

# **Citizens for H.J. Res. 638**

**We, the undersigned, urge Congress to immediately pass H.J. Res. 638 – the bill to extend the deadline for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.**

Public opinion polls show that the majority of the people in this country, as well as the majority in many of the unratified states, support ratification. We believe it would be a national disgrace if equality for women and men under the law was excluded from the U.S. Constitution simply because time ran out.

We believe the need for the ERA remains as compelling today as it was nearly seven years ago when it was passed by Congress. The significance of the ERA is much more than symbolic. The ERA is a basic bread and butter issue; the ERA directly relates to poverty and the working poor. What is at stake is constitutional equality for women in this century. What is at stake is economic independence for women – whether women will continue to earn only 57% of what men earn and whether

women will be forever relegated to the dependence which low wages and low status impose.

It took from 1848 until 1920 to win for women the Constitutional right to vote – a total of 72 years. Three other amendments – the 13th (abolition of slavery), the 14th (due process) and the 15th (the vote for black men) – were achieved only by civil war. None of the really profound advances of civilization and improvements of the human condition could have been accomplished if a stop-watch had arbitrarily cut off their consideration.

Extension of the deadline for ratification of the ERA will permit continuing debate on one of the most profound human rights issues of this century.

**We believe that a vote for the extension is a vote for the ERA and a vote for equality for women in this century.**