"A big change would be the rape law. Men would be protected from homosexual rape. As it stands now, men are only protected by sodomy laws. The punishment for this offense is much less than for rape. The law would read that people can't be raped" if ERA is ratified, Burnette said.

Weidman said that this was true and that many homosexual groups have indicated support for the ERA.

However, the ERA South Carolina publication states that the ERA will have no direct effect on homosexuality.

The Congressional Record states that if state legislature makes a judgement that it is wrong for a man to marry a man, then it must say that it is wrong for a woman to marry a woman.” (118 Cong. Rec. S4386, March 21, 1972). The statement was submitted to the record by the League of Women Voters.

The state’s legislature's statutes will be diminished, if ERA is ratified, Greessette said.

ERA “needs to be handled and controlled by the state. It’s a matter for those states to pass upon where it’s needed," he said. He said he did not think it was needed in South Carolina. He said he fears that the federal government will take away some of the state’s rights for self government if the amendment is ratified.

However, the ERA South Carolina publication states that “ratification of the ERA would allow each state to make its own laws on marriage, divorce, etc., as long as the law did not discriminate on the grounds of sex.”

Phyllis Schafly, National Chairman of Stop ERA, said in the public hearing on March 22, “We should have discrimination. In some areas we should be treated equally but in other areas it is a grievous act to do so. There is nothing ERA will do for women. It will not give us any rights we do not have but will take away many rights we now have.”

Dodie Baxter, of Aiken, S.C., said she wants the amendment ratified because she has “worked for 35 years and saw someone get the pay for the work I did. Because I am a women, I was denied promotions.”

Baxter represents Business and Professional Women's Club of South Carolina as a state lobbyist for ERA. She was a secretary and applied for a job as a technical writer because “I was doing the work already and someone else signed for it. Lots of times my bosses couldn’t answer questions, but I could. They just signed. I was denied promotion because I was a women. I’d like to see some of those signers be forced out of jobs and dig ditches.”

All debaters agree on is that ERA wouldn’t be a cure-all: “Changes will be gradual even though states would have two years to comply. This would not be a blanket cure for equality problems,” Weidman said.