

**To the Chair and Members:**

Please pass House File 501, the bill providing for equal rights under the law and prohibiting discrimination of any kind. The aim of the inclusive Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) is to establish equality of rights as an unassailable legal principle.

Our state constitution is a dynamic document that is designed to be improved over time, reflecting our ever-evolving society. This new ERA language will acknowledge the pervasive nature of discrimination, help dismantle structural inequities and provide a foundational remedy to overcome them. By embedding constitutional protections into our strongest legal document, the ERA will secure remedies in our courts that cannot be easily eroded, while creating a framework for progress – both social, and legal.

Last week on Equal Pay Day - in a bipartisan effort - congressional chief sponsors US Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) and Cong. Pressley (D-MA) introduced a resolution in Congress declaring the federal ERA the 28<sup>th</sup> Amendment. We ask for bipartisan support for ERA here today,

Now it's time for this state to join the 29 other states that already have ERAs by advancing this measure to voters, so that Minnesotans have a chance to decide whether to embed Minnesota values of freedom, fairness, and equality into our state constitution.

Whether you agree or disagree with the effort, the vote you cast on HF501 will be to allow voters to make the final determination.

Everyone deserves the same right to the same rights. I respectfully request a YES vote on HF501 and thank you for your consideration.