

The original documents are located in Box 1, folder “1976/02/18 - Susan B. Anthony Birthday Telegram” of the Frances K. Pullen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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Family Oriented Response

All of us sometimes find changes difficult to accept, and I believe this is the reason many Americans are afraid of the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment.

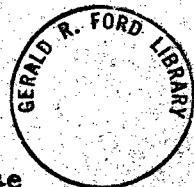
Many women, and I am among them, believe their husbands and families are their ~~major responsibility~~ most important responsibility. ERA will not force women to abandon this responsibility, but it will help ~~promote legal rights~~ ^{insure} end discrimination that harms both men and women.

Millions of American women either by ~~the~~ choice or necessity ~~have~~ work outside the home. These women are often stuck in low-paying jobs with limited opportunities for ~~substantial~~ advancement.

I support ERA, because it will help knock down restrictions, which have locked women ~~out of full participation~~ out of full participation in our society. ~~Opening up the opportunities for women means opening up~~
~~As barriers have~~ barriers against freedom for Americans because of race or religion have fallen, the freedom of all has expanded.

~~Often I've said I've had the best of both worlds a family and a career. I was lucky enough to have~~

~~I want for my four children the opportunity to use their talents to the fullest. If one of my sons and my daughter should choose the same career, I want the doors open to them equally.~~



Page Two

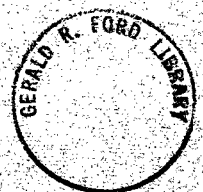
I want for my children and yours the opportunity to use their talents to the fullest. If one of my sons and my daughter chose the same career, I ^{hope they} ~~want them to~~ have an equal chance to pursue that choice ^{and succeed.}

~~XX~~

~~WXX~~

When the question comes down to the personal level of ^{what} ~~how~~ we want to ~~be treated~~ ourselves or ^{for} ~~to have~~ our families treated, it becomes easier to see what fair and equal choices would really mean in our lives.

I want an America where we live up to ^{the} ~~our~~ ideals of each citizen ^{having} ~~has~~ the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. ERA will move us ~~is~~ closer to making that right a reality.



ERA Fears

I hope this year the debate over the Equal Rights Amendment will not be clouded by emotionalism and fear.

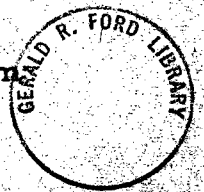
Some opponents of ERA have played on the fears of men and women alike that the Amendment would suddenly destroy our basic family structure and alter existing social customs and mores.

I suppose such fears are natural. Many Amendments, including women's suffrage, were opposed on grounds they would produce ~~such drastic~~ devastating changes. But none has.

ERA will not force women away from their families, send women into combat or force common public bathrooms. It will not strike down protective laws, but probably result in their extension to ~~be~~ be equitable to both sexes. Laws on alimony and child support will ~~also~~ be altered, not to the detriment of women, but to be more ~~more~~ humane and fair to all people involved.

ERA will help open more doors for women and ~~will~~ give a Constitutional vehicle to ~~help~~ ^{reduce} economic and legal discrimination. Such changes ~~can~~ ^{will} be beneficial to all, ~~because~~ ^{As} ~~discrimination~~ ^{eroded} we have seen racial and religious discrimination ~~eroded~~, more freedom for all ~~of~~ ^{has} resulted.

We must not be afraid of humane and realistic changes in our Society. I believe equal rights for women will strengthen our Nation by ~~giving~~ using the talents of more people.



(2)

~~America has been unique in its faith in what the individual's
right to decide on how~~

America has been unique in its faith in freedom for the
individual, and that faith must be reaffirmed by extending that freedom
to individuals who are women.

NEEDS TO GO OUT TODAY/EVENT IS SUNDAY

Telegram/ Women Law Students Association
The University of Michigan Law School

I wish I could join your ~~xxxx~~ celebration of Susan B. Anthony's birthday, because she is a special favorite of mine.

The spirit of the woman who worked so long and hard is to secure the vote for women ~~xxxxxxxx~~ an inspiration to those of us committed to the Equal Rights Amendment.

I hope soon ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ the passage of ERA will become another milestone in the effort to secure equal rights, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxx~~ equal responsibilities and equal choices for American women.

I join your salute to Susan B. ~~Ann~~ Anthony, who gave her best in that ~~xxxx~~ continuing effort, and ~~xx~~ I send my warm wishes to those of you in the Women Law Students Association, who are using the opportunities her work helped open up.

Sincerely,



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 1976

I support the Equal Rights Amendment because I feel that barriers to one person's freedoms in this country are impediments for all.

As ~~walls~~ due to race, color or religion have fallen, freedom for all has expanded. (And likewise, as women begin to be granted full opportunities to participate, our country's full potential can begin to be felt.)

I see the ERA as a beginning. I see it as a base on which to build. I can't pretend it will be the overnight end to discrimination. But it will be part of the evolution of more equal treatment for women. Progress in the recognition of women as a force in our society needs legal roots, and the ERA will provide them.

*downside
fair*

believe
I see the ERA as legislation that ^{is} as important to the housewife as to the career woman. Like many women, my husband and children are my first priority, although I recognize, that's not true for everyone. But my specific lifestyle or yours is not the issue; the issue is having the option to decide. ^{choose} The ERA does not ask us to change our priorities. It gives us the freedom to choose them.

(This is the year to unite against the scare tactics which cloud the issues and threaten to block our chance for real equality in this country.)

We've been given the right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Let's make those rights a reality. And let's do it as a most appropriate celebration of liberty in our Country's 200th year.

