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ERA Fight Presentation Jan. 8 at Illinois State Museum

Dr. Mark DePue will discuss the history of the Equal Rights Amendment at Learning Series Program

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – Despite bipartisan passage in the U.S. Congress of the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the country has witnessed a battle to adopt the amendment, a battle that was often contentious and always noisy. On Wednesday, January 8, Dr. Mark DePue, Director of Oral History at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library will present a talk entitled “An Unlikely Defeat: The ERA Fight in Illinois.” The program will begin at 7:00 p.m. in the Illinois State Museum’s Thorne Deuel Auditorium and will cover the long fight between pro- and anti-ERA groups in Illinois.

As the only northern industrial state not to pass the measure early on, Illinois became a hotly contested battleground state. Every year from 1972 to 1982, the issue went before the Illinois legislature without being passed by the Illinois House and Senate in the same year. For most of those years, the pro-ERA and anti-ERA forces gathered in Springfield and fought it out in very public ways. The fight culminated in 1982, and included a couple of the most memorable events ever to occur in the Illinois legislature, only to go down to defeat. In his talk, Dr. DePue will feature the stories of those who participated in the ERA struggle in Illinois and whose voices are recorded as part of the Oral History Program at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

Each month, the Paul Mickey Learning Series features a different speaker and topic in the Auditorium at the Illinois State Museum. For additional information, please contact events@illinoisstatemuseum.org or (217) 558-6696.

The Illinois State Museum is located at 502 S. Spring Street in Springfield. It is open Monday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Sundays from 12:00 noon to 4:30 p.m. Admission is \$5 for adults ages 19-64.

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