

Argument Against Question 1 – Equal Rights Amendment to the NV Constitution

The Equal Rights Amendment has been described by proponents as a benevolent way to ensure the “equality of rights under the law” for everyone regardless of their race, sexual orientation, sexual identity, etc. Sounds great, right? Who doesn’t want to see everyone treated equally under the law?

Yet, a deeper look will reveal a darker vision that will jeopardize the rights of women, children, parents, doctors, charitable organizations, and religious institutions – both laity and clergy. In fact, there is no stated protection of religious rights under this amendment. And that, in and of itself, should be cause for concern. Yet, there are other serious concerns as well.

Regardless of what those that favor this amendment say, the Nevada ERA could mandate taxpayer-funded abortions. This occurred in New Mexico when the New Mexico Supreme Court mandated taxpayers pay in 1998. This also occurred in Connecticut under the guise that restricting abortion is a form of sexual discrimination.

By promoting “gender identity” in the state constitution, men who identify as women would be allowed to compete with biological women in sporting events. This “inclusion” will destroy women’s sports and undermine the chances for young women in Nevada to advance in their athletic field and receive scholarships.

Next, this amendment could potentially open sex-specific facilities such as locker rooms and restrooms to members of the opposite sex, violating the privacy of young women and increasing the risk for sexual assault.

Religious freedom could be imperiled by forcing clergy and businesses to accommodate same-sex marriage even if doing so violates their religious and personal convictions, and according to the Alliance Defending Freedom for Faith and Justice, “SJR8 (Nevada ERA) would deny state financial aid to students at faith-based colleges and universities unless they abandon policies and practices reflecting their sincerely held beliefs about marriage and sexuality.... It could forbid religious schools and organizations from ensuring that their employees abide by their doctrines or beliefs about marriage, sexual behavior, and the distinction between the sexes.”

Not only would a Nevada ERA open the door to blatant opposition to the First Amendment that protects our right to freely practice our religion, it could also politicize medicine and force physicians and hospitals to violate their oath and values and prescribe sex-altering therapies, such as puberty blockers, to young children who are struggling with gender identity. These therapies could cause unwarranted, irreversible harm since “research has shown that 80 to 90 percent of children outgrow their distress with their bodies after puberty (*Daily Signal*, May 15, 2020).

Alarmingly, Catholic hospitals in California and New Jersey have already been sued for declining to perform hysterectomies on otherwise healthy women who want to become male. A Catholic hospital in Washington settled out of court when the ACLU sued them for declining to perform a double mastectomy on a gender dysphoric sixteen-year-old girl.

Creating even more disruption, the new sexual norms that this amendment supports harm and divide families. Parents will be required to adhere to sex-altering therapies that they believe are not in the best interest of their children.

“Once you change the definition of gender (identity/expression) in the Constitution, legislators can **NOT** address the unintended **CONSEQUENCES**,” points out Karen Barton England, the Executive Director of Nevada Family Alliance.

The vagueness of the language in the Nevada ERA will open the door to laws that would uproot the freedom of Nevadans, harm our youth, and result in excessive lawsuits. Please vote **NO** on ballot question one.

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