PRESS RELEASE

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VIRGINIA NOW KICKS OFF “PARTY-FOR-THE-ERA” BUS TOUR

Tour from D.C. to New York Recognizes ERA Centennial

WASHINGTON, D.C., JULY 19, 2023 — The Virginia National Organization for Women (NOW) is kicking off an East Coast ERA Bus Tour to Seneca Falls, N.Y., tomorrow to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA).

“Virginia must defend its status as the historic 38th state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment and this event is all about putting the spotlight on women’s and LGBTQ+ rights and bodily autonomy and reminding the nation that gender inequality reigns in a country that is supposed to be an exemplar to the world,” said Virginia NOW President and trip organizer, Lisa Sales. “Our coalition of voices to right this wrong is growing stronger every day. We will never stop fighting for our core values and demanding America live up to them.”

Members of Congress will join Virginia NOW and the nearly 20 participating organizations on the “Party-for-the-ERA” Bus where five states and five jurisdictions are represented, plus the country of Ireland! They are: Baltimore, Md. NOW; Charlottesville, Va. NOW; D.C. NOW; Maryland NOW; Montgomery County, Md. NOW; Nevada NOW; National NOW; Ohio NOW; AAUW-VA; Clearinghouse for Women’s Issues; ERA Coalition; Feminist Majority; The Fund for Women’s Equality; Generation Ratify; Virginia League of Women Voters; Ms. Magazine; and Zonta Club of Fairfax.

“For generations, women, LGBTQ+ folks, and other marginalized communities have been relegated to a second-class status in America. But now, during the centennial anniversary of the Equal Rights Amendment, we once again say no more,” said Rep. Ayanna Pressley (D-MA). “As our movement builders head to Seneca Falls, I am proud to stand in solidarity with the broad, diverse coalition – the women of color, the LGBTQ community, and so many more – in the fight to enshrine gender equality in the Constitution. This movement is strong, and we won’t stop fighting until we codify the dignity, humanity, and equality of all people.”
“One hundred and fifty-five years ago, the 14th Amendment promised equal protection under the law, and 100 years ago, the Equal Rights Amendment was introduced. From the beginning of the women’s rights movement, women of color have been fighting to make the ideals of this country true for everyone. I’m proud to have done my part by leading the fight in the state senate to make Virginia the final state necessary to ratify the ERA,” said Rep. Jennifer McClellan (D-VA). “Unfortunately, our work still isn’t done. As the first Black woman elected to Congress from the birthplace of American democracy, I am proud to continue the fight to enshrine the ERA into the U.S. Constitution, and I wish these equality warriors a safe and productive trip to Seneca Falls for the ERA Centennial.”

"On January 8th, 2020 I was honored to become the first female Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates in its 400-year history and we got to work immediately to make bold and lasting change. Just weeks later, I presided over the chamber as Virginia became the 38th and final state needed to ratify the ERA, thanks to years of hard work by Virginia NOW and others,” said Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn (VA-41). “But our work is far from over. We must ensure equal rights for future generations regardless of sex. I may have been the first female Speaker, but I know I will not be the last. We must provide an equal chance for our daughters and their daughters to reach their full potential and realize their dreams. It is time for Congress to act."

“We’ve got to shout it from the rooftops – the Equal Rights Amendment has met all constitutional criteria for ratification,” said Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-VA). “No more excuses. No more delay. American women have waited long enough for true constitutional equality.”

"After Virginia became the 38th and final state needed to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, it’s time for Congress to remove the arbitrary time limit to affirm the ERA’s ratification and finally enshrine women's equality into the U.S. Constitution. In recognition of 100 years since the ERA was introduced, I’m glad Virginia NOW and other advocates are shining a light on the need to acknowledge the ERA's ratification, and I look forward to seeing them in D.C.,” said Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA).

What: The ERA Centennial Bus Send Off to Seneca Falls (Special Bus Unveiled - See Below)
When: July 20, 2023, 11:00 a.m.
Where: U.S. Capitol Building, Senate Swamp, Washington, D.C. followed by photo ops at the bus send off at Noon at the reflecting pool, Garfield Circle (3rd St., NW at Constitution Ave., NW)
Who: Featuring various Senators and Representatives


The Virginia National Organization for Women (NOW) is an all-volunteer, state chapter of National NOW which was founded in 1966 to take action through intersectional advocacy, promoting awareness of issues which lead to societal change. We work to eliminate discrimination and to achieve and protect the equal rights of women, girls, and LGBTQ+ people in all aspects of social, political, and economic life. As the cornerstone of the grassroots arm of the women’s movement, NOW is dedicated to its multi-issue and
multi-strategy approach to women’s rights and is the largest organization of feminist advocates in the United States. NOW has hundreds of chapters and thousands of members and advocates in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Contact us, learn more, or donate to support the Virginia Law Audit Project (VLAP) at: www.vanow.org. You can follow us on Instagram and Twitter @VANOWChapter.

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