**LWVIL ISSUES BIENNIUM REPORT 2019**

**SOCIAL POLICY**

**LWVUS position: Equality of Opportunity/Equal Rights – Sharon Alter**

In 2018, both the IL House and IL Senate ratified the ERA!

Specifically, in a bipartisan vote, on April 11, 2019 the IL Senate ratified the ERA(SJRCA 4) and on May 30, 2018 the IL House ratified the ERA. IL is now the 37th state out the required 38 states necessary for ratification. In the Senate, the vote was 43 YEAS to 12 NAYS. With a 3/5 membership majority required, the House vote was 72 YEAS to 45 NAYS resulting in passage by only two votes!

Prior to 2018, LWVIL worked as part of an informal coalition of groups supporting ERA. However, in January 2018, LWVIL formally joined the broad-based ERA Illinois coalition. LWVIL members lobbied in person and via witness slips, email, and phone calls. LWVIL President Bonnie Cox and board members Jenny Grochowski and Sharon Alter all worked on specific committees of the ERA Illinois coalition. As LWVIL ERA Issue Specialist, Sharon worked on Leadership Group of ERA Illinois. Many thanks to the many other Illinois Leaguers who persisted in their ERA lobbying in 2018 and in previous years.

At LWVUS 2018 convention in Chicago in June 2018, the Illinois delegation in coalition with other state Leagues was successful in getting the LWVUS convention to adopt a resolution stating that LWVUS would emphasize its ERA ratification support in 2018-2020.

In Congress in January 2019, both SJRes 6 and HJRes 38 to remove 1982 deadline for ERA ratification were introduced. For the first time in 36 years, there was a congressional hearing on the ERA. The US House Judiciary Committee on April 30, 2019 held its two hour plus hearing to gain information on issues related to the deadline removal. HJRes 38 currently has 185 cosponsors including 10 from Illinois. At the end of the hearing, it was announced that AAUW had submitted a statement with a request that it be placed into the hearing’s record. LWVUS did not take similar action.

LWVIL plans to continue to monitor action both in Congress and by LWVUS as we lobby for ERA’s final ratification.