



STOP Equal Rights Amendment

National Chairman:
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Abigail Van Buren
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Dear Abby:

Section 1 of the Equal Rights Amendment would mandate a unisex society, and Section 2 would deliver the power to the Federal politicians, bureaucrats and judges to make us conform.

The trouble with ERA is that it has NO exceptions. ERA proponents voted down and eliminated all Senator Sam Ervin's amendments that would have preserved women's exemption from the military draft and wartime combat duty, preserved the rights of wives, mothers and widows to be financially supported by their husbands, preserved the right of privacy in school and public restrooms, hospitals and prisons, and preserved the rights of legislatures to pass laws based on physiological differences between men and women.

Shana Alexander's charges are so false they are ridiculous.

Social Security: Women actually pay only 1/4 of Social Security taxes but receive more than half the benefits. Homemakers get Social Security benefits although they never paid any taxes into the system. A wife can get these benefits after only 10 years of marriage (not 30 as Shana erroneously said).

Taxes: It is absolutely false that husbands own all farms and widows pay inheritance taxes but widowers do not. Tax laws are completely sex-neutral. Anyway, under the Tax Reform Act of 1976, one spouse can inherit from the other at least \$370,000 tax free, and most of us are under that amount.

Divorce: 47 out of 50 states now have no-fault divorce. Do you really want to make divorce easier than it is now? Sure, most women come out of a divorce broke, but ERA won't help them. Under ERA, women won't be entitled to any support at all because that would be sex discrimination!

Florida is the only state where widows have a property tax exemption (a small one). The ERA lawyers are so mean that they took that case all the way to the Supreme Court to get it knocked out. Fortunately they failed. Of course, ERA would wipe out this and many other benefits that women now have.

The Supreme Court said that it is not sex discrimination -- but discrimination against both male employees and nonpregnant female employees -- to force them to pay their fellow workers who are pregnant a wage for up to six months to stay home and take care of their babies. This would be highly discriminatory against the male employees whose own wives would not get that kind of benefit. It would also discriminate against the nonpregnant female employees who do not care to be forced to pay wages to other women to stay home.

It's too bad, Abby, that you got your information from Shana. If you had dug it out yourself, it wouldn't have had all those falsehoods.

With best wishes,

Faithfully,

P.S. It was fun seeing you at the Gridiron Dinner. Let me know if you want my book. It's got a dandy summary of the whole ERA question.