

NOW's Priority Issues

Constitutional Equality Amendment: Equality in pay, job opportunities, political structure, social security and education will remain an elusive dream without a Constitutional Equality Amendment. The progress we have made — and must continue to make — towards women's equality can be lost at any time because women are not granted equal rights in the Constitution. Without constitutional equality, women workers face repeated and varied forms of discrimination, and the patterns of sex discrimination in the workplace will never change. Winning a constitutional guarantee of equality for women remains one of NOW's top priorities.

Reproductive Rights: NOW affirms that reproductive rights are issues of life and death for women, not mere matters of choice. NOW fully supports access to safe and legal abortion, to effective birth control, to reproductive health and education for all women. We oppose attempts to restrict these rights through legislation, regulation or Constitutional amendment.

Racism: NOW condemns the racism which inflicts a double burden of race and sex discrimination on women of color. Seeing human rights as indivisible, we are committed to identifying and fighting against those barriers to equality and justice that are imposed by racism. A leader in the struggle for civil rights since its inception in 1966, NOW continues to fight for equal opportunities for women of color in all areas including employment, education and reproductive rights. NOW recognizes these multiple forms of discrimination and is committed to eliminating racist and sexist policies that hinder women of color from achieving full equality.

Lesbian Rights: NOW is committed to fighting discrimination based on sexual orientation in all areas, including employment, housing, public accommodations, health services, child custody and military policies. NOW is committed to educational efforts which combat the adverse effects of homophobia, promote positive images in the media of lesbians and ultimately ensure civil rights protection for all. NOW asserts the right of lesbians to live their lives with dignity and security.

Violence Against Women: NOW is unique in its approach to the issue of violence against women, emphasizing that there are many interrelated aspects to the issue: domestic violence; sexual assault; sexual harassment; clinic violence; hate crimes across lines of gender, sexuality and race; the gender bias in our judicial system that further victimizes the victims of violence; and the violence of poverty emphasized by the radical right's attacks on poor women and children — all of these resulting from society's attitudes toward women and efforts to "keep women in their place."

Economic Justice: NOW has repeatedly taken clear stands on the wide range of economic justice issues affecting women, from the cement floor to the glass ceiling. These include welfare reform, livable wage, comparable worth, and pay equity. In addition to addressing poverty and welfare here at home, NOW has begun important work on economic issues affecting women globally.