

**Resolution in Support of the Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment
by the Virginia General Assembly**

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria supports equal rights for all residents of Alexandria; and

WHEREAS, over 51 percent of the residents of Alexandria are women who do not enjoy permanent, constitutional protection from discrimination; and

WHEREAS, women continue to confront the persistent, core issues of gender inequality, including the gender pay gap, lack of affordable housing and childcare, limited access to paid family leave, limited access to appropriate healthcare, and the impact of domestic and sexual violence; and

WHEREAS, state laws are not uniform and federal laws are not comprehensive, and these laws are vulnerable to being weakened or repealed; and

WHEREAS, the United States Constitution does not explicitly guarantee equal rights and equal protection for the sexes and the 14th Amendment's equal protection clause has never been interpreted to guarantee equal rights for women in the same way the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) would; and

WHEREAS, the ERA provides 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," in order to establish that women and men have equal rights under the United States Constitution; and

WHEREAS, the ERA was passed by Congress in 1972 and has been ratified by 37 of the 38 states necessary to put it into the Constitution, setting the stage for Virginia to be the 38th and final state needed for the ERA to be included in the U.S. Constitution; and

WHEREAS, the deadline for the ratification of the ERA appeared only in the preamble and not in the actual legislation and Congress can alter time limits in the proposing clauses of amendments; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring issued an opinion finding that, "the lapse of the ERA's original and extended ratification periods has not disempowered the General Assembly from passing a ratifying resolution."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of Alexandria, Virginia, under the recommendation of the Alexandria Commission for Women, that the City of Alexandria calls on the Virginia General Assembly to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution during the 2019 legislative session.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Alexandria urges all members of the Alexandria delegation of the Virginia General Assembly to support legislation to address the core issues of gender inequality, including legislation addressing economic insecurity, barriers to opportunity in education, housing, child care and the workforce, access to appropriate healthcare, and protection from violence.