

## Missing opportunity

In Tennessee in 1920, 24-year-old state legislator Harry Burn broke a tie to cast his vote for the ratification of the 19th Amendment, giving women the right to vote.

Tennessee was the last state needed to place the amendment into our Constitution. Burn said he cast his vote for the 19th Amendment because: 1. He believed the Tennessee Legislature had a moral and legal right to ratify. 2.

His mother wanted him to vote for ratification. 3. He could free 17 million women from political slavery. 4. He desired that his party might say it was a Republican from the mountains of Tennessee who made national women's suffrage possible.

Fast-forward 99 years, and here we are trying to put equality of women and men into the Constitution as the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). North Carolina has the opportunity in 2019 that Tennessee did in 1920 to be the last state needed to ratify.

Unfortunately, because redistricting reform has not been instituted in North Carolina and legislators vote along party lines instead of representing the desires of all their constituents, the ERA will remain buried in committees and never see a vote in our General Assembly. Pity.

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