

Testimony on ERA continues, both sides a speak in Salem

By NAN HENDERSON
Of the Emerald

SALEM (Special) — Testimony on ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution continued last week as proponents and opponents of ratification Monday calmly faced each other during the second hearing on ratification of the legislative session.

They crowded into Room 20 of the Capitol in much the same way as the week before during the first hearing on the issue before the House State and Federal Affairs Committee.

Last week, the testimony was given to the Senate Judiciary Committee as identical measures calling for ratification have been introduced in both the House and Senate. Sen. Betty Browne (D-Oakridge), chairer of the Senate Judiciary Committee, reported

that she does not intend to schedule more hearings on the issue before that committee.

At least one more hearing on the amendment is planned, however, by Rep. Les Aucoin (D-Portland), chairer of the House State and Federal Affairs Committee, though no date for that hearing has been announced.

Last week's testimony, too, was nearly identical to that given the previous week except two Lane County women, not present then, Monday added their support to the ERA.

Nancy Hayward, chairer of the Lane County Board of Commissioners and Mary Klonoski, chairer of the Fourth Congressional District Democratic Committee countered most of the arguments against ratification in their testimonies.

Hayward said she served in the

Navy in World War II and saw "no reason why women should not give service to their country" in the same way as men. She said that it is unfair only the men in the country bear the burden of national defense.

"Almost nine out of ten jobs done in the military are non-combat," Hayward said. She added that women would also be able to "reap the benefits of the military" such as the G.I. Bill.

Hayward also answered the argument the ERA would no longer permit separate public toilets for men and women. "Separate toilets and sleeping facilities between men and women have been created not to discriminate against women, but for other reasons," Hayward said. She called the situation "totally different" from the separate facilities blacks were required to use before passage of the 14th Amendment.

She also argued that dealing with discriminatory laws on a one-by-one basis, as many of the opponents to the ERA propose, would leave women "in a tenuous position as they move from state to state and county to county."

Klonoski called the ERA "the equal rights and responsibilities amendment" in her testimony before the committee. She said that it would give women "equal adulthood" by abolishing many laws that place women in a position below their husbands.

ERA opponents hit 'shot-gun' approach

A middle-aged Portland housewife who considers herself "politically active" but asked that her name not be used "because sometimes reporters don't write down exactly what I say," typified the opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment present in a fuller force last week at the second hearing on the issue.

The woman said she belonged to "the Committee for the Preservation of Womanhood" which was formed "a couple of months ago" specifically to lobby against the ERA. She said the group drew members from many "concerned organizations" including the American Independent Party and though the organization was initiated in Portland "it is growing all over Oregon."

She said the group is increasing their membership by circulating petitions urging persons to "stop the ratification of the 'Equal Rights' Amendment to the U.S. Constitution."

Five points are outlined against the amendment on the petitions: "Would you, in the name of equality, want your 18-year-old daughter to be compelled to register for the draft and, when inducted, to stand in a common physical examination line with men, share living quarters with them and be sent into combat to run the risk of mutilation and capture?"

"The ERA will wipe out women's right to privacy" (by forcing the integration of rest rooms, physical education classes and all public facilities).

"The ERA would turn loose on the public all criminals now imprisoned for sex crimes" (since seduction and statutory rape laws would no longer be legal under the ERA).

"The ERA will strip women of all protective laws gained for them over the decades by unions and legislators."

"The ERA will wipe out the financial obligation of a husband and father to support his wife and children—the most important of all women's rights."

The point of most concern to the housewife, and to all opponents testifying against the amendment was the possibility that "young girls" will be subject to conscription.

"When I was first telling my sister that the ERA would make women eligible for the draft she gave me a big horse laugh and said 'those women libbers are going to get what they deserve,'" the woman said. But when her sister and other persons she talked to about the amendment realized she was serious, "they just couldn't believe it," she said.

"So little information about the amendment has been in the press," the woman said, "most people just don't understand the broad interpretation of the amendment but when they do, they are against it."

She said neither women nor men "should be forced to go to this no-win war in Vietnam." She felt that conscription of any person "is a violation of the involuntary servitude clause of the 13th Amendment."

But she added that women are physiologically and psychologically less able to serve in the military than men. "I have a daughter that will be eligible for the draft in two years if the ERA is ratified," the woman said, "but none of us could expect her to go."

She also expressed concern that passage of the ERA would "be issuing a blank check to Congress" to pass any laws that supposedly would correct existing sex discrimination.

"Our side could be wrong about what would happen, but so could the other side," the woman said. The problem, she added, is that no one knows exactly what will happen if the amendment is ratified.

She said that The Committee for the Preservation of Womanhood will probably petition for a referendum on the ratification issue, if the legislature ratifies the amendment.

"I think this is so important that I would be willing to go door to door to inform people about the ERA," she said.

She admitted that women are discriminated against "in a few areas still," but objected to using "a shot-gun approach to solve that problem." The woman said ratifying the ERA to deal with existing discrimination "is like using an atomic bomb to exterminate a few mice."

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