

Good morning Chairman Veda and members of the Senate Government and Veteran's Affairs Committee. My name is Christi McGeorge, and I am proud to live and work in Fargo, ND. I am urging you for a Do Not Pass recommendation on SCR 4010.

The ratifications of the ERA by those the citizens of North Dakota elected in the 1970s reflects a brave and important step that legislators took, after much debate and conversation, to help ensure that all citizens of North Dakota were treated equally under the law. This legislation was needed in the 1970s and continues to be needed today. I wish our world had reached a place where all citizens were treated equally, and the ERA was no longer relevant, but that simply is not the case. We could look at countless examples, including the incidences of violence against women or lack of parental leave for many fathers, or the pay gap between women and men.

In 2005 and 2006, I had the privilege of interviewing North Dakotan women who were actively involved in helping to advocate for the ratification of the ERA. I heard them explain how seeing the ERA ratified in ND was one of the proudest moments in their lives as they felt that they were a part of something that would benefit their children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren. These were smart, brave, and selfless women who understood the importance of ERA, and having been raised in ND they knew that the ERA reflected the essential values that ND had instilled in them; namely, that we all deserve to be treated equally under the law and that unless we stand up for each other and for legislation that seeks to honor the worth of all of the citizens of ND we will not succeed as a state or as a country. I ask you to honor the legacy of these women and vote to recommend that SCR 4100 is not passed.

I also learned from these interviews about the lies that were told about the ERA in an attempt to prevent its ratification in ND. Many of these same lies are being repeated today. I ask you to take the time needed to educate yourself about what the ERA does and does not do – in 1975, your counterparts saw through these lies and understand that the ERA would benefit the citizens of ND and not harm them. Thank you for receiving my testimony today, and thank you for your hard work during this legislative session.