

## Jesse Jackson for President Committee

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JESSE JACKSON'S POSITION ON WOMEN'S ISSUESPHILOSOPHY

As a candidate for the Democratic nomination for President of the United States, my quest and pledge is to fight for a just society and a peaceful world. The foundation of a just society is to provide equal protection under the law for all of our citizens — something that has never been vigorously fought for in this country. And in foreign affairs, we must seek to resolve conflict through mutual respect, taking and negotiating (using military might only as a last resort), and measure human rights and self-determination by one yardstick. We cannot define democracy in the United States as majority rule, and then define democracy in South Africa as minority rule.

My commitment, as a presidential candidate, is to focus on and lift those boats stuck on the bottom full of unpolished pearls. For if the boats on the bottom rise, all boats above will rise — my views in this regard are the exact opposite of the "trickle down" views of President Reagan. The way I propose to do this is to build a new functional "Rainbow Coalition of the Rejected" spanning lines of color, sex, age, religion, race, region and national origin. The old minorities -- Blacks, Hispanics, women, peace activists, environmentalists, youth, the elderly, small farmers, small businesspersons, poor people, gays and lesbians -- if we remain apart, will continue to be a minority. But, if we come together, the old minorities constitute a new majority. That is how I propose to be nominated and elected President.

THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

As a civil rights leader, I have fought for the past ten years for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. Without ERA, over half of our nation's population will be denied equal protection under the law. Seventy percent of all poor children live in a household headed by a woman, and over 50 percent of Black families are headed by a woman. Thus, if women are denied equal protection under the law, they cannot protect the American family. And if the American family cannot be protected, our children cannot be protected. Having spent all of my adult life in public service as a civil rights leader, I think my record in the area of equal rights is unparalleled among the announced candidates.

As a matter of strategy and perception the struggle around ratification of the Equal (and Economic) Rights Amendment has been led by too narrow of a constituency -- upper middle-class White females -- and that is one of the reasons it has failed to gain passage. But if the women's movement is now willing to put forth an affirmative effort to involve the masses of women -- Black, Latino, Native American, poor and basic working class women -- then ratification has a realistic chance of passage. To that end I will use my candidacy to help organize excluded women to involve themselves in the movement for passage of the ERA. Despite your efforts to include all women, it has not become a reality yet.

As demonstrated again in the House on November 15, 1983, the region of the country most opposed to ratification of the ERA is the South and Southwest. That is true because Blacks and Hispanics, male and female, are being denied our share of political representation. We are being denied our share of political representation by new forms of voting rights violations (largely perpetuated by the Democratic Party), and the lack of enforcement of the Voting Rights Act by the Reagan administration. If the Voting Rights Act is enforced, Blacks and Hispanics, male and female, can replace Republicans and Democratic Boll Weevils and ERA can pass in the South and Southwest. I might add, there has been great emphasis by most of the other announced Democratic candidates on voter registration, but little or no focus on voting rights enforcement. To do that the candidates would have to choose Blacks, Hispanics, progressive Whites and women over incumbent Democratic Boll Weevils. To date, most of the other candidates have chosen your enemies over you.



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Lastly, the other candidates have said they will consider a woman as their running mate. I have promised, without equivocation, that if I secure the Democratic nomination I will name a woman as my vice-presidential running mate after consultation with the organized women's movement and mutual agreement on who that candidate will be.

### NATIONAL GAY CIVIL RIGHTS BILL

As a matter of public policy I am fully committed to equal protection under the law. Thus, I support S430 which would add "sexual orientation" to Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. During my recent speech before the Human Rights Campaign Fund in New York City, I reaffirmed my support for and inclusion of gays and lesbians as part of the Rainbow Coalition of the Rejected.

### CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

I firmly believe that democracy is made better and fulfills its promise when it accomplishes two things: first, puts a floor of jobs, education, health and housing below which none of our citizens fall; and, two, removes all artificial ceilings that deny people equal opportunity and the chance to develop whatever abilities they have or achieve to whatever position their abilities will take them. Thus, I am a strong advocate of all human development programs, including: the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program; School Break fast and Lunch programs; and the Summer Food Service Program. If I am elected President, I would support programs such as those listed above and design others to insure that no child went hungry or lacked an adequate or nutritional daily diet.

### CHILD CARE AND DAY CARE

Due to the increase in the number of parents who work, the need for child care and day care has steadily climbed. It is estimated that six to seven million children, 13 or under, including many pre-schoolers, go without care while their parents work. As more and more parents work, child care and day care become extremely vital. Thus, I support the refundable child-care tax credit, including raising the maximum from its current level of 30 percent to 50 percent, which would include low-income women who currently receive no benefit; increased federal and state funding for child care for working parents and parents still attending school; and new creative forms of child care adapted to the needs, schedules and budgets of all kinds of families.

### REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS OF WOMEN

Even our Creator did not make us puppets, but gave us a free will to exercise a free choice. Thus, as a matter of public policy, I support the right of free choice relative to abortions. I am opposed to the Hyde Amendment because it denies equal protection under the law to all citizens. If abortions are legal for anyone, and they are, then they should be legal for everyone. Poor women should not be denied equal protection under the law because they are poor. I also oppose a Constitutional Amendment outlawing abortions. It is not right to impose private religious and moral positions on public policy as a matter of law, even though I support the right of all to differ and try to change public attitudes through personal persuasion. As a private matter, I would not, except in medically extenuating circumstances, advise a woman to have an abortion. I would also emphasize that while I fully support freedom of choice, that one must also be responsible and live with the consequences of one's choice. However, I repeat, I am strongly opposed to any legislation that would weaken or reverse the Supreme Court decision of *Roe v. Wade*.



### VOTING RIGHTS ACT

I intend to make enforcement of the Voting Rights Act and other civil rights laws a major campaign issue in the 1984 campaign. Blacks, Hispanics, women and the poor are not apathetic, we are oppressed by new forms of voting rights denial. The public must be made aware of the new forms of political oppression -- dual registration (in Mississippi), second primaries, at-large elections, gerrymandering, annexation and inaccessible registrars. Blacks are 12 percent of the population, but only one percent of the public officials 18 years after the Voting Rights Act was enacted. At the current rate, one percent every 18 years, it will take us 198 years to catch up. Women are 51 percent of the population, yet hold only 10 percent of all elected offices. With regard to Blacks, Hispanics and women, if the parties accept integrated voting they must practice integrated slatemaking. If elected President, I would commit my administration to appointing more women to key jobs than has ever been done in the history of the country. And I would appoint men and women to key enforcement agencies who are committed to eliminating discrimination in all aspects of our society.

### SEX DISCRIMINATION IN INSURANCE

Discrimination on the basis of sex, pregnancy and marital status in all insurance policies (including health, life and disability insurance) should be illegal. A person's sex should not be a factor in determining monthly pension benefits. Inequities in Social Security must be eliminated.

### ECONOMIC EQUITY ACT

The federal government should establish strong criteria to assure equal pay for jobs of comparable value. I would support all legislation designed to achieve that end. In addition, I believe the Justice Department should be creative and intervene by filing Amicus Curiae briefs on behalf of women to force government and the private sector to equalize pay for women.