SENATE RESOLUTION

8631

By Senators Cleveland, Hasegawa, Liias, Randall, Saldaña, Short, and Wilson, C.

WHEREAS, The nation's long-proposed Equal Rights Amendment promises 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" and was first introduced in Congress in 1923 and filed every session thereafter from 1923 to 1972; and

WHEREAS, The Equal Rights Amendment was finally approved by Congress in 1972 and sent to the states for ratification with a 7-year deadline; and

WHEREAS, Washington has historically been a leader among states in providing equality for all its citizens and in 1972 passed its own equal rights amendment to the Washington state Constitution, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex, and then in March of 1973 became the 30th state to ratify the federal Equal Rights Amendment; and

WHEREAS, In 1978 Congress extended the original ratification deadline for three more years and 35 of the needed 38 states ratified the proposed amendment before the deadline; and

WHEREAS, Nevada and Illinois ratified the proposed amendment after the deadline, raising the total number of states to 37 while Virginia continues to consider ratification; and

WHEREAS, After a 38th state votes for ratification, the ERA can be referred back to Congress where the deadline Congress placed on ratification in the 1970s can be removed, extended or waived; and

WHEREAS, Washington has not wavered from its insistence that the bedrock principles of our democracy — "all are created equal," "liberty and justice for all," "government of the people, by the people, and for the people" — apply equally to men and women, and should apply regardless of how an individual identifies;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate acknowledges the anniversary of the passage of the federal Equal Rights Amendment in 1972 and reaffirms our state's commitment to freedom from discrimination on the basis of sex.