



May 6, 2024

Dear Chair Long and Members of the Rules and Legislative Administration Committee,

TakeAction Minnesota is a grassroots, multi-racial people's organization that believes in a state that works for all of us and where nobody is left out. With our members, we advocate for policies that promote justice and fairness. Our members know that no matter our age, race, gender, or where we live, we all benefit when we enjoy the same protections under the law. **We write to express our strong support for SF 37, the Minnesota Equal Rights Amendment ("ERA") Ballot Initiative.**

Across the country, legislatures and courts are attacking our freedoms. While in this current moment the Minnesota Legislature has been proactive in supporting equal rights for all, it is still imperative that we enshrine those rights within the Minnesota Constitution to ensure every Minnesotan's rights are guaranteed regardless of shifting political winds.

We regularly see across various policy areas throughout state government that a changing landscape often leads to different policy outcomes. That is how the system is supposed to work. When it comes to our fundamental rights, however, we support Minnesotans exercising their civic right and responsibility to protect against discrimination based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, or sex, including pregnancy, pregnancy outcomes, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. **Minnesotans should have the ability to make their voices heard to solidify in our Constitution a culture of tolerance and equality for all.**

There are a number of examples where Minnesota is a leader on public policy relative to the rest of the country. In this area, though, we are in the minority of states that do not have an ERA. Going back 40 years, ERA states have shown that there is nothing apocalyptic about adding an ERA to their constitution. Rather, those states are stronger because people who are discriminated against based on gender have legal recourse through the courts, the wage gap has been addressed, and BIPOC and LGBTQI+ people have more economic well-being.

We encourage the Committee to advance SF 37 to ensure that everyone has the same right to the same rights.

Sincerely,

Elianne Farhat
Executive Director
TakeAction Minnesota