S.C. House, Senate again consider ERA bills

By KAREN LEE
Gamecock Staff Writer

The South Carolina House and Senate are considering identical bills that would ratify the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

THE BILL will most likely come to vote in the senate before the house, Sen. Tom Turnipseed said. But, if the bill is defeated in the house first, it won't be passed in the senate, and Mallard Burnett, president of Columbia National Organization for Women and a third-year law student at USC.

The bill does not "stand a chance in the state house," said Sen. L. Marion Gressette, chairman of the state judiciary committee, where the senate bill is now being studied. However, "If the bill gets out of committee, there's a very good chance it will pass in the senate. If so, the chances are very good that it will be ratified in South Carolina," Burnett said.

It is "very close" now in the Senate and in the judiciary committee, Gressette said. It will probably come to a vote on the senate floor where "it depends on who's present if it passes," he said.

THIS IS THE third time in four years the ERA has been considered for ratification in South Carolina. In 1972, the House passed a bill in favor of it, but the senate sent its bill to committee after two readings, and it was never voted out of committee. In 1973, the house sent the bill to committee for study, where again it was never voted out. Senate did nothing about the bill that year. It was proposed for the third time this January.

Students, professors have mixed feelings

By KATHLEEN McINTYRE
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USC students have mixed feelings about the Equal Rights Amendment and equal rights. Students whose names were randomly chosen from the telephone directory, agree with equal rights for women but they disagree with the ERA.

Joyce Jackson, a history major sophomore, believes that the amendment shouldn't be passed because "I feel you get enough equal rights under the other amendment which states equality for all no matter what their creed, nationality or race would happen to be."

"I support equal rights for women but I am against the ERA amendment," said Aggie Haladay, a business administration major. The ERA amendment is just restating the old laws and it will also cause more conflict in court systems. Halladay also said that "because of the amendment, many activities which are very important to our society would be eliminated, such as father-son and mother-daughter programs."

Prof. Sherry Messinger and accounting major Rock Lolley both agree that women and girls are capable of doing the same jobs as men should receive the same pay as men do.

Messinger feels that some women carry this idea too far. "Even if they are unable to do the job, some women feel they should still receive the same pay as a man who is more capable than she is," Messinger said. "If the amendment is passed there will be a lot more competition among all men and women."

MANY PROFESSORS who were interviewed were not familiar enough with the amendment to form an opinion.

Richard Mims of general studies and James Wynn of pharmacy both believe in equal rights but not the ERA amendment per se. Wynn said, "My personal feeling is that the amendment is that it will have a tremendous effect on our country and it would change the way of life. I feel that this is totally unnecessary."

"I am 100 per cent for equal rights but limitations need to be considered against the amendment," Wynn said.

Government staff member Ann Mooney said that "all of us I haven't met are the amendment enough to give an over all opinion, there are things about the amendment which I agree and things that I disagree with."

Lisle Mitchell, geography professor, thinks that the ERA should be passed. "We live in an age of lawyers in our society. We function on the basis of precedent. We do not look forward to the future or even our society today, we are continually looking into the past. This does not make for progress in our society," Mitchell said.

"Women are not equal under the law in our society. To achieve this, the ERA should be passed. It needs to be expedited," Mitchell said.

Here is the complete text of the Equal Rights Amendment:

SECTION I. Equal rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.

SECTION II. The Congress shall have power to enforce by appropriate legislation the provisions of this article.

SECTION III. Amendment of this article shall be proposed by the Congress, and it shall be ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the states within seven years after the date of submission, or by the conventions of three-fourths of the states as the Congress shall direct.

The ERA was written by Alice Paul and submitted to the U.S. Congress in 1923. It was not passed then, and it was submitted to Congress again in 1944. On March 22, 1972, the house vote was 254-23. The senate vote was 60-8. The wording of the amendment has remained the same since 1946.

Section I's design is for implementation of the first section. Section II was included in order to make it possible for states to comply with the first section after ratification. Section III was designed to ensure that ERA-type amendments to their state constitutions, ten of which are identical to the federal ERA, states a publication by ERA South Carolina, a state organization in favor of ratification.

A good possibility exists that South Carolina may adopt similar legislation. "Women receive adequate protection now from Titles IX and VII," Gressette said, referring to the education act of 1972 (IX) and the civil rights act of 1964 (VII).

Title IX is part of the education amendment of 1972. It deals with equal opportunity of men and women at a federally funded institution in admissions, financial assistance, treatment of students in educational programs and activities, employment opportunities and discrimination because of marital status.

WASHINGTON, June 21, 1975, and colleges and universities were given three years to comply, following reports submitted to the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

The university has been working for years to provide equal educational facilities under title IX provisions. Richard Wertz, president of the university, said, "We would like to see this thing get done and we are now working with Title IX. We'll have no trouble fully complying." Wertz added that they still do not have Title IX.

HOUSING FOR men and women will not have to be coeducational because of either ERA or Title IX. Wertz said, "It will be based on demand. We will try to furnish housing to those who want it, no matter what the ratio." The civil rights act, title VII, is inadequate for women's protection from job discrimination, Burnett said. There are too many loopholes. Under statement 4 of Title VII, unless an office has 15 employees, a woman cannot presently sue on grounds of discrimination. Only 20 per cent of employers are covered in this act, anyway.

Those "laws are not enough," Burnett said. "They are only advisory as such can be repealed by congress at any time. We need the protection of an amendment, which cannot be repealed."

Women first allowed at USC in 1894

By KAREN LEE
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Less than one hundred years ago, a substantial barrier was removed for women in South Carolina. In December, 1894, women were granted the right to attend the state's university, then known as South Carolina College.

THE NEXT fall, on Sept. 24, 1895, Frances G. gibbons received permission to take a special course at the college. She was followed the next week by two other women. And in November, 13 women were taking special courses at the South Carolina College.

There was no dean of women and no female faculty members and no dorm space was allotted for these students.

The attitude of peers doesn't appear to have been invaded. The first two organizations at the college, the Euphrad and Clarissoc societies amended their constitutions in 1895 to prevent the entrance of women into their meetings.

In 1910, the Clarissop society said that women were less intellectual than men. In 1928, the Euphradians concluded that the minds of the sexes were not equal.

ADMINISTRATION officials were not taking a much-different stand. In 1899, President Frank Woodward complained that women took easy courses and disrupted the progress of the male students.

The first woman graduate was Mattie Jean Adams of Newberry, in 1899. The first organized campus group for the sexes was established in 1900. It was called the "Purity Society" and was a social group. Women were not much involved with politics.

It was not until 1973 that USC students elected a women, Rita McKinney, as student body president.

Before World War I, there was never an enrollment of more than 25 co-ed. In 1924 the first dean of women was appointed and a women's dormitory was opened. It accommodated 100 women. Only women of junior, senior and law school classifications were allowed to live there, or for that matter, were even granted full-time student status. This was changed in 1938, when these restrictions were repealed by the S.C. General Assembly.