

This November, The citizens of New York will vote on an Equal Rights Amendment for the state. The ERA would prohibit discrimination by the government based on ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and pregnancy outcomes. In this essay, I will write about what the word "equality" means, how this amendment could affect people I know, and how people who are lacking in these rights are disadvantaged.

I think a good place to start is what the word equality means. Of course, equality doesn't mean that everyone gets the same amount of everything. For example, someone who works 50 hours a week and someone who works 40 will not get the same pay, and neither will a cashier at a fast-food restaurant compared to a heart surgeon. However, it is wrong to turn away someone because you *think* they are not up to the job, or because you do not agree with their views. This is why I think that my definition of "equality" is giving everyone *the same chance*. What they make of it doesn't matter, but they should be allowed to do what they aspire.

I can easily see how this amendment could affect people I know. For example, if a sibling or I decide to enter the workforce (sometime in the future,) this could apply. If we happen upon a job, and whoever is in charge denies us because of our Jewish lineage, or they think that we are "too young for the job", they could deny us said job. However, under the ERA, this would be unlawful, because it would prohibit discrimination under ethnicity or age. This is but one way that this ERA can help people I know.

Unfortunately, in many places in the world, amendments like this do not exist, and their lives are heavily disadvantaged. One of myriad examples is Afghanistan. There, women are treated sub-humanly. They are prohibited from attending school beyond 6th grade, using gyms or public washrooms, and it is almost impossible for them to work outside of health and, (ironically,) education. This prevents any real future for them. Of course, this is an extreme example, but in other places, similar rules exist.

In this essay, I have written about what the word "equality" means, how this amendment can affect people I know, and how people who are lacking in these rights are disadvantaged.

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WHAT DOES THE WORD EQUALITY MEAN?

Hello there! I'm Dilraj Singh, a 7th grader with big dreams of a future where everyone is treated equally. The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) aims to achieve just that. It guarantees that everyone has the same opportunities, regardless of their race, gender, or any other personal characteristic. The ERA ensures that people are protected against discrimination and treated with dignity and respect. Ultimately, it secures our fundamental rights and ensures that everyone is treated equally under the law. I believe that the ERA is a crucial step towards a more just and equal society, and I hope to see it implemented soon.

HOW WOULD THE AMENDMENT AFFECT YOU OR PEOPLE YOU KNOW?

Regarding the impact of an amendment on my life and others, I am not sure. Although I have personally experienced discrimination because of my religion, I don't know how an amendment would stop people from discriminating against others. However, if an amendment were to be implemented, my dad would be treated with more respect. I would also hope everyone would be treated equally, regardless of their background, beliefs, gender, race, ethnicity, and other characteristics. The ERA will protect people against discrimination and ensure everyone is treated with respect, dignity, and equality. This is how an amendment would affect me and the people I know."

WHY IS THE AMENDMENT IMPORTANT?

It's difficult for me to answer why the amendment is important because it's something that should be self-evident. It's important to learn to accept people who are different and to show them respect. We are all human beings and we should treat each other with kindness and dignity. In some places, women are not allowed to go to work or school, get treated unfairly because of their race, religion, or sexual orientation, are forced to marry at a young age, and cannot go to school. In Russia, LGBTQ+ individuals are subjected to discrimination and violence. They may not have access to education, employment, or healthcare. ERA can stop people from feeling scared, isolated, and powerless. The right to equality enables people to reach their full potential, contribute to their communities, and fulfill their lives. We can make a difference by supporting organizations that fight for quality, speak out against disrespect, and treat everyone with kindness and respect. Ultimately, the amendment is important because it protects our fundamental rights and ensures that everyone is treated fairly and equally under the law. In summary, ERA is an important step towards achieving quality for all. This is important because it will ensure that everyone is treated fairly and has the same opportunities regardless of gender, race, or ethnicity. ERA will help address issues such as the gender pay gap, racial discrimination, and discrimination against the disadvantaged. We can make a difference by educating ourselves and others about the importance of equality, speaking out against discrimination, and defending the ERA. Now is the time to come together and demand equal rights for everyone. It is our responsibility to ourselves, our communities, and future generations to create a world where all people are treated with dignity and respect. I believe we can achieve this goal of everyone having equality and that is why this amendment is important to me.

HOW ARE THE LIVES OF PEOPLE WHO DON'T HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS DIFFERENT FROM OUR LIVES?

Unfortunately, some individuals do not have equal rights and face challenges due to their status, financial situation, or opportunities. Sadly, many people fail to recognize the humanity of those who are different from themselves. While some may disagree with this sentiment, I am not a person of great wealth or status, but I believe that everyone should be treated equally. People who are denied equal rights are often disrespected and treated differently based on their gender, skin color, religion, and many others. We should all receive the same treatment, regardless of our differences. As a 12-year-old boy named Dilraj Singh, I hope my message resonates with others. Thank you.

THANK YOU,
DILRAJ SINGH