



To: Judicial Proceedings Committee

From: Rebecca Snyder, Executive Director, Executive Alliance

Date: February 20, 2024

RE: FAVORABLE SJ 0001

Executive Alliance focuses on creating opportunities for professional women in Maryland's boardrooms and executive leadership levels through education, advocacy and mentorship.

We are pleased to support SJ 0001, which would reaffirm Maryland's commitment to constitutional rights regardless of sex. Maryland was one of the first states in 1972 to ratify the ERA, which is an amendment that would provide a constitutional foundation for addressing gender-based discrimination, promoting fairness, and ensuring that the rights of all citizens are protected equally.

The ERA, first introduced in Congress in 1923, seeks to enshrine in the U.S. Constitution that "equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." Despite decades of progress in the fight for gender equality, women still face disparities and discrimination in various aspects of life. The ERA is a crucial step towards ensuring that all individuals, regardless of gender, are afforded the same legal protections and opportunities.

Constitutional Equality: The ERA would provide a clear and unequivocal statement in the U.S. Constitution that gender-based discrimination is unconstitutional, reinforcing the principle of equal protection under the law.

Closing Legal Loopholes: While existing laws have made significant strides in addressing gender inequality, the ERA would serve as a constitutional guarantee, closing any remaining legal loopholes and providing a solid foundation for addressing current and future challenges.

Reflecting Maryland's Values: Ratifying the ERA aligns with Maryland's commitment to justice, fairness, and equality. It sends a powerful message that the state values the rights and dignity of all its citizens.

P.O. Box 26224, Baltimore, MD 21210 | (443) 768-3281 | info@executivealliance.org | www.executivealliance.org

We stand for women's leadership.

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Setting a National Example: Maryland's ratification of the ERA would contribute to a national momentum, encouraging other states to follow suit and bringing us closer to achieving gender equality across the United States.

We urge a favorable report.

Executive Alliance is a Maryland 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to accessing power as women leaders in Maryland's workplace. We measure that power by representation in the c-suite, board room, and other places of power and nurture a network of women leaders that support each other in their development. Learn more at executivealliance.org.

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