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CONSULTANCY FOR  
HIGH  
PERFORMANCE  
BUILDINGS

December 17, 2018

The Honorable M. Kirkland Cox  
Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates  
P.O. Box 1205  
Colonial Heights, VA 23834

Dear Speaker Cox,

Virginians, including those in our corporate community, overwhelmingly support constitutional gender equality. Article I, Section 11, of the Virginia Constitution has provided a guarantee of equal rights for nearly half a century. This state level guarantee, however, cannot protect Virginians against federal discrimination. Only a federal Amendment can do that.

As business participants in the Virginia economy, we find it notable that studies by Deloitte, McKinsey and PwC have found that increasing gender equity results in significant increases in gross domestic product (GDP) and net business profits.

Virginia is in a unique position to make history as the state that adds important language to the U.S. Constitution, just as was done with the Bill of Rights. As a women-owned small business, we believe this can send a strong signal to women entrepreneurs that Virginia supports its women.

Please prioritize Virginia's ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment early in the 2019 legislative session. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Smita Chandra Thomas  
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Certified Woman-owned small business  
WOSB WBENC Certification  
VA SWaM Certification  
MD MDOT MBE Certification