

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Office of the White House Press Secretary
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THE WHITE HOUSE

WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY, 1976

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BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

During this Bicentennial Year we celebrate a dynamic history which began with that inspirational declaration that all individuals are "endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

To give substance and form to those self-evident truths, "We the People of the United States" created a constitutional republic to "secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity."

However, it was not until August 26, 1920, that the Nineteenth Amendment to our Constitution unambiguously secured for each of us, regardless of sex, that precious mark of liberty -- the right to vote.

In October 1971 and March 1972, the House of Representatives and the Senate of the United States proposed a new amendment for our consideration -- an amendment, completing the process begun by the Nineteenth, which would secure "equality of rights under the law" regardless of sex, for men and women.

Several more States need to ratify that Equal Rights Amendment before it becomes part of our Constitution. It would be most fitting for this to be accomplished as we begin our third century. 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 secure legal equality for all women and men, do hereby designate and proclaim August 26, 1976, as Women's Equality Day.

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 have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fifth day of August, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and seventy-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and first.

GERALD R. FORD

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