

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 26, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY, 1975

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BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

In October 1971 and March 1972, the House of Representatives and the Senate of the United States adopted a proposed amendment to our Constitution providing equal rights for men and women. By August 26, 1972, twenty States had ratified the proposed constitutional amendment, only eighteen more were needed for the proposed amendment to become part of our Constitution.

August 26 is a significant date because it was on that day in 1920 that the Nineteenth Amendment, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex with regard to voting, was certified as part of our Constitution after ratification by the necessary three-fourths of the States. Recognizing that the proposed Equal Rights Amendment is the logical and rightful extension of the Nineteenth Amendment to rights other than voting, the President has, since 1972, annually set aside the 26th of August in recognition of the real and practical need to ensure that equal legal rights are enjoyed by women and men.

This year, 1975, has been designated as International Women's Year, dedicated to equality between men and women. It is also the two-hundredth year of our Nation -- a Nation born, nurtured and dedicated to the proposition that all people are entitled to be equal before the law.

Several more States need to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment before it becomes part of our Constitution. It would be most fitting for this to be accomplished during our Nation's two-hundredth year. In this Land of the Free, it is right, and by nature it ought to be, that all men and all women are equal before the law.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GERALD R. FORD, President of the United States of America, to remind all Americans that it is fitting and just to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment adopted by the Congress of the United States of America, in order to secure legal equality for all women and men, do hereby designate and proclaim August 26, 1975, as Women's Equality Day.

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I call upon all the citizens of the United States to mark this day with appropriate activities, and I call upon those States who have not ratified the Equal Rights Amendment to give serious consideration to its ratification and the upholding of our Nation's heritage.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of August, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and seventy-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two-hundredth.

GERALD R. FORD

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