

50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

EQUAL RIGHTS  
ADVOCATES

# 50 Years of Impact

ANNUAL REPORT  
2024





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Noreen Farrell,  
Executive Director

# Letter from the Executive Director

As we mark Equal Rights Advocates' 50th Anniversary, we find ourselves at a pivotal moment. The new administration signals that the fight for equality is far from over, but it also underscores the urgency of our work.

For 50 years, Equal Rights Advocates has driven extraordinary progress. Setbacks won't stop us—we're ready to hold the line and keep moving forward. Our resolve is unshaken, and our momentum is fierce. Thank you for standing with us to finish the business of this movement.

Equal Rights Advocates advances gender justice at work and school and in other spheres, with a focus on low-income families and communities of color. Equal Rights Advocates drives system and policy change, defends rights in courts, and builds power among students, workers, and communities across the country. With tremendous opportunities and perilous threats ahead, please know Equal Rights Advocates was made for this moment.

Our heartfelt thanks to the thousands of people across five decades who have led, staffed, supported, and partnered with us! Read on to learn more about recent wins made possible by your support and to get energized about ERA's plan for the work ahead.

**Together, let's do this!**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Noreen Farrell".

**SUPPORT  
50 YEARS  
OF IMPACT**



# Our Impact is Powered by You

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Thank you for your  
transformative support and  
extraordinary vision and  
partnership!

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## THANK YOU FOR YOUR IMPACTFUL SUPPORT

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ERA'S LEGACY

# 50 Years of Progress

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Founded in 1974, Equal Rights Advocates (ERA) emerged at a time when traditional sex stereotypes were widespread, from "home economics" classes to boys-only sports. Many industries were closed to women, and workplaces often forced out pregnant, unmarried, or older women. With the backdrop of Title IX, *Roe v. Wade*, and Billie Jean King's iconic victory over Bobby Riggs, ERA founders Nancy Davis, Wendy Williams, and Mary Dunlap envisioned equal educational and economic opportunities for all those historically excluded from power and progress.

Since then, ERA has led groundbreaking litigation, policy reform, and movement-building. We championed pregnant workers in a landmark Supreme Court case, set legal precedent for peer sexual harassment in schools, and protected undocumented workers like Alicia Castrejon from discrimination. These are just a few of the many cases that have reshaped workplaces and schools nationwide.

ERA has also driven bold policy changes, sponsoring laws such as the nation's first paid family leave and leading efforts for stronger pay equity and anti-harassment protections. We've successfully incubated 57 new laws in the past decade alone.

Our success is rooted in innovative projects like the Lesbian Rights Project, the ENOUGH Network for student survivors, and collaborative campaigns like Equal Pay Today and the Stop Harassment State Network. In 2024, ERA expanded this legacy by welcoming the National Taskforce on Tradeswomen's Issues to unify tradeswomen across the country.

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Visit our **50th Anniversary Hub** at [era50th.happily.events](https://era50th.happily.events)  
for historic videos, timelines, and more!

# Tackling Unfinished Business Across the Nation

We brace for the significant challenges and uncertainties in 2025. With the current political climate, ERA will intensify efforts to collaborate with progressive leaders on essential reforms to uphold our mission. The coming year will be crucial for defending gender justice rights at all intersections. Currently, state legislatures are aggressively attacking reproductive health rights and choice. Numerous states have enacted laws disenfranchising voters of color, posing a severe threat to our democracy. Additionally, lawsuits in 26 states are challenging vital Title IX education equity regulations, jeopardizing the safety and education of millions of students.

## With your support, ERA's Action Plan ahead prioritizes:

### BUILDING WOMEN'S WEALTH, POWER, REPRESENTATION

ERA aims to raise **\$10 million** to create a national gender hub, increasing women's representation in high-wage jobs.

### POWERING THE STATES

In **2025**, ERA will target **25 new state policy initiatives**. Follow us for updates on our Equal Pay Today and Stronger California Agendas. We will also defend rights through impactful litigation in state and federal courts.

### DRIVING FEDERAL REFORM

ERA will seize every opportunity for reform in Congress and federal agencies. The recent passage of the **Pregnant Workers Fairness Act** shows that bipartisan support for progressive change is possible. Fueled by state progress, we will advocate for legislation like the BE HEARD Act against sexual harassment, the Paycheck Fairness Act to update the Equal Pay Act, and national paid family leave and sick days programs.



“

Research suggests that tens of thousands of people are being forced to carry their pregnancy to term [because of restrictive abortion laws]. It's estimated that U.S. maternal deaths will increase by 24%. For Black women, deaths could rise by as much as 39%. We know the economic consequences will also have impacts for generations.

”

Executive Director Noreen Farrell on TODAY

## NEXTGEN DEFENSE

With a rise in school sexual assaults, attacks on trans kids, and book bans, ERA will invest in defending our NextGen leaders through training, legal representation, and policy advocacy. Students can learn about their rights through the **Student Survivor Toolkit** on our website.

## MOVEMENT BUILDING

Recognized by philanthropic leaders in 2024, ERA's campaigns are accelerating change for women, gender-expansive individuals, workers, families, and students. With your support, we will continue to drive impactful collaborations across the nation.

INVEST IN  
THIS WORK



# Stronger Than Ever

## Defending Rights

Equal Rights Advocates includes a team of lawyers defending rights, every day. Through the Advice and Counseling program, ERA provides free legal assistance to those in need as we track trends for litigation and policy efforts. ERA's services include legal support of student survivors of sexual assault with our ENOUGH Pro Bono Network, the first of its kind in the country. This representation informed our advocacy for the new Title IX regulations that took effect August 2024. These regulations confirm protections for students who are LGBTQI+, pregnant, parenting, and survivors of campus sexual violence.

In the workplace, ERA-led amici efforts have supported pay equity settlements benefitting thousands of workers at Oracle and Google. We coordinated national support for pay equity for Costume Designers and the #NakedWithoutUs Campaign. In July 2024, the Costume Designer Guild IATSE Local 892 reached a historic win at the bargaining table, increasing wages by a whopping 40%, bringing the scale in line with similar creative peers.

### CASE SPOTLIGHT

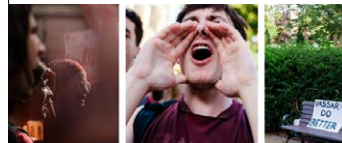
#### EQUAL PAY FOR VASSAR COLLEGE PROFESSORS

One of the country's first women's colleges, Vassar was built on the promise of equal opportunity. That's why it's crucial for us to hold them accountable as a foothold for gender equity in education. Thanks to women professors at the college, ERA discovered a growing gender pay gap over 20 years between Vassar's male and female professors, with a current average disparity of 10%. ERA and co-counsel Lief Cabraser continue our suit filed in August 2023 to challenge these pay inequities. Dozens of professors and hundreds of students have come forward to support this effort.

The New York Times

#### One of America's First Women's Colleges Is Accused of Paying Men More

Vassar, which is coeducational now, has maintained a gender-based pay gap for two decades, current and former female professors say in a recently filed lawsuit.



The Washington Post Sign in

**Female professors sue Vassar College, alleging wage discrimination**

By Danielle Douglas-Gabriel

Updated August 30, 2023 at 3:16 p.m. EDT | Published August 30, 2023 at 11:12 a.m. EDT





# OUR 2024 IMPACT

**217K**

People used ERA's Know Your Rights Guides and free resources last year.

ERA's legal actions helped secure pay equity settlements at **Oracle** and **Google**, benefiting thousands of workers.

ERA supported **Costume Designers (IATSE Local 892)** in the #NakedWithoutUs campaign, resulting in a **40% pay increase** and wage parity with creative peers.

ERA is setting pay equity standards for **1.5 million** college professors, adjuncts, and lecturers. A study revealed U.S. female professors earn **\$17K less** than their male colleagues on average.

“ Jessica Stender, the deputy legal director at Equal Rights Advocates and a lawyer for the Vassar plaintiffs, said she was surprised the college had not done more to address the pay gap given its status as a standard-bearer of women's education and one of the Seven Sisters consortium of historically women's colleges.

That such problems could exist at Vassar, she said, “is really indicative of how deep and how pervasive pay discrimination problems are in our society.”

Policy Director & Deputy Legal Director  
Jessica Ramey Stender in *The New York Times*, September 2023

“ The new [Title IX] regulations put an end to unfair and traumatic grievance procedures that favor harassers. No longer will student survivors be subjected to processes that prioritize the interests of their perpetrators over their own well-being and safety.”

Senior Attorney Kel O'Hara in *The New York Times*, April 2024



## A Game-Changing Policy Revolution

### DOUBLING DOWN ON SYSTEM CHANGE

With staff in six states and Washington D.C., ERA leads collaborative campaigns with partners across the country accelerating the pace of change. In the past decade alone, this collective force has driven passage of 50 new laws in California and 150 across the nation. These laws are supporting working families, combatting pay inequity, harassment and other forms of discrimination, and building the economic security of millions of families. Through our Family Voices Initiative, ERA conducted research with Black and Latinx family breadwinners in 16 cities. Their overwhelming need for childcare, secure jobs, debt relief, and increased wages has been our call to action in policy efforts in states and at the federal level.

ERA celebrates these policy wins since 2023, made possible by your support. They're setting the national standard and inspiring federal victories, even with a divided Congress.

### Workplace Equity

ERA strengthened anti-retaliation laws benefiting over 5 million low-paid workers vulnerable to pay violations and harassment. Nationally, ERA celebrated passage of the bipartisan Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, after years of tireless advocacy. We also led executive branch actions on pay data collection, workplace harassment, and salary transparency, leveraging relationships with the Biden Administration.

### Safety from Violence and Harassment

ERA helped pass California's Assembly Bill 933, protecting survivors of sexual assault and harassment from retaliatory defamation lawsuits. We also supported housing protections for 6 million domestic violence survivors.

### Support for Working Families

ERA has been the force behind ten workplace leave law since 2002. Recent wins include a bill increasing required paid sick days for 15 million workers. To move progress for the nation's 53 million caregivers, we also helped pass a groundbreaking state bill extending time off to care for chosen family members.

### Childcare & Combating Poverty

ERA supported efforts to create an equitable family fee system, eliminating childcare fees for most families and capping fees at 1% for the rest, following years of securing billions of dollars in childcare funding.

### Defending Reproductive Choice and Health Care

ERA provided leadership on abortion litigation and ballot measures. In California, we supported a bill enhancing protections for abortion providers, expanding the healthcare workforce, and safeguarding reproductive health data.

### Defense of Students & Education Equity

ERA advocated for new Title IX regulations, effective August 2024, protecting LGBTQI+, pregnant, and parenting students and survivors of campus sexual violence.

POLICY SPOTLIGHT



WAGE JUSTICE

ERA leads the nation in pay equity policy wins, including state laws now requiring the posting of salary bands on job postings, pay data reporting to government agencies, and prohibiting reliance on prior salary to set pay. At the federal level, ERA proudly led the advocacy finalizing a ban on reliance on salary history when setting wages for federal employees. This victory for pay transparency will help millions of federal workers across the country.

OUR 2024 IMPACT



Stronger California Advocates Network:

Celebrating 10 years in 2024, with 50 new economic security laws passed, and billions of dollars secured for child care and support for vulnerable communities.

Key CA Victories:

- Domestic workers now protected by health and safety laws.
- Strengthened legal protections for rape survivors.
- Expanded workplace leave for domestic violence survivors.
- Streamlined licensing for clinics providing abortion and healthcare.
- First-in-the-nation law recognizing compounded harm from intersecting identities (gender, race, age, LGBTQ+ status).

September 2024 Wins:

Seven new California laws signed by the Governor to protect workers, survivors, and expand access to reproductive health care.



## Strengthening the Movement

### BUILDING WORKER POWER

ERA's success is driven by high-impact collaborative networks that build power for state and federal change. These include Equal Pay Today, the Stronger California Advocates Network, the Stop Harassment State Network, and the National Taskforce on Tradeswomen's Issues. As Chair of these campaigns, ERA works with 262 partner organizations in states like Mississippi, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and Illinois. Together, we coordinate strategies on policy, research, enforcement, and community mobilization. We also host community education events, lobby visits, and legislator briefings to advance key issues.



**WOMEN REBUILDING AMERICA**

We are working to reduce poverty by closing gender and race pay gaps. With occupational segregation accounting for 30% of the pay gap, ERA launched the Women Rebuilding America Initiative to support women workers in construction and other trades. Over the next ten years, federal funding will create an estimated 15 million high-wage jobs in infrastructure. ERA is partnering with workers, community organizations, and government agencies to increase the representation of women of color in these jobs. Through advocacy and monitoring, we will ensure these jobs are equitable, harassment-free, and supported by childcare options.

In 2024, ERA incorporated the National Taskforce on Tradeswomen’s Issues to create pathways of power for women of color, immigrant women, and others, changing the future of work. ERA is also developing funds for a National Gender Hub to coordinate this effort.

**OUR 2024 IMPACT**

**150**

New pay equity laws passed in the past decade, benefiting tens of millions of families and closing the pay gap that costs women millions of dollars over their careers.

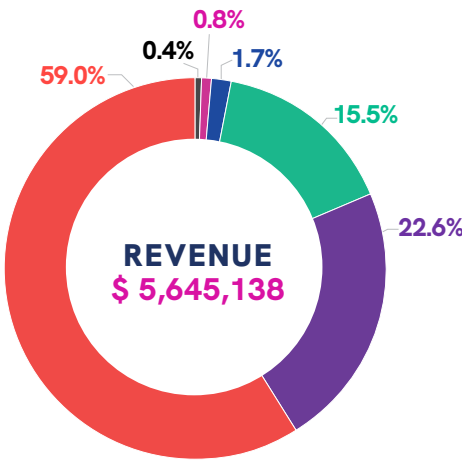


In **2023** ERA launched a **two-year Equal Pay Today Policy Agenda** to drive state and federal policy changes addressing all wage gap factors.

**Equal Pay Days** — The campaign coordinates national awareness days to highlight pay disparities for women of color, immigrant and part-time workers, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and mothers, engaging over **50 million** people on pay gap facts and solutions.

# Finance Report

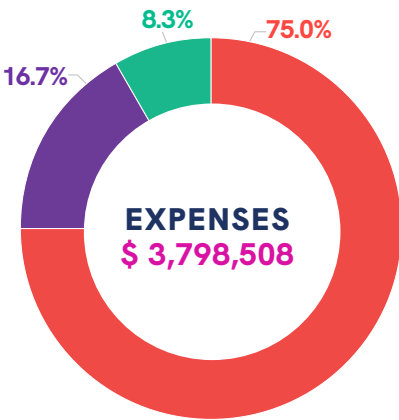
Equal Rights Advocates (ERA) experienced an increase in multi-year funding in FY 23-24, including from institutional funders, to support visionary programmatic initiatives. Simultaneously, ERA remained conservative on its organizational expenses and growth and was focused on ensuring that the vast majority of its funds raised went into providing the critical legal and policy advocacy services that ERA does on a daily basis to advance gender justice for all.



## Revenue

**\$ 5,645,138**

Foundations	\$ 3,330,903
Individual	\$ 1,276,471
Events	\$ 873,329
In kind	\$ 97,579
Corporate	\$ 44,133
Other	\$ 22,724



## Expenses

**\$ 3,798,508**

Program	\$ 2,848,354
Development	\$ 316,839
General & Administrative	\$ 633,315

\*Source: Unaudited financials, April 2023 - 2024, Equal Rights Advocates





You don't make progress by  
standing on the sidelines...  
you make progress  
by implementing ideas. ”

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Shirley Chisholm



## Join Us!



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**TAKE ACTION:** [equalrights.org/what-you-can-do](https://equalrights.org/what-you-can-do)



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