



NAACP

Maryland
STATE CONFERENCE

March 11, 2024

Rules and Executive Nominations
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, Maryland

HJ 001 – Federal Equal Rights Amendment

Members of the Committee,

The mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is to secure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights in order to eliminate race-based discrimination and ensure the health and well-being of all persons.

The vision of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is to ensure a society in which all individuals have equal rights without discrimination based on race.

HJ0001 urges the Administration of President Joseph R. Biden to publish the federal Equal Rights Amendment as the 28th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and for the U.S. Congress to affirm, by joint resolution, the Equal Rights Amendment as the 28th Amendment, explicitly prohibiting sex discrimination and guaranteeing legal gender equality for women and men.

One of the principal objectives of the NAACP is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of all citizens. As written, amendments to the constitution, particularly the fourteenth amendment's Equal Protection Clause, have been interpreted by the U.S. Supreme Court to provide further protections and augmented rights for men and white people, upholding and exacerbating a race and gender-based hierarchy in the U.S. These sanitized legal interpretations, operating under the banner of colorblindness, disregard systemic and structural inequities operating at the nucleus of our unabashedly patriarchal and misogynistic civil society, fueling a political landscape that celebrates and

normalizes the subjugation of women, gender-based violence and medical autonomy. Domestic ills faced by US women more broadly impact Black women at exponentially higher rates. Using domestic violence as an example, researchers at the University of San Francisco found that the U.S. accounts for about 92% of the women killed by guns in high-income countries and a woman is five times more likely to die if her abusive partner has access to a gun.”¹

Further, the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence found that “Black women accounted for 60% of Intimate partner victims in 2021. For context, Black women make up only 15% of Maryland’s population, meaning Black women are being killed by their intimate partners at a rate nearly four times their proportion in the state’s population.” This represents but one of numerous examples of systemic issues that, when addressed through an intersectional lens, highlights the manner in which broad and *unwavering constitutional protections for women as defined in the Equal Rights Amendment in general can lead to a reduction in unmitigated and unrelenting violence against Black women.*

For these reasons, the Maryland State Conference of the NAACP urges a favorable vote on HJ0001

In Service,

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¹ https://repository.usfca.edu/nursing_fac/130/