SPONSOR: Rep. Longhurst & Sen. Hansen & Sen. Henry & Sen. Townsend
Reps. Baumbach, Bennett, Bentz, Bolden, Brady, Heffernan, Hudson, Jaques, J. Johnson, Q. Johnson, Keeley, Kowalko, Lynn, Mulrooney, Osienski, Paradee, Potter, Ramone, Schwartzkopf, M. Smith, Viola, K. Williams; Sens. Bushweller, Cloutier, Ennis, Lopez, Marshall, McBride, McDowell, Poore, Sokola, Walsh

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
149th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE BILL NO. 399

AN ACT PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE I OF THE DELAWARE CONSTITUTION RELATING TO EQUAL RIGHTS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE (Two-thirds of all members elected to each house thereof concurring therein):

Section 1. Amend Article I of the Delaware Constitution by making deletions as shown by strike through and insertions as shown by underline as follows:

§ 21. Equal Rights.

Section 21. Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged on account of the sex of the person.

SYNOPSIS

This is the first leg of an amendment to the Delaware Constitution to provide equal rights on the basis of sex. There is no Equal Rights Amendment to the United States Constitution. While Congress passed the Amendment in 1972, it was not ratified by the requisite number of states by the 1982 deadline. Delaware, however, was one of the first states to ratify the Amendment. About half of the states across the country have passed Equal Rights Amendments to their state constitutions in order to provide protection against discrimination based on sex. Without an Equal Rights amendment, women's rights and protections are limited. This Amendment is necessary to correct a constitutional shortcoming, reduce sex-based disparities and to codify our State's value of equality.