



MINNESOTA
FAMILY COUNCIL

January 24, 2019

Members of the Government Operations Committee
House of Representatives
State Office Building
100 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: OPPOSE HF13

Dear Members,

Minnesota Family Council represents tens of thousands of families across the state and we **urge you to oppose HF13.**

Minnesota supports equality before the law for *all* Americans, but that's not what the Equal Rights Amendment actually does. Men and women already have equal protections under the 5th and 14th Amendments, and numerous Minnesota laws already prohibit sex discrimination in employment, education, housing, and many other areas.

The Supreme Court has ruled, "Neither federal nor state government acts compatibly with the equal protection principle when a law or official denies to women, simply because they are women, full citizenship stature-equal opportunity to aspire, achieve, participate in and contribute to society based on their individual talents and capacities."¹ It is very clear that state laws cannot discriminate against women or men. This language has been tested in court and upheld countless times as the ultimate legal protection for all persons residing in Minnesota.

Instead of protecting the rights of women, the revived ERA attempts to prohibit discrimination "on account of gender," while refusing to define "gender." If, like the original ERA, the revived bill used the word "sex," few would claim that the ERA was necessary in 2019 because of federal and state laws which already guarantee women equal protection. The efforts to revive the ERA aren't about women's rights; they're about trading a common sense definition of sex in state and federal law for an unverifiable "gender identity," preventing the government from protecting bodily privacy rights in public accommodations like domestic violence shelters and school locker rooms, mandating taxpayer funding for abortions, and threatening the status of churches and religious organizations.

Women deserve better than the ERA--they deserve the equal protections already granted to them by the Constitution, as well as legal protections based on sex, which include pro-woman legislation that would strengthen privacy protections, increase penalties for human trafficking, and ban sex-selective abortions.

Sincerely,

Meredith Campbell, Esq.
Director of Public Policy

¹ United States v. Virginia, 518 U.S. 515 (1996).