

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 15, 2005

## Equality begins with the Equal Rights Amendment Become an Original Cosponsor of the Women's Equality Amendment (H.J. Res. 37 in the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress)

Dear Colleague:

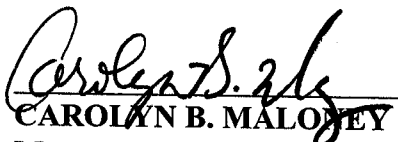
Over thirty years have elapsed since the Congress passed the Equal Rights Amendment (also known as the Women's Equality Amendment). This historic Constitutional Amendment was intended to ensure equality for women and men in all areas of society.

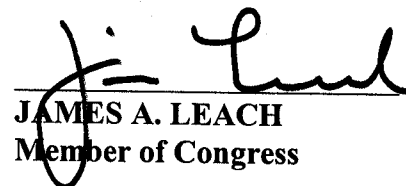
When Congress passed the ERA in 1972, it provided that the measure had to be ratified by the necessary number of states (38) within seven years. The deadline was later extended to ten years but, unfortunately, the ERA was three states shy of full ratification when the deadline passed in 1982. We believe that Congress should give the states another chance.

During the last 30 years, women have made extraordinary strides toward achieving equality-- but without the ERA, women have often been denied the ability to seek justice when they have experienced discrimination. Today, state and federal laws and policies can still perpetuate gender classifications that keep women from achieving their full potential. Passage of the ERA affirms that such classifications are unconstitutional.

If you would like to become an original cosponsor or would like more information about the ERA, please contact Karen Persis, Legislative Fellow with Rep. Maloney at x5-7944 or Mary Andrus with Rep. Leach at x5-6576.

Sincerely,

  
CAROLYN B. MALONEY  
Member of Congress

  
JAMES A. LEACH  
Member of Congress

The language of the Equal Rights Amendment: *"Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article. This Amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification."*