

Dec. 10, 2019  
Dear Mitzi and Jill,

I'll submit the following letter to the editor tomorrow, Dec. 11. I'll update the letter to include the Dec. 10 decisions of the Venice City Council and SCCB before submission.

Best,  
Carol Hartz  
LWV Sarasota County president

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The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) has not been ratified in Florida. In fact, despite a century-old Florida suffrage movement, our state constitution didn't officially adopt provisions for women's voting rights until 1969. This month, the Sarasota City Council passed a resolution urging consideration of the ERA by the Florida legislature. The Sarasota County Commission Board and Venice City Council are considering similar resolutions today.

Alice Paul, often credited for passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, might be pleased. "I always feel the movement is a sort of mosaic," Paul said. "Each of us puts in one little stone, and then you get a great mosaic at the end."

Men, women, former slaves, people of privilege, and people who struggle have all supported equality. Frederick Douglass, abolitionist born a slave, proclaimed, "Right is of no sex." Reformer Susan B. Anthony declared, "Men, their rights and nothing more; women, their rights and nothing less." Author Erica Jong said, "The right to vote is important but is not sufficient to guarantee equality." The League of Women Voters cites its pro-ERA position in fighting gender-based discrimination.

A mosaic of diverse supporters indicates the time is now for Florida to join the states ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment.