

Testimony in opposition to SCR4010

Angie Schmidt Benz – D28 – Moffit, ND

Chairperson Kasper and Members of the Government and Veteran's Affairs Committee,

My name is Angie Schmidt Benz and I am a constituent of D28. I am a mother, professional, and a proud woman. I come before you today to request a Do Not Pass recommendation on SCR 4010.

What is the ERA? It is simple. It states that the "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex". That is it. Nothing more. It says that you as a man and me as a woman will not be denied rights due to our sex. It creates equality amongst men and women. Something that is long overdue.

During the 2019 Legislative session this same resolution was brought up and my D28 senator was a co-sponsor of the resolution. I reached out to him as I normally do and I was taken back by his response to me. When asking why he would support a resolution that does nothing more than create equality between men and women he responded, "Do what you want to within the abilities and graces that God has given you, but don't demand it because you're mad you're not a man". It was then that I knew that there is no equality in ND. I have never been mad that I'm not a man. I am mad that I am still fighting for equal rights, but I don't demand them because I am mad that I am not a man. I have been raised to be a strong, independent woman. In return I have raised two strong, independent men and one very strong and independent young lady. In our house our kids are taught that we all have the same roles and responsibilities regardless of sex. We share in the workload of our home and ranch. We have equality. I would hope my state would want the same for our future generations.

I have spent time listening to the hearings and floor sessions this year. I have heard numerous times how our state is creating laws that are all in the name of women's rights. If we are truly for women's rights why are we spending our time and resources to rescind our 1975 ratification by the 44th Legislative Assembly? What are people so afraid of? We don't get to say that HB1298 is all about women's sports rights and then rescind our ratification of the ERA. It is contradictory. Our citizens deserve better.

Our 67th Legislative Assembly has the opportunity to keep our state moving forward. You have the opportunity to show that you truly believe in equality. You have the opportunity to not turn the clock back to 1975 in our state. Ironically, 1975 was the year I was born. To think that we are still fighting for equality after 45 years is astounding to me. I will continue to fight for our equality for all men and women. We deserve it.

Please vote Do Not Pass on SCR 4010 and let's move our state forward to equality.

Thank you,

Angie Schmidt Benz