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WDC Newsletter – August 15, 2023

From the President

Tazeen Ahmad

"Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex."

— Section 1, Equal Rights Amendment

This summer, while many of us have been taking some time off and while all the news organizations are incessantly covering the latest indictments against Donald Trump, a re-growing national effort to secure equal rights for all regardless of sex has been largely ignored by mainstream media.

When I first sat down to write for the August newsletter, my initial thought was to write about Women's Equality Day, coming up on August 26th, though it seemed contradictory to Women's Equality Day when so many women across the country are being stripped of their ability to make decisions about their own bodies, their families, and their future. But a look, I quickly realized that 2023 has truly been a historic year in the fight for equal rights regardless of sex; it just hasn't been on my radar. I plan to remedy that by making a corn educate myself, to share what I learn whenever and wherever the opportunity arises, and to act where I can.

So, here is my first attempt at doing exactly that.

This year, one hundred years after the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) was first introduced in Congress, the fight to enshrine it as the 28th Amendment to the Constitution continues ramped up with new urgency.

This year the charge is being led by Ayanna Presley (D-MA) and Cori Bush (D-MO), in the House of Representatives, and Ben Cardin (D-MD) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), in the resolutions to affirm the ERA as the 28th Amendment. Rep. Pressley (co-chair of the recently established House Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) Caucus, filed a "discharge petition could compel the House to hold a vote to affirm the ratification of the ERA. The Cardin/ Murkowski resolution passed a Senate vote by a simple majority in April but did not attain majority that some feel is required for affirmation. "The Equal Rights Amendment is all about equality—the most fundamental of American values. After 100 years, we are closer to realizing the vision of the ERA," said Sen. Cardin.

Rep. Pressley's discharge petition comes on the heels of the July 13 introduction by Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Rep. Cori Bush of ERA Now, a joint resolution to Congress ERA has already been ratified and is enforceable and that directs the Archivist of the United States to affirm the ERA as the 28th Amendment of the United States Constitution, certify ratifications, and publish it in the Federal Register. The resolution counters opposition claims that the deadline to ratify has long passed with a novel legal theory that (a) since the ERA preamble rather than the text, it is nonbinding; and (b) if Congress has the power to impose a deadline, then Congress has the power to remove a deadline.

"The ERA is the path that brings our entire country toward true gender equity, and all that is standing in the way of this necessary change is paperwork," said Congresswoman Bu to be joined by Senator Gillibrand and several of my ERA Caucus colleagues in introducing this important resolution. We are urging the Archivist to fulfill her ministerial duty by cert publishing the ERA as the 28th amendment. This simple, 24-word amendment is packed with the potential to protect access to abortion care nationwide, defeat bans on gender-e healthcare, shore up marriage equality, eliminate the gender wage gap, help end the epidemic of violence against women and girls, and so much more. With the flick of a pen, we constitutional gender equality as the law of the land, and today we are coming together to say we refuse to wait a moment longer to guarantee this fundamental right."

Finally, in addition to the extensive efforts at the federal level, there is important work being done at the state level. In Maryland, a new Maryland NOW ERA Task Force was established January 2023. Its mission is to increase awareness of the ERA among Marylanders; organize Marylanders to take action to promote recognition and validation of the ERA as the Amendment to the Constitution; and take action to support protection, implementation, and enforcement of the Maryland state ERA (MD ERA).

So later this month, as we commemorate Women's Equality Day, let's remember there is still work to do. Yes, August 26 marks the passage of the 19th amendment in 1920, which gave women the right to vote. It was a watershed victory, decades in the making, that suddenly gave women—at least white women—the chance to have their voices heard at the ballot. Women who led the fight for universal suffrage, would have to wait until the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to be granted similar access to the ballot.

It was a hard-fought victory, nonetheless, that made women a powerful voting bloc. But history has shown that equal citizenship cannot be attained by casting a ballot alone, and finish the work started by suffragists Alice Paul and Crystal Eastman, who wrote the Equal Rights Amendment in 1923, and the concerted effort of so many spanning over five generations.

The bottom line is that the ERA will prohibit discrimination based on sex. Affirming it as the 28th Amendment in our Constitution **has become imperative** in a post-Roe v. Wade world.

We are so close to the finish line. Let's not drop the ball on our watch. Here are a few simple things we can do to help ensure every individual, regardless of gender, gets equal protection under the law.

Know the facts – Take time to read and understand the history of this struggle.

Be a catalyst for change – Go to <https://www.sign4era.org> and sign the petition. Add your name to the growing movement advocating for gender equality.

Share with your networks – Follow & amplify the need for the ERA in the Constitution on social media. Use #ERANOW, #ERA100, #28thAmendment, #ERACoalition, or @ERA posting.

Spread the Word – The ERA is fully ratified. Virginia was the 38th state to ratify in 2020. It's time! Let Congress know that we need Congressional affirmation, certification, and passage of the Equal Rights Amendment—and we need it now.

Stay Strong. Stay Focused. Stay United.

Tazeen Ahmad
President



WDC Events

WDC Members Only

ANNUAL FALL KICKOFF

Sunday, September 10, 2023
3 - 5:30 pm

FREE and
OPEN to Women's
Democratic Club
members only.

Join or renew now
for \$35/year at:
bit.ly/2023-renew

Reconnect with all your activist buddies, meet new ones,
plan for the upcoming elections and more.

At the home of
WDC President Tazeen Ahmad
9920 New London Dr. | Potomac, MD 20854

RSVP at: bit.ly/wdc-kickoff
We'd love to have you join us!

To RSVP, [click here](#).



Democratic News & Events



The Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee (MCDCC) will fill two vacancies at its September 2023 meeting. The successful candidates will complete unexpired terms in November 2026.

Candidate must be registered to vote as a member of the Democratic Party and fulfill the following criteria as of the date of appointment:

- At-large representative: identify as male or non-binary and be registered in Maryland Legislative District 9A, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, or 20.
- District 9A representative: identify as female or non-binary and be registered in the district.

Candidates are asked to submit an application that consists of a resume, cover letter, and any additional information the candidate would like the Central Committee to consider in its selection process. Applications should be submitted no later than **5:00 pm Thursday, August 31, 2023, via email, to office@mcdcc.org** with the subject line: **At-Large/District 9A Central Committee Member Vacancy**.



MONTGOMERY
COUNTY
DEMOCRATIC
PARTY

You are Cordially Invited
2023 Fall Gala
Sunday, October 22, 2023

*Save
the
Date!*

Other Events



Get Involved to Swing and Keep Elections Blue!



Here are some other ways you can take action with DTMG:

In-Person Letter Writing for Virginia General Assembly Election with DTMG & Vote Forward

Thurs., August 17, 2 - 4:00 pm

Thurs., August 24, 2 - 4:00 pm

Thurs., September 7, 2-4:00 pm

Virtual Letter Writing for Virginia General Election with DTMG

Mon., August 21, 7-8:30 pm

Mon., August 28, 7-8:30 pm

Mon., September 11, 7:00-8:30 pm

For more information, go to [DoTheMostGood](https://www.dothemostgood.org).



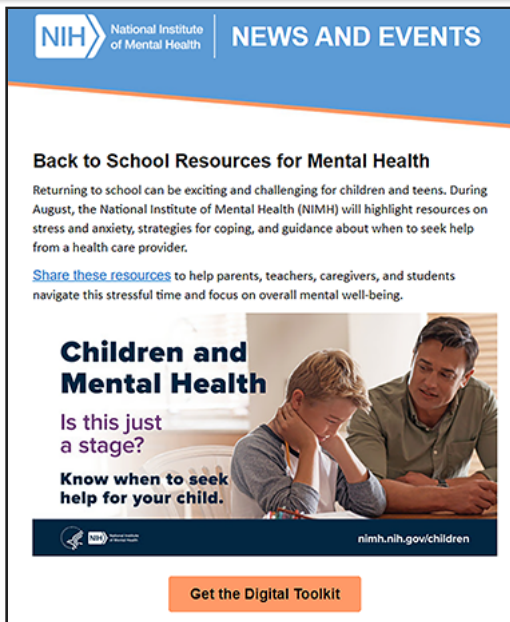
Write Letters to Virginia Voters

Write letters to encourage Virginia Dems to vote in this fall's election! Hand-written letters increase turnout and swing elections blue. For information about SSPA and about ways going forward, go to [SSPA](https://www.sspa.org).

August Is Back to School Month



Image Credit: <https://www.cpcmg.net/time-lets-get-ready-go-back-school/> and <https://www.isabellatallors.com/august-back-school-month/>



NIH National Institute of Mental Health | **NEWS AND EVENTS**

Back to School Resources for Mental Health

Returning to school can be exciting and challenging for children and teens. During August, the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) will highlight resources on stress and anxiety, strategies for coping, and guidance about when to seek help from a health care provider.

[Share these resources](#) to help parents, teachers, caregivers, and students navigate this stressful time and focus on overall mental well-being.

Children and Mental Health

Is this just a stage?
Know when to seek help for your child.

[nimh.nih.gov/children](#)

[Get the Digital Toolkit](#)

Get the digital toolkit [here](#).



Call or text the **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** at **988** to connect with a crisis counselor and get support 24/7.

[nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention](#)

For more about the program in Montgomery County, see the [July 21, 2023, issue of Maryland Matters](#).

The Events Committee is in need of members to support our programs and events this year. If you are interested, please send an email to lavontte.gardner@gmail.com.



HELP ME: A New Service for WDC Members

Did you forget your password? Are you having trouble registering for an event? Logging into MyWDC? Renewing your membership? Have you changed your address? Email? Phone number?

WDC HAS A NEW WEB HELP SERVICE FOR MEMBERS. When you click on **HELP ME** on the WDC website, you will receive a form to complete. Please give us as much information as possible so we can fix the problem. Response time will typically be within a day.

HELP ME

If you haven't already done so, renew online [here](#). You may also mail your \$35.00 annual dues (\$25 for members 35 years old or younger) payable to "WDC" and mail to: WDC, PO Box 3404; 20827.

By renewing your membership, you are building community and political muscle with other Democratic members, clubs, and allies to elect Democrats and support progressive Democratic policies. We are excited to work with each of you, as we advocate for our WDC priorities, and present our Speakers Programs, Community Education Panels, social events, and service projects. Join us!

Make a Difference—Volunteer with WDC!

WDC needs you! Can you help us in one of these positions? Not sure what a position entails? Come try it out—no obligation!

- Membership Co-Chair
- Events Committee Member
- Finance Committee Member
- Advocacy Committee Members

Interested? To learn more, please contact [Tazeen Ahmad](#) and make sure to use the subject line: "Volunteering with WDC."

WDC Resources

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