

THE COST OF FAILURE

Calculating the costs of the gender gap in pay since the failure of the equal rights amendment.

The Equal Rights Amendment was a proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution stating that civil rights may not be denied on the basis of one's sex. The amendment failed to be ratified in 1982.¹

One of the chief impacts of the failure of the Equal Rights Amendment is the continuing difference in pay between women and men, called the Gender Gap.²

This graphic shows yearly earnings by women and gender gap in pay each year since 1982. It also identifies what the lost wages were and what that could have purchased year by year.

ERA amendment fails



Women's Earning

- in millions³

Gender Gap

- Percent of pay difference²

- Annual lost wages (millions)²

Lost purchasing power

- Lost wages divided by the cost of item

Year	Women's Earning (millions)	Gender Gap (%)	Annual Lost Wages (millions)	Lost Purchasing Power
1982	\$113,079	38.3%	\$43.3M	21,654,629 TICKETS TO E.T., EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL
1983	\$114,668	36.4%	\$41.7m	5,988,401 COPIES OF MADONNA'S FIRST ALBUM
1984	\$121,025	36.3%	\$43.9m	17,608 MACINTOSH COMPUTERS
1985	\$125,643	35.4%	\$44.4m	1,112,219 BEAN BAG LOUNGERS
1986	\$129,957	35.7%	\$46.3m	415 NEW HOMES
1987	\$134,689	34.8%	\$46.8m	6,701 CHEVROLET SPRINTS
1988	\$138,582	34%	\$47.1m	DINNER FOR FOUR FOR 2,161,371
1989	\$142,414	31.3%	\$44.5m	165,708 TELEVISIONS
1990	\$144,981	28.4%	\$41.1m	68,624,340 POUNDS OF BROCCOLI
1991	\$143,111	30.1%	\$43m	122,029 OUNCES OF GOLD
1992	\$145,805	29.2%	\$42.5m	GROCERIES FOR A YEAR FOR 31,701
1993	\$148,092	28.5%	\$42.2m	10,991,203 BOTTLES OF ASPIRIN
1994	\$149,509	28%	\$41.8m	301,169 CORDLESS PHONES
1995	\$152,221	28.6%	\$43.5m	21,877 SETS OF LEATHER FURNITURE
1996	\$156,096	26.2%	\$40.8m	FOUR YEARS OF PRIVATE COLLEGE FOR 1,503
1997	\$161,452	25.8%	\$41.6m	3,386,554 TANKS OF GASOLINE
1998	\$165,170	26.8%	\$44.2m	2,611,537 COPIES OF HARRY POTTER AND THE SORCERER'S STONE
1999	\$169,827	27.7%	\$47m	BASIC CABLE FOR A YEAR FOR 125,566
2000	\$176,458	26.3%	\$46.4m	77,090 MONTHS OF RENT
2001	\$176,838	23.7%	\$41.9m	105,039 FIRST-GENERATION IPODS
2002	\$174,938	23.4%	\$40.9m	8,699 MONTHS OF CANCER TREATMENTS
2003	\$176,281	24.5%	\$43.1m	A YEAR'S WORTH OF DINING OUT FOR 28,099
2004	\$176,864	23.4%	\$41.3m	LAW SCHOOL FOR 3,490
2005	\$180,587	23%	\$41.5m	A YEAR'S WORTH OF BIRTH CONTROL FOR 115,375
2006	\$185,402	23.1%	\$42.8m	CLOTHING FOR A YEAR FOR 22,854
2007	\$188,156	22.2%	\$41.7m	A YEAR'S WORTH OF TOYS FOR 74,590
2008	\$188,837	22.9%	\$43.2m	A YEAR OF HEALTHCARE FOR 14,531
2009	\$178,858	23%	\$41.1m	A YEAR OF CHILDCARE FOR 3,791
2010	\$177,886	23.1%	\$41m	82,348 IPADS
2011	\$177,958	23%	\$40.9m	8,186 FULLY-FUNDED TRADITIONAL IRAS
2012	\$181,856	23.5%	\$42.7m	A YEAR OF UTILITIES FOR 18,719
2013	\$185,082	21.7%	\$40.1m	2,679,306 DVDS OF FROZEN
2014	\$188,310	21.4%	\$40.2m	1,291 WEDDINGS
2015	\$193,341	20.4%	\$39.4m	PUBLIC COLLEGE TUITION, ROOM & BOARD FOR 2,018

Women's lost wages since the failure of the ERA amendment

\$1,455,000,000