



Kansas City Area Missouri Equal Rights Amendment Coalition Records (K0515)

Collection Number: K0515

Collection Title: Kansas City Area Missouri Equal Rights Amendment Coalition Records

Dates: 1972-1982

Creator: Kansas City Area Missouri Equal Rights Amendment Coalition

Abstract: The collection contains administrative records for the Kansas City Regional office relating to the effort to pass the Equal Rights Amendment in Missouri. It includes minutes, bylaws, correspondence, newsletters, clippings, financial documents, speeches, reports, and other materials, dated between 1972 and 1982.

Collection Size: 5 cubic feet
(192 folders, 2 reel-to-reel tapes)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at kansascity@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

Restrictions on Use: The donor has given and assigned to the University all rights of copyright, which the donor has in the Materials and in such of the Donor's works as may be found among any collections of Materials received by the University from others.

Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Kansas City Area Missouri Equal Rights Amendment Coalition* (K0515); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-KC].

Donor Information: The records were donated to the University of Missouri by Charlene B. Schmelzer on July 7, 1982 (Accession No. KA0153).

Related Materials: Additional materials related to the Kansas City Area Missouri Equal Rights Amendment Coalition Records can be found in the following collections:

Rosemary L. Smithson Papers (K0307)

Greater Kansas City Women's Political Caucus Records (K1243)

Missouri Equal Rights Amendment Coalition Records (S0437)

Processed by: Processed by Sophia Southard, February 2023

Note: The reel-to-reel tapes are unavailable for viewing until materials have been digitized.

Historical Note:

In 1969, the Missouri Equal Rights Amendment Coalition was founded as an umbrella group to coordinate the efforts of organizations supporting the amendment. The Coalition focused its efforts on lobbying in Jefferson City. The steering committee appointed statewide and regional coordinators to lobby and carry out the functions of the coalition as established by the executive and steering committees and to coordinate the lobbying plans of other organizations. The Coalition organized rallies in Jefferson City, wrote letters to legislators, helped in the formation of outstate coalitions, and sought endorsements from other organizations.

In 1973, Governor Christopher "Kit" Bond, was a strong supporter of the amendment and helped launch a ratification campaign. Due to efforts of the Missouri Equal Rights Amendment Coalition and Governor Bond, the Missouri House of Representatives passed the amendment in 1975. The amendment was defeated again in the Senate that year and suffered defeat each time it came up for a vote for the next nine years.

The Coalition monitored individual legislators and began organizing in the districts of senators who voted against the amendment. The Coalition formed a political action committee, the Missouri Citizens for Constitutional Democracy in 1975. This committee provided financial support to pro-equal rights amendment candidates for the Missouri state legislature, especially those in five districts with anti-equal rights amendment senators.

The Coalition began developing grass roots support across the state in 1977, and for the first time it initiated a membership fee to help raise money for its activities. Lobbying activities included house parties, letter writing and persuasion campaigns, local fundraisers, phone banks, and canvassing. The "Show Me Equality Caravan," modeled after a successful campaign in Indiana, toured every county in Missouri, held public meetings, and provided educational materials and assistance to out-of-state coalitions. The phone banks increased membership, kept existing members active and rallied support of individuals and organizations. Despite such efforts, the Senate voted against the amendment by a 22 to 12 margin in 1977.

The 1980 election provided the last opportunity for electoral changes in the Missouri legislature before the 1982 deadline for the amendment's ratification. The Coalition failed in its efforts to remove incumbents who voted against the amendment in the Missouri Senate. In 1980, sponsors of the Equal Rights Amendment struck the amendment from the senate calendar because there were not enough supporters in the legislation.

In 1982, the Senate Constitutional Amendments Committee failed to achieve the majority vote needed to pass a ratification resolution, thus prohibiting the amendment from ever getting to the senate floor for debate. The Coalition disbanded in June 1982 when the time limit for ratification was not extended. The amendment was never ratified in Missouri and fell three states shy of the necessary thirty-eight to become an amendment to the United States Constitution.

Presidents of the Missouri Equal Rights Amendment Coalition included Barbara Harrison (1973-1974); Rosemary Smithson (1975-1976); Doris Quinn (1977-1978); Mary Ann Sedey (1978-1979); and Mary Lou Anderson (1979-1982).

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged into the following 7 series:

- Administrative Records
- Affiliated Organizations
- Correspondence
- Financial Records
- Legislative Research
- Promotional Materials
- Public Events
- Public Relations

Scope and Content Note:**Administrative Records**

The Administrative Records series contains the administrative records of the Coalition. Included are bylaws, committee minutes, memorandums, mailing lists, meeting notes, and documents related to the Coalition's fundraising efforts. Folders in the series have been arranged alphabetically.

Affiliated Organizations

The Affiliated Organizations series consists of materials relating to organizations associated with the Coalition. Also included in the series is information relating to E.R.A. Coalitions in other states. Folders in the series have been arranged alphabetically.

Correspondence

The Correspondence series contains incoming and outgoing correspondence of Charline Schmelzer, Lois Barnhouse, Mary Anne Sedey, Pam Rich, Vera Clay, Wilda Worley, and other members of the Coalition. Folders in the series have been arranged alphabetically.

Financial Records

The Financial Records series consists of materials relating to the Coalition's finances. Included are budgets and treasurer's reports. Folders in the series have been arranged alphabetically.

Legislative Research

The Legislative Research series consists of materials relating to research conducted by the Coalition on the Missouri legislature and legislators. Included in the series are written profiles and reports of state representatives, vote counts, petitions, research on grassroots lobbying, and records related to canvassing activities. Folders in the series have been arranged alphabetically.

Promotional Materials

The Promotional Materials series contains publications and media documents relating to the Coalition's efforts to pass the Equal Rights Amendment in Missouri. Included in the series are essays and papers about the Equal Rights Amendment, brochures, leaflets, pamphlets, as well as the Kansas City Coalition's E.R.A. newsletters. Folders in the series have been arranged alphabetically.

Public Events

The Public Events series consists of materials relating to public events organized and attended by the Coalition. Folders in the series have been arranged alphabetically.

Public Relations

The Public Relations series consists of materials relating to the Coalition's public relations. Included in the series are advertisements, press releases, information about the press and media in Missouri, and information about the Coalition's relationship with Gary Ferguson of Gary Ferguson Inc. Public Relations. Folders in the series have been arranged alphabetically.

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