



The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) has not been ratified in Florida. 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 Commission and Venice City Council passed resolutions urging the Florida legislature to consider the ERA. The North Port City Commission will vote on the resolution December 17.

Alice Paul, often credited for passage of the 19th Amendment, might be pleased. "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, and people of privilege 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 not sufficient to guarantee equality." The League of Women Voters cites its pro-ERA position in fighting gender-based discrimination.

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

Carol Hartz
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