



memorandum

This is going on DPM

TO: State and Local League Presidents
FROM: Dorothy S. Ridings, President, and Lois Harrison, ERA Chair
RE: ERA June 30 Press Statement and Reintroduction Plans
DATE: June 18, 1982

We know you are all thinking about what you will say to the press on June 30 regarding ERA if we have not gained three additional states by that time. For that reason, we want to share with you a statement that will be released from the LWVUS on June 30 as an aid in planning your own remarks. (If we have gained three states by that time, we are certain you will know what to say.)

CAUTION: BETWEEN NOW AND JUNE 30, THE CAMPAIGNS WILL STILL BE UNDERWAY IN FLORIDA, ILLINOIS, AND OKLAHOMA. IT IS TOO EARLY TO MAKE ANY STATEMENTS OTHER THAN TO REITERATE OUR DETERMINATION TO RATIFY. THIS CAMPAIGN LASTS UNTIL JUNE 30, 1982, OR UNTIL EVERY POSSIBLE STATE VOTE HAS BEEN TAKEN.

After June 30: Questions have come in to the LWVUS office from Leagues concerning plans for ERA after June 30 if ratification is not secured by that time. Several months ago, Representatives Don Edwards, Patricia Schroeder and others announced a "letter of intent" to reintroduce the ERA. Plans are now underway on Capitol Hill to reintroduce it in the House and Senate. Representatives Edwards and Schroeder are leading the effort in the House, Senator Paul Tsongas in the Senate. They are already seeking co-sponsors for ERA and will reintroduce sometime after July 1 (exact date is still under discussion). It is appropriate for Leagues to write their legislators asking them to co-sponsor. You will be receiving a complete campaign update by mid-July.

Let's all hope reintroduction won't be necessary, and that the miracle we are all hoping for occurs -- ratification prior to June 30. Either way, the League's determination to secure equal rights under the law is not dampened.

(OVER)

STATEMENT BY DOROTHY S. RIDINGS, PRESIDENT LWVUS
ON THE FUTURE OF THE STRUGGLE TO ENSURE EQUAL RIGHTS FOR WOMEN
JUNE 30, 1982

Our membership most emphatically does not believe the struggle for an equal rights amendment will end with this June 30th deadline or that the ERA will fade quietly away. The League of Women Voters is used to long struggles, having been founded in 1920 at the end of the successful 72-year struggle to gain women's suffrage.

Our commitment to a constitutional amendment prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex is as strong as ever before, and we are confident that our political skills, sharpened by this past 10-year ratification campaign, will serve us well in our future efforts to ratify an ERA.

Women are only now beginning to realize the full extent of the considerable political clout we have accumulated during this past campaign. We have enhanced our expertise in mobilizing grassroots support and raising funds needed to wage legislative issue campaigns in all 50 states. These enhanced political skills have led to an ever-increasing number of women running for and holding public office.

These are trends that will help us as we continue the fight for a constitutional guarantee of equal rights for women. We will continue to confront legislators with this issue on Capitol Hill, in the state legislatures, and in election campaigns.

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