



Margaret Chase Smith Essay Contest



“Many inquiries come to me asking my attitude on an amendment to the Constitution which would give men and women equal rights in the United States. This would mean that women would have full privileges and responsibilities — a principle which I approve.”

**--Margaret Chase Smith
December 30, 1943**



*Senator Margaret Chase Smith with Visitors
At “Portrait Monument” of Lucretia Mott,
Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony
US Capitol, Washington, DC
February 15, 1968*

When Margaret Chase and her Skowhegan High School classmates visited the White House and met President Woodrow Wilson in 1916, women did not have the right to vote. Four years later, the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified. Margaret Chase Smith was a beneficiary of the suffrage movement, becoming one of the first females to make national politics a career. Nevertheless, she believed women also deserved the protection of an Equal Rights Amendment. Debates about “full privileges and responsibilities” for women continue today. Therefore, we invite Maine high school seniors to assess the arguments for and against an Equal Rights Amendment.

The rules of the contest are minimal. It is open to **Maine high school seniors**. Essays must be typed and double-spaced. Electronic submissions are accepted. Contestants should provide complete contact information so they can receive notification of final results. For publication purposes, essays should be no longer than 2000 words. As always, quality of evidence, argumentation, and writing is more important than quantity of pages. The best essays support personal opinions with historical context and cited facts.

The Library will award **\$1000** for first place, **\$500** for second place, **\$250** for third place, and five **\$50** honorable mention prizes. Essays are due by **April 1, 2019**. Prizes will be announced by May 3rd.

To submit entries or for more information, please contact:

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