

Dear Committee Members,

On behalf of AAUW MN, we are writing today to express our support of ERA SF37, as amended by Representative Her. AAUW MN is composed of 25 branches throughout our state and represents over 1,600 members. Established in 1881, AAUW is one of the nation's oldest women's advocacy groups. As an organization, we seek to advance equity for women and girls, recognizing that a lens of intersectionality and inclusivity is crucial in this mission.

As Minnesotans we value freedom and equality for every person. This includes the freedom for each child to receive a high-quality public education, the freedom to make your own reproductive choices, and the freedom to receive life-saving gender affirming care.

Across the country, we are seeing attacks on reproductive freedom and transgender rights. In 2023, over 1,400 bills attacking reproductive freedom and transgender rights were introduced in states across the nation. Minnesota has stood as a North Star against these attacks, passing legislation to protect these freedoms and human rights. While these have been important steps to take, the best way to protect these freedoms in the future is through a constitutional amendment that includes explicit protections for gender and reproductive freedom. It is imperative that the legislature acts now ensure that all Minnesotans are equal under the law, no matter which political party is in power.

Twenty-three states currently have Equal Rights Amendments in their state constitutions, and it is past time that Minnesota adds its name to this growing list. The amended language, as proposed by Representative Her, would provide the strongest equality protections of any state ERA. Discrimination is not a Minnesota value, and Minnesotans deserve the opportunity to cast their ballots in support of equal protections for all.

AAUW MN is proud to support SF37 and we urge the committee to support it as well.

Sincerely,


Jan Carey
AAUW MN President


Kelsey Waits
AAUW MN Vice President of Public Policy