



DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

CLARE E. CONNORS
ATTORNEY GENERAL

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Hawaii Attorney General Calls on Congress to Take Steps Towards Ratification of Equal Rights Amendment

HONOLULU – Hawaii Attorney General Clare E. Connors today joined a coalition of 20 state attorneys general in submitting a letter to Congress strongly urging the two houses to remove any ratification deadline that may apply to the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), and in doing so, clarify the eligibility of the ERA for ratification to the U.S. Constitution.

A change to the U.S. Constitution requires three-fourths of the states to ratify the ERA. Earlier this year, Virginia became the 38th state to ratify the ERA. Although three-fourths of the states have ratified the amendment, an opinion issued by the U.S. Department of Justice contends that the deadline for passage of the ERA expired decades ago.

“Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment is long overdue,” said Attorney General Connors. “Congress should act quickly to clarify that no deadline bars passage of this amendment.”

The ERA states that “equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex” — explicitly guaranteeing protection against discrimination based on sex. After becoming the 38th state to ratify the ERA, Virginia has joined Illinois and Nevada in suing the federal government to compel official recognition of the amendment’s adoption. Relying on the DOJ’s opinion, the archivist of the United States, who is responsible for certifying ratification, has refused to certify the ERA. In the letter sent to Congressional leadership, the coalition calls for the passage of two pending resolutions that would eliminate any time limit that may apply to the ERA and clarify its eligibility for certification.

Joining Attorney General Connors, the coalition, led by New York Attorney General Letitia James, includes the attorneys general of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota,

New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington.

A copy of the letter to Congress can be found [here](#).

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For more information, contact:

Krishna F. Jayaram
Special Assistant to the Attorney General
(808) 586-1284
Email: atg.pio@hawaii.gov
Web: <http://ag.hawaii.gov>
Twitter: @ATGHlgov