

## Concrete reasons for ERA

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by law in our courts. But ERA does not apply to customs.

Mothers and wives are among the hardest working people. Yet in some states, widows are automatically denied an equal right to the home, savings accounts, and other property acquired during the marriage; widowers do not have to pay inheritance tax, but the widow is required to pay. Last month's figures show about 42 million working women whose income [already taxed] helps accumulate that estate, besides their homemaking work.

In 42 "common law" states, the law gives the husband complete control over all property, including his wife's inherited property, and his wife's earnings, and he can sell "community" property without his wife's consent; a wife loses control of even her own funds unless she puts them into a separate bank account; women have no rights of ownership of assets in marriage. In these states, when a marriage ends in divorce, women have to depend on the court for distribution. Some of these decisions are based on Blackstone, an 18th-century English jurist. It is past time for these ideas to be updated.

The Illinois equal rights constitutional clause is not sufficient to protect women in a mobile age when about 500,000 citizens are affected by business relocations each year, or when people retire to other states. ERA needs to be a national condition.

Being in favor of ERA is not being anti-men. It should assist what men now attempt to do with insurance, etc., to protect the future of wives and daughters.

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**SCHAUMBURG**—The decision of the Illinois General Assembly will soon decide whether Illinois joins the 35 states which have approved the Equal Rights Amendment. Failure of legislators to act will result in the courts acting instead. ERA is not going to go away. People who believe in justice realize it is time for fair and equal treatment of women