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EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT for TEXANS

N E W S L E T T E R

VOL. I, No. 3

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TEXANS FOR ERA OFFICE INSTALLS NEW PHONE, HIRES STAFF MEMBER, EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT LOBBYIST

As of November, TEXANS FOR ERA has installed a telephone, listed under Texans for the Equal Rights Amendment, has a staff member and lobbyist.

BARBARA VACKAR, TEXANS FOR ERA Coordinator, has announced that NORMA CUDE of Houston, who has a heavy political science background, will represent TEXANS FOR ERA as its lobbyist during the 1977 session of the Texas Legislature. Ms. Cude will soon relocate in Austin and begin active lobbying efforts in early February.

Joining TEXANS FOR ERA as its staff member is KATHY SCAFE, who will staff the TEXANS FOR ERA Office part time, from 9 a.m. to noon, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. During the afternoons, Ms. Vackar will be in and out of the office to answer telephone messages and other requests.

The TEXANS FOR ERA Office telephone number is Area Code 512, 477-6570.

BROCHURES, STICKERS, BUTTONS AVAILABLE FROM TEXANS FOR ERA

Two brochures, bumper stickers, and buttons are available from the TEXANS FOR ERA Office, 711 San Antonio Street, Austin, Texas, 78701.

Brochures with suggestions and directions on writing Government officials are offered in quantities of 200 for \$5.

An ERA brochure, created and coordinated by LINDA BUCK, an advertising/public relations freelancer in Austin, also is available in quantity. The attractive red, white, and blue easy-to-read leaflet is sold in packages of 500 for \$17.

Red and white bumper stickers, reading "Support Equal Rights Amendment," are 20¢ each. Red and white buttons, with the slogan "Support ERA," are 25¢ each.

COLORADO UPHOLDS ERA RATIFICATION, MASSACHUSETTS ADOPTS STATE ERA

During the November election, voters in Colorado defeated, by a two-thirds margin, efforts to rescind the

State Equal Rights Amendment, and Massachusetts voters adopted a State Equal Rights Amendment by an overwhelming majority.

The 1977 legislative sessions will be an important time to pick up four more states.

TEXANS FOR ERA encourages everyone to contact friends in those states that have not ratified and seek their support of Equal Rights Amendment ratification.

VACKAR RECAPS STATE CONVENTION

--from Barbara Vackar

Republican Politics...The Equal Rights Amendment had some problems at the Republican convention because Phyllis Schlafly was there waging her usual fight. But, after the convention was over, PAT BAILEY concluded:

"The kinds of problems we have faced here are the same as those we face in the unratified states. We did not wage battle on the merits of the issue. The time for education on the ERA is over. We waged a purely political battle here. We did not say vote for ERA because it is right to do so, but because it was politically necessary. People in the legislatures must now be made to realize that they will have to vote for it because it is politically necessary for them that they do so."

At the state Republican convention, delegates agreed to embrace the national party platform, except the plank which supports the Equal Rights Amendment.

The Democrat national and state platforms support the Equal Rights Amendment.

CARTER DECLARES ERA SUPPORT AT NATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

During his campaign, President-elect Jimmy Carter declared his support of the Equal Rights Amendment, although he warned that the struggle to induce the last four states needed to ratify the amendment would be difficult.

Carter's declaration was made before the National Women's Agenda Conference, where he became the first presidential candidate to endorse the National Women's Agenda in its entirety.

In making his statement supporting the Equal Rights Amendment, Carter said:

"The American people are fair. When they are convinced that women's jobs are just as important to them and their families as men's, then the legislators will not be reluctant any more, and the John Birch Society will not prevail any more, and we will get the ERA passed."

MORE ORGANIZATIONS JOIN IN SUPPORT OF EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT EFFORTS

Joining in support of TEXANS FOR ERA efforts are the Austin Association of Teachers, who comprise 2,644 teachers in Austin, and the Woman's Caucus of the Texas State Teachers Association.

BAPTIST WOMAN'S GROUP PRESIDENT ENDORSES ERA AT SAN ANTONIO MEET

The president of Woman's Missionary Union of the Southern Baptist Convention recently endorsed the Equal Rights Amendment during the annual

session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas in San Antonio.

Mrs. A. HARRISON GREGORY of Danville, Va., also challenged Baptist women to shake off apathy because they hold in their hands "the powers to bring about change in this country."

Mrs. Gregory spoke to the Texas Baptist Woman's Missionary Union meeting in San Antonio in conjunction with the annual session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

She declared the ERA has raised the consciousness level of women and added, "It has made us feel we can do more than we think under Jesus Christ."

Paraphrasing poet John Donne, she said, "I cannot be totally liberated unless my sister is liberated, for I am totally involved in womankind."

CATHOLICS WORK TO CLARIFY ERA

The Southwest Regional Office for the Spanish Speaking, with the approval of the Executive Board, has worked to bring together Catholic Groups for the purpose of supporting the Equal Rights Amendment.

Of major concern is that a strong movement to block National ratification of the ERA is underway, either by blocking State ratification or working for rescission of the ERA in States where it has been ratified.

It appears that those Catholics involved in this movement are confusing the ERA with the

Abortion issue, which is a separate area of concern--distinct from the ERA. The office is working to help clarify this and the many mistaken notions about the ERA among Catholics and particularly, among Spanish-speaking people.

At the United States Bishops Conference in Detroit, October 23, the following resolution was passed:

"Since ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution would be a major step toward achieving equal economic justice for men and women, we endorse and support it. The Church should commit significant economic resources and personnel, especially in social action agencies and offices, to achieve speedy ratification of ERA. Special efforts should be made in those states which have not ratified the amendment."

Another part read:

"Since women, in particular minority women, have been special victims of employment and income discrimination in the United States, and since legal guarantees are historically important means for eliminating discriminatory practices, we urge the country to enact a policy which would insure full legal equality for men and women in the United States and in every state of the Union. For this reason, we endorse the Equal Rights Amendment to the United States Constitution."

TEXANS FOR ERA THANK ERA VOLUNTEERS

--from Barbara Vackar

A very special thanks go to some people, who, through their talents and dedication to the ERA, have made possible the new brochures, buttons, and bumper stickers

encouraging support of the Equal Rights Amendment. TEXANS FOR ERA asks that everyone support those who give of their time by using the following communications services when they might be needed. Linda Buck, Austin; Darby Graphic Designs, Austin; Crouse, graphic artist, Austin.

Any others who would be willing to share similar talents and volunteer their time are welcomed. If interested, contact the TEXANS FOR ERA Office in Austin.

EIGHT UNRATIFIED STATES WITH CHANCE

Among the states believed to have the best chance for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment in 1977 are Illinois, North Carolina, Nevada, Indiana, Missouri, Arizona, Florida, and Oklahoma.

The 1977 legislative sessions are critical to assuring passage of the ERA by four more states. Any efforts geared beyond 1977 will be too late, if the required 38 states have not been obtained. Since elections will not occur again until 1978, there would be only three months-- January through March 22, 1979--to achieve ratification.

TEXANS FOR ERA was delighted that the State ERA passed in Massachusetts this past November. In Colorado (which ratified both the Federal and State ERA), a state ballot measure to rescind Colorado's State ERA FAILED this past November.

MORE GOOD NEWS--A Harris Poll, released November 4, 1976, stated that "a cross section of people were polled on the Equal Rights Amendment, which would affect laws regulating the status of

women. A thumping 65-27 percent majority of the American people favors passage of ERA, a view also held by Carter and Ford."

CITY/TOWN COALITIONS FOR ERA AID STATE-WIDE ERA MOVEMENT

During the month of November, BARBARA VACKAR, TEXANS FOR ERA Coordinator, traveled to San Antonio, Amarillo, and El Paso to work with or form ERA Coalitions.

According to Vackar, such trips to these and other cities and towns are extremely necessary and helpful, especially where coalitions already do not exist.

For information on how to set up a coalition, or for information on whether or not a coalition exists in your area, contact the TEXANS FOR ERA Office, 711 San Antonio Street, Austin 78701; Area Code 512: 477-6570.

TEXANS FOR ERA NEWS NOTES

National Women's Political Caucus. The NWPC has targeted nine states for ERA activity: Arizona, Florida, Indiana, Missouri, Nevada, North Carolina, South Carolina, Oklahoma, and Illinois. The Caucus gave monetary support (between \$20,000 and \$30,000) to women candidates in state legislative races this fall. The Caucus also endorsed women candidates in the November election at the local, state, and national level. State caucuses will work in ERA state coalitions for ratification.

League of Woman Voters. Like Common Cause, the League will lobby

candidates in 1977. The League has a budget of \$90,000 committed to ratification of the ERA through March, 1977. This budget includes salaries, printing, travel, and telephone expenses. The League has targeted the same eight states as Common Cause and, in addition, worked in Colorado and Massachusetts. The League has budgeted \$2,500 per state, with one half of that going to ERA state coalitions. State and local Leagues will be active in the ERA effort. The League plans to publish a history and status report on the ERA and an analysis of ERA opposition.

National Organization for Women. NOW has targeted six states for ERA activity: Nevada, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, and South Carolina. NOW plans to distribute pamphlets on general ERA information and a study on how the ERA will affect poor women. It plans a report on the effect of state ERAs--this is being developed by a summer intern. Finally, NOW is conducting a direct mail solicitation drive in an effort to raise \$150,000 for use in the six targeted ERA states. All of the money raised by NOW will be put back into the states.

Melissa Thompson, national NOW Legislative Coordinator, recently stated:

"November 2 has come and gone and we are closer than ever before to ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. NOW and the ERA forces can be proud of the work we have done. We are credited with the defeat of over 15 ERA opponents and with the election of pro-ERA legislators in their places. The ground-swell is happening and we have a steadily growing list of state legislators who have been convinced to change their individual positions to one of support."

Business and Professional Women. BPW has developed a media package which includes 11 television and radio spots, as well as newspaper ads, and have them available to state coalitions working with ERAmerica. Members are going to do a mailing campaign to state legislators and the national press corps detailing discriminatory sections in existing state statutes. A media campaign is to be launched through state and local ERA coalitions, using themes and information which will be useable by radio, television, and newspapers.

Church Women United. In early 1976, CWU gave \$6,500 to ERAmerica. CWU members raised \$15,000 through ecumenical fundraising appeals which has been given to state coalition and religious organizing efforts. CWU will work through the Methodist Church to find ERA coordinators in unratified states to work with state ERA coalitions. CWU inserted in church bulletins information on the ERA in all Methodist Churches during one Sunday this summer. Material on the ERA also was distributed and discussed in summer church programs and many churches which held conferences in the summer focused on the ERA. A national committee has been formed to coordinate a number of religious women's groups' work on the ERA. (Religious Committee for the ERA, c/o Sr. Mary Luke Tobin, Room 812, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, New York 10027; 212-870-2355.)

American Association of University Women. The 1975 national AAUW Convention unanimously passed a resolution making ERA ratification efforts a top priority for its 190,000 member organization. A "Dollar for Equality" \$190,000 fundraising goal was set with a direct mail solicitation in February to be completed with October state and local fundraisers. 1976

activities focused on grassroots organizing workshops in six targeted states: Indiana, Illinois, North Carolina, Florida, Missouri, and Nevada. A political field organizer is being hired to work in two or three of the targeted states.

Women in Communications, Inc.
At its annual national meeting in Milwaukee, October 6-10, Women in Communications, Inc., agreed to appoint a national ERA chair to work for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and to coordinate WICI's efforts with other like-minded organizations.

A resolution, reaffirming the organizations support of the Equal Rights Amendment, was unanimously adopted by the national delegation.

During Women in Communications' election of officer for the national organization, JUDITH ASELMAN NEWBY, TEXANS FOR ERA Newsletter Editor, was elected national second vice president of WICI.

Common Cause. Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment is a major concern of Common Cause. The nation-wide organization is concentrating on eight unratified states considered as the best prospects for passage of the ERA. These states are Illinois, North Carolina, Nevada, Indiana, Missouri, Arizona, Florida, and Oklahoma. Members of Common Cause, in stating their beliefs, say that "we cannot hope to restore confidence in a government that ignores basic rights of a majority of its citizens."

Network. Once candidate positions on the Equal Rights Amendment have been compiled by Common Cause, the organization will forward to Network contacts who are working

with state Equal Rights Amendment coalitions in the unratified states. Network people will then lobby Catholic candidates on the Equal Rights Amendment. After the elections in November, it was the plan for Network people to lobby Catholic legislators in the unratified states.

SUPPORT ERA

SOME OBSERVATIONS ABOUT WOMEN'S RIGHTS. . .

--by John W. Gardner

(Reprinted from the Common Cause publication, FRONTLINE.)

I am not a renowned leader in the fight for women's rights. I'm just an adult male American who has come to some simple, strongly-held views on the subject.

I grew up in a family of boys and to say that, in growing up, I gave little thought to the role of women would be a wild overstatement. I gave no thought to it.

But I was storing away some impressions even though I didn't know it. My mother was a strong, independent-minded woman whose great energy and good sense provided me with an expensive education, and I never doubted that if I could be resourceful and self-sufficient as she was, I'd make it.

My wife and I have two daughters, now grown, and it was my observation of their life experiences that led me to give serious thought to the role of women in our society. No doubt my observations will seem elementary to those who have studied the subject for years. But I just want to talk as straight as I can about

some down-to-earth things. First, a few facts:

The idea that women can get equal pay for equal work is, except in a few enlightened organizations, a joke. Wages for female college graduates still approximate those of male high school drop-outs.

Federal, state and local governments practice and condone discrimination against women.

Social Security laws penalize both the homemaker, who has no coverage or protection, and the working woman who is married, who pay in at the same rate but will receive a lower return on her investment than a man.

No industrialized country in the world has a smaller percentage of women doctors, women lawyers, women engineers, women physicists, women lawmakers, women justices and women achievers than the United States.

It was not until five years ago that the Supreme Court first knocked down a law which discriminated against women, and even then, the Court refused to invalidate earlier decisions upholding discrimination. Today a woman plaintiff still carries the burden of proof that government actions perpetrating sex bias are illegal.

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The same jurisdiction can send a man to jail for 30 days for being durnk; a woman, three years.

Only two percent of employees in the highest grade of government are women.

One could give a lot more examples but those should make the point.

The Equal Rights Amendment says:

"Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

It's as simple as that. There are no hidden messages.

Ratification of the ERA would ensure uniform legal equality for women and men. Women now face a crazy quilt of archaic state laws and legal obstacles of varying surmountability. There are laws that still limit where and when women can work, that require the permission of her husband before she can manage income, that assume all property held in marriage is owned by the husband. A widow may have to pay inheritance tax on her own home, which the law assumes was purchased by the husband.

Opponents of ERA have done everything possible to stir up the fear of change, and to picture the Amendment as some kind of nutty idea. But go back over the points I've mentioned. I'm not talking about any crazy new rights--I'm talking about the oldest right in the world--fair play: the same chance a man has to exercise his God-given talents; a fair chance to get a job; equal pay for equal work; equality before the law; and the same chance as a man to enjoy the fruit o one's own efforts.

That's the least I want for my daughters and my granddaughters. And that's the least I want for my country.

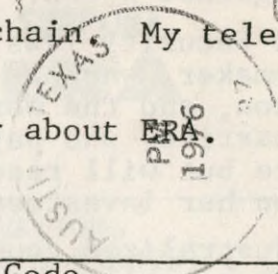
SUPPORT TEXANS FOR ERA

Let us know you care, and fill out the coupon below and return to
TEXANS FOR ERA, 711 San Antonio Street, Austin, Texas 78701!!!

I would like to receive the TEXANS FOR ERA Newsletter and am sending
a contribution to help with expenses: \$5 \$10 \$20 \$50 Other in
the amount of \$ (any amount is appreciated). Expenses between now
and June, 1977, are anticipated to be approximately \$5,000.

- I would like to receive the newsletter
- I want to be a part of a state-wide phone chain. My telephone
is (AC) - .
- I would be willing to contact my legislator about ERA.
- I want more information on ERA.

Name _____ Address _____
City _____ State and Zip Code _____
My State Representative is _____



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