

The original documents are located in Box 47, folder “Women - Equal Rights Amendment - State Legislatures” of the Sheila Weidenfeld Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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TO: Sheila Weidenfeld

March 2, 1975

FROM: Doug Bailey
John DeardourffREQUEST: ERA Telephone Call to Illinois State Senator John Nimrod on Monday, March 3rd.

1. The Illinois Senate Vote is now scheduled for late Tuesday afternoon, March 4th. The expected ruling will be for a 51% majority (30 votes). ERA will have 30 votes or more, unless some nervous Senators "take a walk". Senator Nimrod is under some pressure to do just that.

2. Senator John Nimrod is a middle-of-the-road Republican, in his second Senate term, from the suburban Chicago Cook County District covering Maine Township. He voted against ERA in 1973; he voted for ERA in 1974; and until the last few days has been considered a sure pro-ERA vote this year. His constituency is heavily Jewish -- and he recognizes their strong support of ERA.

But he is getting very heavy pressure from the Republican organization in Cook County and his District to vote "No" or to "take a walk". The Cook County GOP Chairman (who is currently under federal indictment) is strongly anti-ERA. And Nimrod's District GOP Chairman is also.

Senator Nimrod knows he should vote for it, and a call would probably give him the confidence to do so.

3. Purpose of call: To assure that Senator Nimrod will be present and will vote for ERA on Tuesday.

4. Some suggested points for the call:

- a. Indicate that the call is confidential unless he wishes otherwise.
- b. Indicate that this is your only call -- that you had called Senator Harris a few weeks ago -- but that this time you wanted to talk with a strong ERA supporter.
- c. Inquire as to how he thinks the vote will go. Ask whether there have been any Republican defections on the issue.
- d. Indicate how important continued GOP backing for ERA is, for the Party in Illinois and nationally.
- e. Ask whether all the pro-ERA votes will be there. Say that you had heard that Senator Roe (R, pro-ERA) was in the hospital and that you hoped he could make the vote -- that with a set number of votes needed, an absence is just as much a vote against as an actual "no" vote.
- f. Ask him to call Sheila Weidenfeld after the vote -- to let you know what happened.

5. Timing of the call: Monday, March 3rd.