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Equal Rights Amendment Constitutional Referral Passes Senate Committee on Rules

Senate Joint Resolution 33 will give voters the power to safeguard Oregonians' equal rights from future anti-abortion, anti-LGBTQ attacks

SALEM, Ore - Today, the Senate Committee on Rules voted to move [Senate Joint Resolution 33](#): the Equal Rights Amendment Constitutional Referral to the Senate floor for consideration.

The ERA Constitutional Referral will give the voters of Oregon the opportunity to preserve equal rights protections in Oregon's constitution during the 2024 General Election. If passed, this amendment would protect Oregonians from any government efforts to discriminate based on gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation, including the ability to make your own decisions about your reproductive healthcare or marry who you love to regardless of gender.

"Oregonians agree that marginalized groups are not political punching bags, and their rights are not up for debate. With a shifting legal landscape at the federal level and the threat of Republicans' anti-LGBTQ, anti-abortion agenda, it's important for voters to have the opportunity to enshrine these rights in our constitution," **said Senate Majority Leader and Senate Rules Chair Kate Lieber (D – Beaverton & SW Portland)**.

This year alone, Oregon Republicans have introduced [7 anti-LGBTQ bills](#) and 13 anti-abortion bills in 2023, including: [HB 2810](#), [HB 2808](#), [HB 2809](#), [HB 2807](#), [HB 2526](#), [HB 2424](#), [HB 2423](#), [HB 2402](#), [HB 3061](#), [HB 3193](#), [SB 513](#), [HB 3400](#), and [HB 3420](#).

"Oregonians already enjoy and support these rights, which are fundamental to the health, safety, and future of this state. With this measure, we are clearly stating that laws restricting equal rights are not permissible in Oregon," **said Senator Lew Frederick (D – Portland), another chief sponsor of the measure**. "If passed by voters, this clarification of equal rights in Oregon's constitution will prevent the erosion of freedom in our state. In my life, I have seen firsthand the consequences of not protecting fundamental rights."

If the anti-abortion, anti-LGBTQ political agenda were to prevail in Oregon, it could have a serious impact on the state's workforce and economy. When North Carolina passed an anti-LGBTQ "bathroom bill," that state was [projected to lose \\$3.76 billion](#) in business investment. Those [economic threats played a role](#) in that bill being quickly repealed. When then-Governor Mike Pence signed anti-LGBTQ+ legislation in Indiana, [the state's major businesses, like Yelp and Salesforce, spoke out](#), saying that the law would make it difficult to attract and retain top-end talent.

Major Oregon employer [Nike](#) cites workforce recruitment and retention as a reason for their support of the ERA Constitutional Referral.

"The Oregon Senate has a strong history of protecting LGBTQ+ rights and expanding access to reproductive health services, and today we add to that history," **said Senate President Rob Wagner (D – Lake Oswego), who is a chief sponsor of the measure.** "It is our responsibility to protect the rights of all Oregonians."

[Learn more about the ERA Constitutional Referral here.](#)

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