution. This means the amendment speaks about our society's basic beliefs about right and wrong. Amendments are also much harder to create than laws. They are also much harder to take away, once they are ratified.
8. Well, you already have an idea of what it takes to make a law...So, let's see what other steps are needed to add an amendment to the U.S. Constitution!
9. There are two ways an amendment can be added to the U.S. Constitution:

- a. Both chambers of the U.S. Congress can approve the amendment by a two-thirds vote. Then, the amendment is sent to the states. Three-fourths of all the state legislatures also have to pass the amendment.
  - b. Two-thirds of the state legislatures call for an Amendment Convention. All the states would send delegates to this convention. To ratify an amendment, three-fourths of the delegates would have to support it. (This method has never been used.)
    - i. Once one of these options is completed, the amendment is ratified. This means our U.S. Constitution has a brand new amendment in it!
10. ERA supporters tried to use the first way. For years, they lobbied the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate to pass the amendment. In 1971, the House passed it by the required two-thirds majority. The following year the Senate did the same. The ERA was then sent to the state legislatures for ratification.
11. Ratification of the ERA in 1982
  - a. By the next year, 30 states legislatures had ratified the amendment! But the ratifications began to slow down. In 1979, Congress extended the deadline three more years. By 1982, only 35 states had ratified the ERA. Three more states were needed for ratification. Four state legislatures planned to hold special legislative sessions that summer to vote on ratifying it. Florida was one of these four states...
12. Why was the ERA having so much trouble getting the last few states to approve it?
13. Five amendments had been quickly ratified in the last 30 years. When Congress passed the ERA in 1972, many people believed it would easily be ratified as well. But, over the next 10 years, the opposite happened. As the deadline in 1982 approached, no one knew if it would be ratified or not!
  - a. Associated Press: Supporters of the Equal Rights Amendment march down Pennsylvania Avenue: Aug. 26, 1977.
  - b. FL Rep. Gene Hodges and sign opposing ERA amendment: State Archives of Florida, [floridamemory.com/items/show102813](http://floridamemory.com/items/show102813)
    - a. Photograph by Donn Dughi
  - c. Let's look at some of the arguments for and against adding the ERA to the U.S. Constitution. That way you can make up your own mind!
14. In 1973, a program called Firing Line with William Buckley aired a televised ERA debate between Ann Scott (in favor of the ERA) and Phyllis Schlafly (against it). This debate covered many of the arguments people had about the ERA during that time.

- a. In the Prezi Debate, the text in quotes comes from the Firing Line debate. The rest is paraphrased from the Firing Line debate or is a summary of general arguments at the time.

- i. Transcript at:

- <http://hoohila.stanford.edu/firingline/programView2.php?programID=575>

15. Question 1: Will the ERA help end discrimination in the workplace?

- a. Phyllis Schlafly: National Chairman of STOP Equal Rights Amendment

- i. Political activist Phyllis Schlafly in 1975: Michael Mauney/ TIME & Life Pictures/ Getty, Read more:

- <http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1889757,00.html#ixzz22K8QTPmQ>

- ii. I agree that these are problems. But the ERA is not the solution. Congress has already passed a law that guarantees equal rights in employment situations. The “ERA will do nothing for women in the field of employment which is not already done by the Equal Opportunity Act of 1972.” Since it is already a law, we don’t need to pass the ERA. We just need to enforce this law better.

- b. Dr. Ann Scott: Vice President for Legislation of the National Organization for Women (NOW)

- i. Image from:

- [http://library.buffalo.edu/archives/womens\\_work/bios/scott.htm](http://library.buffalo.edu/archives/womens_work/bios/scott.htm)

- ii. Definition: A school superintendent is the person who is in charge of all the schools in a school district.

- iii. Today, women make less money than men for the same job. That means if a man makes \$10 for completing a job, a woman might only be paid \$6 or \$7 for doing the exact same job. Women also are less likely to be chosen for jobs with higher pay or responsibilities. At his time, 84% of elementary school teachers are women. But only 20% of elementary school principals and only 1% of school superintendents are women. The ERA would make discrimination like this illegal across the boards.

16. Question 2: How will the ERA affect marriage?

- a. Dr. Ann Scott: Vice President for Legislation of the National Organization for Women (NOW)

- i. Image from:

- [http://library.buffalo.edu/archives/womens\\_work/bios/scott.htm](http://library.buffalo.edu/archives/womens_work/bios/scott.htm)

- ii. In 1982, many women still “do not have the right to be granted anything by their husband” by some state laws. These laws

give men control of any property bought by the married couple. The ERA will make sure men and women are treated equally under the law when married.

b. Phyllis Schlafly: National Chairman of STOP Equal Rights Amendment

- i. Political activist Phyllis Schlafly in 1975: Michael Mauney/ TIME & Life Pictures/ Getty, Read more: <http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1889757,00.html#ixzz22K8QTPmQ>
- ii. Today married women have many rights special to women that they do not want to give up. For example, a wife “has the legal right to be supported by her husband. This is regardless of her own separate means. He can’t make her go to work if she doesn’t want to. She has the legal right and these are laws which will be invalidated by the Equal Rights Amendment.”

17. Question 3: How will the ERA affect the military?

a. Phyllis Schlafly: National Chairman of STOP Equal Rights Amendment

- i. Political activist Phyllis Schlafly in 1975: Michael Mauney/ TIME & Life Pictures/ Getty, Read more: <http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1889757,00.html#ixzz22K8QTPmQ>
- ii. Definition: The draft is a system in the United States for selecting citizens to become soldiers during wartime. Registering for the draft was required for men, but not required or even allowed for women.
- iii. If men and women have to register for the draft on an equal basis, no exemptions could be made for women. You could not “have a system whereby the women would get all the nice, easy desk jobs and the men get all the fighting jobs. You would have to be equal across the board—in combat, on warships, and all up and down the line.” I don’t want to live in a country where women are forced to serve in the military or allowed to fight combat, do you?

b. Dr. Ann Scott: Vice President for Legislation of the National Organization for Women (NOW)

- i. Image from: [http://library.buffalo.edu/archives/womens\\_work/bios/scott.htm](http://library.buffalo.edu/archives/womens_work/bios/scott.htm)
- ii. “But if women are to be citizens and citizens are to be subject to the draft, then women should take the responsibilities as well as the rights of citizenship.” This means that women should be drafted just like men. People would be placed in duties based on their abilities. Why shouldn’t a woman be able to fight in combat if she is willing and

able? Unfortunately, our military denies capable women at this time. But the ERA will change that.

18. Question 4: Could we just pass laws against discrimination? Why is this amendment necessary?
  - a. Dr. Ann Scott: Vice President for Legislation of the National Organization for Women (NOW)
    - i. Image from:  
[http://library.buffalo.edu/archives/womens\\_work/bios/scott.htm](http://library.buffalo.edu/archives/womens_work/bios/scott.htm)
    - ii. “But if we waited to change the laws, law by law, we would wait something like 200 years before we would have complete equality under the law.” The amendment is simple and morally right: Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Stop legal discrimination between men and women. Add this amendment to the U.S. Constitution!
  - b. Phyllis Schlafly: National Chairman of STOP Equal Rights Amendment
    - i. Political activist Phyllis Schlafly in 1975: Michael Mauney/ TIME & Life Pictures/ Getty, Read more:  
<http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1889757,00.html#ixzz22K8QTPmQ>
    - ii. We have been changing our laws that allow for discrimination between women and men. The 1972 Equal Opportunity Act is an example of that. Most Americans agree with that. But many Americans do not agree with many of the changes that this Equal Rights Amendment would bring to our society. Let’s reject this amendment. We can stop discrimination by making more good laws as they are needed.
19. Now that you have heard the debate about whether or not this amendment will be a good choice for the country...
20. What do you think?
21. The nation was divided and so was Florida.
22. The Florida Legislature has tried to pass the Equal Rights Amendment three times since 1972. The Florida House of Representatives approved it all three times. But each time, the Florida Senate rejected it. The last time the House passed it, the vote was much closer than the first time. With the 1982 deadline here, no can guess how either chamber will vote...
  - a. This will be Florida’s last chance to ratify the amendment. Only three more states are needed for ratification. If Florida votes for it, many believe at least two more states will follow in their footsteps before the deadline.

i. What should Florida's legislators do?

23. People for and against the ERA have showed up to the capitol in Tallahassee to protest and let their senators and representatives know what they thought about the issue.

24. Many protests for and against the ERA have taken place around or on the grounds of the Historic Capitol. Though the supporters seemed to have more protestors, both sides have attracted the attention of the public and the media. Most importantly, these protests at the Capitol have been a way for citizens to communicate their beliefs on the issue to their elected leaders.

a. Click on any picture for a better view.

i. All images in this frame are from the Florida Memory Collection

ii. [www.floridamemory.com](http://www.floridamemory.com)

25. Many others who felt strongly about the ERA could not make the trip to Tallahassee. Instead, they called and wrote letters to their representatives expressing their views. These are examples of actual letters that were sent to representatives in Florida. Some of them outline arguments similar to those we just discussed.

a. You can click each letter to read them better and use the zoom feature if needed.

b. 1. Jacksonville Coalition for the era: Equal Rights Amendment: February 6, 1974

i. Dear Senator Smathers, Opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) is a blow to all Americans who believe that an individual's rights and responsibilities should not dependent upon sex or marital status. Why is it that men and women are not equally treated in awarding of child custody? Why is it that men and women are not considered equally in promotions? Please help change these inequities. Vote for, speak for, encourage support of the Equal Rights Amendment.  
Sincerely, Luann Bennett

c. 2. 1044 Marlin Drive, Rockledge, Florida, March 25, 1975

i. Dear Senator Smathers, I am not much of a letter writer, as you can see, but as a concerned citizen, and voter, feel pressured to voice my opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment. Most active of all on behalf of this very insidious bill are the communists (who never let up). We hope the many letters you will be receiving

will urge you to take a second look. For God and  
Country, Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Fuscaldo.

d. 3. Citizens Against Women's Draft: P.O. Box 13936, Interbay Station,  
Tampa, Florida 33611, March 22, 1974

- i. Dear Legislator: Shortly you will be called upon to again consider ratification of the so-called Equal Rights Amendment. Enclosed herewith is a letter just received from the Honorable Sam J. Ervin, Jr., United States Senator, in which he again expresses his strong opposition to the ERA and describes it as "the most destructive piece of legislation to ever pass Congress." When the ERA was being considered in the U.S. Senate, Senator Ervin stated, "if the Equal Rights Amendment is approved, I believe that the Supreme Court will reach the conclusion that the ERA annuls every existing federal and state law making any distinction between men and women however reasonable such distinctions might be in particular cases, and forever robs the Congress and Legislatures of the fifty states of the constitutional power to enact any such laws at any time in the future." There are many detrimental effects of the Equal Rights Amendment, but, as the name of our organization implies, we are mainly concerned with the fact that, should the ERA pass, Congress would be locked into the position that when the call-ups under the present draft law are reinstated, young girls nineteen years old must be drafted into the military service and into combat units on exactly the same basis as young men. This fact, as you know, has been fully debated and has been admitted by the proponents of the ERA. There has been a strong effort to minimize this effect of the ERA, but the cold, hard, realistic facts are that we will have military conflicts on the future, the so-called volunteer Army will not support the manpower for such conflicts, the young girls of Florida would be drafted into the military service and into combat units, they would be taught to kill and be killed, would be wounded and taken prisoner and the United States would be the only country outside of the Communist bloc to allow the women in their country to be used in this fashion. These are facts not scare tactics, emotional arguments, or untruths. Please consider your position on this amendment

very carefully and prayerfully. Thanking you, we are sincerely yours, Louis & Jeanie Putney.

- i. Louis W. Putney & Jeanie T. Putney Co-Chairmen
  - ii. LWP: scw, Enclosure
- e. 4. May 18, 1976, 4249 Burntwood Drive, Pensacola, Fla, 32504
- i. Gov. Reubin Askew, Tallahassee, Fla. 32304 & Members of West Florida Delegation-
  - ii. Dear Members of our State Government, I'm writing to urge each and every one of you to support the Equal Rights Amendment. It doesn't matter whether I am male or female, black or white, rich or poor, old or young, Democrat or Republican, etc. disabled or able, intelligent or ignorant; I believe everyone was born with equal rights and are entitled to them as citizens of this great nation of ours. I feel if any of you vote against this bill, you would be voting against your own rights, as well as against the rights of all your constituents. Sincerely, Helen Y. Spera
  - iii. C.C. Sen. Childers, Sen. Tom Johiassen, Rep. Fortune, Rep. Hagler, Rep. Melvin, Rep. Peoden, Rep. Robinson, Rep. Jolton

26. Did any of the signs or letter change your mind or make you think differently about the issue?

27. You will get the chance to stand on the floor of the state House of Representatives, and speak for or against this amendment. Then your class will decide if the Equal Rights Amendment should be ratified!

- a. Rally for the ERA on the steps of the Historic Capitol.  
(Florida Memory)

Choose the proposed legislation YOU would like to learn about and debate!

#### 1999 Opportunity Scholarship Program

You get to decide if Florida should provide "Opportunity Scholarships" to students in failing public schools. These scholarships would provide funds for these students to go to a better public or private school. This program is one part of former Governor Jeb Bush's A Education Plan.

#### 1982 The Equal Rights Amendment

You get to decide if Florida should ratify the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). The ERA would guarantee men and women equal rights. Thirty-five states have already ratified the amendment. If Florida does too, it would set the stage for it to be added to the U.S. Constitution.

#### 1961 The Cross Florida Barge Canal

You get to decide if Florida should build a man-made waterway across the state. It will connect the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico. This canal would allow barges to move goods and people more quickly and safely.